



**The Commissioner for  
Public Appointments**

**Rt Hon Peter Riddell CBE**  
**Commissioner for Public Appointments**  
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29 March 2021

Charles M Ramsden  
Deputy Director, Equality Framework  
Government Equalities Office

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*cc:* [pina.sadar@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:pina.sadar@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

Dear Charles,

Thank you for your letter consulting me on the intended 6-month extension to the appointment of Sandra Wallace and Steven Cooper as interim Co-Chairs of the Social Mobility Commission (SMC) for up to 6 months, while a competition to appoint a new Chair is run.

I understand that the SMC has undergone a Machinery of Government change, which has seen it moved from the Department for Education to the Cabinet Office from 1 April 2021. The Governance Code is clear on ministerial accountability for appointments, and so I accept the need to pause and restart the competition for a substantive Chair under the oversight of the Minister for Women and Equalities, and that the current Co-Chairs are best-placed to steer the SMC in the interim. I will be expecting a consultation from the Minister for Women and Equalities on the Senior Independent Panel Member for this new competition in due course.

Please let my office know when Ms Wallace and Mr Cooper's extensions are publicly announced so my website can publish this information in the interests of transparency for appointments made under Section 3.3 of the Code. I am hopeful that a substantive Chair will be in place no later than September 2021 as you have planned, and wish you well for a successful competition.

Yours sincerely,

**Peter Riddell**  
**Commissioner for Public Appointments**