



Government Equalities Office

Minister for Women & Equalities
Government Equalities Office
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
Westminster
London, SW1P 3BT
www.gov.uk/geo

The Rt. Hon. Harriet Harman MP
Chair, Joint Committee on Human Rights

The Rt. Hon Maria Miller MP
Chair, Women and Equalities Select Committee

26 April 2016

Houses of Parliament
London
SW1A 1AA

Dear Harriet & Maria

APPOINTMENT OF NEW CHAIR OF THE EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Thank you for your letter of 19 April on this subject, followed by legal advice you received from Speaker's Counsel. I am pleased that you accept that David Isaac is a good candidate, if the potential or perceived conflicts of interests can be addressed. I am satisfied that any potential conflicts can and will be addressed.

I am therefore writing to let you know that I have decided to confirm my decision to appoint David Isaac as Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. I have written to David Isaac to let him know of my decision to appoint him and to ask him to agree a suitable date on which he can take up his duties.

Since your Committees' joint pre-appointment hearing on 23 March, I have considered very carefully the concerns expressed at that hearing, and in subsequent correspondence. I believe these matters have been extensively covered in letters from me (24 March, and 1 April, and in summary on 15 April) and from Sir David Normington (24 March to me, forwarded to you; and 31 March), while the EHRC has covered its procedures for dealing with any potential conflicts of interest in letters to you of 24 March, 1 April and 15 April. David Isaac wrote to you himself on 15 and 18 April.

Since then, David Isaac has given further consideration to what more he can do to



ensure any perception of conflict is addressed, and has written to you again today, copying that letter to me. He has decided to put in place arrangements of the sort raised when he gave oral evidence to your Committees to ensure that he will not receive profit as an equity partner from work conducted by Pinsent Masons on behalf of government while he holds this role. He has also made clear that he will not be involved in any aspect of advising government clients of Pinsent Masons while he holds the role. I am sure you will agree that this addresses issues raised by the Committee, ensuring that any potential or perceived conflict of interest is fully and satisfactorily dealt with.

I note that although I have not yet received a report from the Committees, you reserve the right to issue one at a future date. Bearing in mind that you do not specify any timescale for the issue of this report, and that it is now over a month since the hearing took place, I feel it is now right to make this important appointment without further delay - and to provide the EHRC with the experience and skills which I am confident David can bring to the role, and enable the EHRC to take forward its important work.

I am nonetheless grateful for the input that your committees have made on this appointment, and for the prompt opportunity you gave David Isaac to provide evidence to you on 23 March.

Mary W
Nicky

**The Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP
Minister for Women & Equalities**