The Rt Honourable David Gauke MP  
Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
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9 February 2018  

RECRUITMENT OF THE PRISONS AND PROBATION OMBUDSMAN  

Thank you for your letter of 29 January inviting our views on this recruitment. The Committee considered it at our meeting on Wednesday and asked me to write to you.

I note that there are some changes to the person specification when compared to the last time this post was advertised. For example, the new specification makes no mention of financial management which was listed as part of one of the essential criteria when the role was advertised in early 2017. I would be grateful if you would outline the reason for the changes to the person specification. I assume that the key responsibilities, which do not appear to be listed in your letter to me, are unchanged; if there are changes here, it would be useful to know the reasons for them too.

In addition, I would be grateful if you would outline whether you have made any other changes to the process this time in order to overcome the difficulties that have affected the last two recruitment attempts for this role. I would be interested to know how you intend to ensure the broadest possible range of qualified applicants are encouraged to apply for the role.

If there have been any changes to the remuneration for the post or the time commitment expected, which are not set out in your letter, I would like to know what they are and the reason for them.

I am pleased to see that the panel appears to be independent in its composition.

I do not foresee any problems in holding a pre-appointment hearing in June as your letter suggests. I would be grateful for an early update on the progress of the recruitment.