



Women and Equalities Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

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From the Chair

Rt Hon Liz Truss MP
Minister for Women and Equalities
(by email)

7 September 2021

Dear Liz,

Appointment of Social Mobility Commission (SMC) Chair and Commissioners

I look forward to your confirmation of the Government's preferred candidate for the post of SMC Chair, interviews for which I understand were held on 14 July. While the delay in announcing the preferred candidate is regrettable, I appreciate the greater importance of appointing the best candidate to this important role. We had hoped to hold our pre-appointment hearing with the preferred candidate on 8 September. Our programme of work precludes us from rescheduling the hearing during September. We are now planning to reschedule for shortly after the conference recess, assuming your decision has been announced.

The delay gives rise to concern about the continuity of the SMC and its Board. We note that the terms of the current co-Chairs expire at the end of this month. We are also aware that all 12 Commissioners were appointed for three-year terms, which expire at the end of next month. This was flagged as a risk in the SMC's Annual Review and Business Plan 2020. We would therefore be grateful if you could confirm the steps the Government is taking to ensure continuity:

- Will the terms of the current SMC co-Chairs be extended until a new Chair is in post? If not, how will you ensure the SMC has effective leadership in the intervening period?
- Have any existing Commissioners been approached about extending their terms? If so, how many have been approached and indicated their intention to serve as Commissioners beyond October?

- How many new Commissioners do you intend to appoint; when will the recruitment process commence; and when do you intend to have new Commissioners in post?

I would be grateful for an urgent response. Many thanks.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Caroline". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP
Chair, Women and Equalities Committee