Pre-appointment hearings
I am writing to you following Oliver Dowden’s letter of 17 January to me regarding pre-appointment hearings by Select Committees and the roles that the Government has agreed, by convention, should be subject to this process.

According to the updated Cabinet Office guidance, the only post that will be subject to a formal pre-appointment hearing by the Science and Technology Committee is the Chair of UKRI. This reflects our preferences, as expressed in Annex B of the Report by the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, *Pre-Appointment Hearings: Promoting Best Practice*.

However, the Executive Chairs of the Research Councils, which now sit under the UKRI structure, are also important roles. I would therefore be grateful if you could confirm that the Department will alert the Science and Technology Committee:

- whenever recruitment processes for the Executive Chairs are launched;
- the name of your preferred candidate before their appointment is announced; and
- information relating to the recruitment process, if requested by the Committee, at the same level of detail as the Committee would receive for a pre-appointment scrutiny hearing (as set out on Box 1, page 5 of the Cabinet Office Guidance: pre-appointment scrutiny by House of Commons select committees), so that the Committee can hold a pre-commencement hearing should it so wish.

I would be grateful for your response by Friday 22 February. Once your response is received I will be placing my letter and your response into the public domain.

I am copying this letter to Oliver Dowden.