

HOUSE OF LORDS

APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION

Room G/40, 1 Horse Guards Road, London SW1A 2HQ

General Enquiries: 020 7271 0848

Internet: <http://lordsappointments.independent.gov.uk>

E-mail: enquiry@lordsappointments.gov.uk

William Wragg MP
Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

By email only to: pacac@parliament.uk

22 December 2020

Dear William,

HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION - DR PETER CRUDDAS

You will be aware of the latest list of party political peerages published by the Prime Minister on 22 December, through which the Prime Minister confirmed his intention to appoint Dr Peter Cruddas to the House of Lords. The House of Lords Appointments Commission advised the Prime Minister that it was unable to support this nomination after carrying out its vetting, against published criteria.

My predecessors have previously committed to writing to the Chair of the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Select Committee should such a case arise, to ensure transparency in respect of the Commission's vetting function.

The Commission is an independent non-statutory advisory body with responsibility for vetting nominations for life peers in line with its published criteria. It carries out a range of checks and advises the Prime Minister if it has any concerns about the propriety of a nominee. The Commission takes the view that in this context, propriety means that the individual should be in good standing in the community in general and with the public regulatory authorities in particular; and that the past conduct of the nominee would not reasonably be regarded as bringing the House of Lords into disrepute. The Commission plays no part in assessing the suitability of those nominated by the political parties, which is a matter for the parties themselves.

The Commission provides advice but does not have a veto. Ultimately, appointments are a matter for the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has written to the Commission to set out his position, and has published the attached letter.

The Commission has been unable to support individuals nominated by the Parties on previous occasions and publicly confirms the number of nominations it has been unable to support and the nominating Party. This is the first occasion on which its advice has not been followed.

In order to maintain the confidentiality of the Commission's vetting process we do not comment on the detail of individual cases. It would be highly unfair on individuals to do so and risks undermining nominees' confidence in the confidentiality of our processes. We do, however, welcome the Prime Minister's decision to publish his recent letter, and his indication that he considers this to be an exceptional case.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Lords Constitution Committee for information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Bew".

Chair, House of Lords Appointments Commission