



Department for
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Damian Collins MP
Chair
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House of Commons
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TO2018/03228/DC
23 February 2018

Dear Damian

Thank you for your letter of 22 February regarding the recruitment process for the role of Charity Commission Chair.

As I said in my previous letter, the recruitment process was conducted fully in accordance with the Governance Code for Public Appointments. Peter Riddell, the Commissioner for Public Appointments has confirmed this. The advisory assessment panel's report identified appointable candidates and their assessment of each candidate. Obviously it would be completely inappropriate for me to give further personal details. As the appointing Minister, I have the final decision of who is appointed to the role.

You may have seen that one of the advisory assessment panel's independent members, Julia Unwin, has said publicly that the process was both rigorous and fair, that Baroness Stowell was an outstanding candidate on the day, and that the panel was unanimous in this assessment.

Baroness Stowell has never claimed to possess significant experience of working in charities. This was not an essential criteria within the role description. She does, though, have significant executive and Government experience, including at the highest level. Baroness Stowell will bring a wealth of relevant expertise and experience, including regulatory experience, and will bring a fresh perspective to the role of Charity Commission Chair. That is very important, especially now.

As you know, past political activity should be no bar to a public appointment. However, I do understand that her previous position as a Conservative Peer and Cabinet Minister has prompted questions about her ability to undertake the role independently and impartially. She has publicly committed to do so, acting only in the public interest. I have every confidence that she will. Of course she will be accountable to the Committee for this once she takes up the Chair post and I expect she would welcome the parliamentary scrutiny and accountability.

Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

Baroness Stowell was the best and right candidate for the role and I am sure will be an excellent Chair of the Charity Commission.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt Hancock". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping flourish at the end.

The Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP