

Government's preferred candidate for the role of First Civil Service Commissioner



The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has today confirmed Baroness Stuart of Edgbaston as the preferred candidate for the role of First Civil Service Commissioner.

Baroness Stuart began her career in the private sector, working in publishing and bookselling in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. Baroness Stuart then worked as a government Minister under the Labour government in 1999-2001, sat on the Security and Intelligence Committee and later Chaired Vote Leave in 2016. From 2017, Baroness Stuart has contributed to public life with non-partisan roles. This includes roles at the Royal Mint, Birmingham City University and as the lead Non Executive Board Member at the Cabinet Office. Baroness Stuart now sits as a Crossbench Peer where she operates independently, outside of a party-political framework.

The recommendation follows a fair and open recruitment process following the requirements of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010. Pre-appointment scrutiny by the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee (PACAC) will follow shortly. Following the recommendations of the last review of the Civil Service Commission, the criteria for appointment emphasised the need to act independently of the Civil Service and for a broad range of experiences from outside of Civil Service roles. Candidates were also required to demonstrate how they would uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life.

Ian Watmore stepped down as First Civil Service Commissioner on 30 September 2021 as his five-year, non-renewable term ended. The campaign for the First Civil Service Commissioner launched in August and the Prime Minister has authorised Rosie Glazebrook to carry out the functions of First Commissioner from 1 October 2021 until the vacancy is filled.

The Rt Hon Steve Barclay, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, said:

I am delighted to confirm Baroness Stuart as the preferred

candidate for the office of First Civil Service Commissioner. Baroness Stuart has all the attributes, experience and independence of judgement needed to lead the Civil Service Commission highly effectively.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ian Watmore for his work as First Civil Service Commissioner over the last five years and also extend my thanks to Rosie Glazebrook for carrying out the functions of the office while we recruit Ian's successor ”.

Following a pre-appointment hearing, PACAC will publish their recommendations, which the government will consider before deciding whether to finalise the appointment.

Notes to Editors:

- Baroness Stuart has been Cabinet Office Lead Non-Executive Board Member (since 2020) and has stepped down today; Chair of the Board and the Advisory Council, Wilton Park (an Executive Agency of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) (since 2018). Appointed to the House of Lords as a non-affiliated Peer (September 2020) and subsequently joined the Crossbench group of Peers. Previously Labour MP for Birmingham Edgbaston (1997-2017), Chair of Board of Vote Leave (2016), and Minister in the Department for Health (1999-2001).
- The Panel for the campaign, part nominated by the Civil Service Commission, was made up of:
 - Simon Case, Cabinet Secretary
 - Sarah Healey, Permanent Secretary, DCMS
 - Lord Kakkar, independent of government and the Civil Service Commission
 - Sue Langley, Lead Non-Executive, Home Office and Chair of Gallagher UK
- The Triennial Review (2014) into the Civil Service Commission stated at 3.22 that: “in future there would be clear advantages for its Chair to be perceived to be independent both of the Civil Service and the Government and have a background wider than that of the Civil Service”.

Published 9 December 2021

Last updated 9 December 2021 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 9 December 2021

Title amend

2. 9 December 2021

First published.