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for Exiting the
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Stephen Metcalfe MP
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Dear Stephen

CHIEF SCIENTIFIC ADVISER

Thank you for your letter regarding the appointment of a Chief Scientific Adviser for DExEU. I am grateful for the interest that the Science and Technology Select Committee has taken in this matter.

As you know, Government takes the potential impact of EU exit on the science and research sectors extremely seriously. Our ambition, as set out by the Prime Minister and by my Secretary of State, is for the UK to be the go-to place for innovators and investors across the world. To maintain our global leadership position, at Autumn Statement we announced a further £4.7 billion by 2021 in R&D funding – the largest increase by any government since 1979. We intend to work hard to secure the best possible outcome for the sector as we leave the EU.

I agree that it is critical that my Department has access to the best scientific expertise both within and outside Government as we work to achieve this. We are already working with a wide range of external stakeholders. Again, as I know you are aware, both I and my ministerial colleagues meet regularly with representatives from the sector. Jo Johnson has also recently set up High Level Stakeholder Working Group on EU Exit, Universities, Research and Innovation, including a number of senior representatives of UK research and innovation organisations. This has been set up to discuss opportunities and issues arising from the UK's exit from the EU. The group will work closely with the Government to ensure the UK builds on its strong global position in research and innovation excellence.

My Department continues to discuss with Sir Mark Walport, the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser, what more we should do to ensure that DExEU is accessing the very best scientific expertise. There are several models for achieving this, and it is important for us to take into account DExEU's role as a co-ordinating Department when considering what provisions to put in place. The Department is currently exploring these options, including considering the appointment of a Chief Scientific Adviser.

My Department expects to reach a conclusion on this matter shortly, and would be delighted to write to you again once a decision has been made.

Thank you again for your interest in this matter.

Yours,
Robin

**ROBIN WALKER MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
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