



Peter J Lawrence OBE
Chief Executive, Civil Service Commission

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Susie Uppal
Chief Executive, Press Recognition Panel
Mappin House
4 Winsley Street
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By email only

Dear Susie,

Thank you for your letter of 31 March 2022 outlining the conclusion of the process to recruit a new Chair for the PRP Board.

Under para 4.2 of the Royal Charter, the Commissioner for Public Appointments shall be asked to consider whether the process of appointments to the PRP board are fair, open and merit-based, and, if he considers that they are, to confirm so in writing.

In November last year, you supplied information about the recruitment competition PRP were beginning, to replace your current Chair, David Woolf QC. I was assured that the competition was planned to be a fair, open and merit-based process, with recruitment agents engaged and a robust advertising strategy.

At that time, I explained to you that I was still continuing to take decisions under para 4.2 of the Royal Charter on the Commissioner for Public Appointments' behalf. The new Commissioner, William Shawcross CVO, was at that time, only recently in post, and he committed to reviewing the delegation from the Commissioner to me in due course. I can confirm to you that the Commissioner considers the delegation must remain, to mitigate any perceived or real conflicts of interest presented from his previous career in journalism.

From your information in the letter you sent on 31 March 2022, I have considered the process you have run to find the new Chair of the PRP, in regards to the provisions in the Royal Charter, using the definitions of merit, fairness and openness provided in the Governance Code for Public Appointments.

I am satisfied that the appointment the PRP board wishes to make is based on merit, following a fair and open competition, and the Charter's provisions on the selection criteria and ineligibility have been adhered to. Interviewees were given a fair opportunity to show their skills to the selection panel, and the PRP are making the appointment based on the selection panel's merit-based recommendation.



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In the interests of transparency, correspondence between myself and the PRP is published on the OCPA website. If you can advise when your new Chair is officially announced, I will ensure the website is updated with this letter.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter J Lawrence".

Peter J Lawrence OBE