



Treasury Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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Rt Hon. Philip Hammond MP
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Dear Philip

Thank you for your letter regarding the appointment of Sir John Armitt as the new Chair of the National Infrastructure Commission.

The Committee has discussed and we are disappointed that you decided to make an appointment without running a formal process. Your letter makes it clear that as the vacancy for this post arose within 12 months of the previous appointment process that Sir John can be appointed from the reserve list without the need for usual pre-appointment processes. However, given the lack of diversity in the original list – and the fact that other qualified candidates could now be available for this post which has arisen near the end of that 12-month period – it would have been preferable for the competition to be re-run. The Committee is not casting any doubt on Sir John's ability, but simply would like to have seen a proper process followed.

Moreover, we hope you can consider adding this appointment to the 'list' of appointments where the Committee has a formal role through the whole process. The Government has underlined the independence of the Commission in its Charter. As I mentioned in my previous letter, it would be timely for Government to update the 2013 Cabinet Office guidance on pre-appointment scrutiny by House of Commons select committees to include the NIC, and the Committee would welcome the Treasury's commitment to do so. The NIC was not in existence when the list was last updated but fits well with the bodies that are included.

Morgan

Nicky

The Rt Hon. Nicky Morgan MP
Chair of the Treasury Committee