



**The Commissioner for  
Public Appointments**

**Rt Hon Peter Riddell CBE**  
**Commissioner for Public Appointments**  
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**4 January 2021**

Chris Heaton-Harris MP  
Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London SW1P 4DR

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your letter of 23 December 2020 to consult me on your intention to directly appoint Neil Sachdev to the LCR board for a period of no more than six months under Section 3.3 of the Governance Code - which I understand will follow on from a current office holder's post ending on 11 January 2021. My officials have provided your office with my view via email on 24 December, so this letter functions as a formal recording of my views in response to your letter.

I recognise your determination of the need to join up the property work between LRC and Network Rail (NR), and that Mr Sachdev has the capabilities to do this by virtue of his role as a NED on the NR Property Board.

I recognise that holding a competition now would be premature, considering the potential for changes to the rail landscape coming from the Rail Reform Programme. I welcome your intention to use this six month term to amend LCR's governance framework to establish that Mr Sachdev holds his position on the LCR Board ex-officio, by right of his position as a NED on the NR Property Board and as Chair of the NR/LCR Collaboration Joint Property Board. This will make the arrangement routine and transparent, and avoid the need to use the exceptional appointment route in the Code in the future. I am content therefore with the direct appointment in this instance.

As ever with exceptional appointees, can I ask your officials to notify my office when this appointment is announced, so my website list of exceptional appointees can be updated.

With best wishes,

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