



**The Commissioner for
Public Appointments**

Rt Hon Peter Riddell CBE
Commissioner for Public Appointments
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Andrew Stephenson MP
Minister of State for Transport
Great Minster House, 33 Horseferry Road
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7 July 2020

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for bringing your proposal to appoint Tom Harris, and Ian King, as Non-Executive Directors to the HS2 Ltd Board to me for consultation under Section 3.3 of the Governance Code. I welcome the early engagement your officials and Cabinet Office have had with my officials in regards to these appointments. It is always useful to be kept up to date with ministers' plans for public bodies when independent reviews and the like can make big changes to their governance structure.

I understand that the Oakervee Review has necessitated changes to the governance, oversight and scrutiny of the HS2 project, and that these proposed direct appointments contribute to those changes. In regards to the proposed appointment of Mr Harris, I recognise that the Review recommended strengthening engagement with communities, and that a previous recruitment round has found Mr Harris to have these skills, while he was not found appointable for the rail and infrastructure specialism that was being recruited to. I am content with the proposal to respond to the Oakervee recommendations by appointing Mr Harris under Section 3.3 for 12 months as a specialist in stakeholder engagement in the interim, and I am content with plans to launch a fair and open competition to find a substantive appointee shortly. I agree with your view that Mr Harris will be able to apply for that post.

In regards to the proposed appointment of Ian King, I note ministers want to strengthen government shareholder representation on the HS2 Board with the appointment of two members to represent DfT and HMT interests directly, again as a response to the Oakervee Review. I agree that an open competition for these roles is not suitable due to their nature, and note similar arrangements for directly appointed shareholder representatives exist for other DfT public bodies, such as Network Rail. As you rightly point out, HS2 Board roles are included in the Order in Council and as such, exceptional appointments without competition require consultation with me. I am content with the appointment of Ian King for a term of three years under Section 3.3 and welcome government efforts to amend the Order in Council to better reflect the structure of public bodies' governance. I will await a further communication from you in regards to the other proposed direct appointee nominated from the Chief Secretary for the Treasury.



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My annual report and website detail appointments made under Section 3.3 of the Code so I would appreciate if your officials could update OCPA when these exceptional appointments are announced.

With best wishes,

Peter Riddell
Commissioner for Public Appointments