



Department for
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Dear Julian Knight MP

The process for the Ofcom Chair campaign was opened to applications on 29 November 2021, and following a two week extension was closed to applications on 13 December 2021.

The previous Secretary of State chose to re-run this competition in line with the Governance Code, as he was not content that he had been presented with a choice of high quality diverse candidates. Therefore it has been imperative this competition has a broad and diverse field as well as diversity of background and experience.

The competition was reopened on 26 January 2022 for one week until 2 February 2022, to allow for a further opportunity for applications to be submitted. This was to ensure that following the Christmas recess period, all potential applicants had sufficient opportunity to submit an application and to ensure both the department and Saxton Bampfylde had done all possible outreach. We are now confident that we have exhausted all possible opportunities to ensure the breadth and diversity of the candidate pool.

As part of the questionnaires submitted to the Committee prior to a pre-appointment hearing, the department provides numbers of applications and candidates on the shortlist, in addition to the diversity information. We are happy to provide the information you have requested as part of those questionnaires, which will be published alongside the Committee's report.

Whilst the competition is ongoing we do not wish to increase speculation on the process and in line with comments by this Committee and the Commissioner for Public Appointments on the benefits of minimising media speculation, we will not be providing a running commentary on candidate numbers.

The campaign is progressing to interviews over the coming week, and we hope to be able to announce a preferred candidate in the near future to enable pre-appointment scrutiny by this Committee at the earliest possible opportunity.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Healey
DCMS Permanent Secretary

