

Ali Harris
Equally Ours
By email only

Thursday 03 December 2020

Dear Ali,

Appointment of David Goodhart as EHRC Commissioner

Thank you for your letter dated 26 November, in which you express concerns about the appointment of David Goodhart to our Board and call on us to make a public statement regarding the appointment.

As you are aware, our Commissioners are appointed by the Minister for Women and Equalities. This has been the case since the Commission was formed in 2007 and our Board has always brought a diversity of views to guide our work.

Following the appointment of four new Commissioners and our new Chair, we will shortly be undertaking an induction process which will outline the role, duties and obligations of the Commission and our Commissioners, as set out in the Equality Act 2006 and in our Governance Manual. In line with governance best practice, we will publish conflict of interest declarations for all Commissioners and our Chair and minutes from Board meetings will continue to be publicly available to ensure ongoing transparency and independent scrutiny.

We are an independent body and we demonstrate this through the action we take. This has included supporting cases to challenge discriminatory right to rent policies, the immigration removal window and our most recent assessment

of the Home Office's compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty, where we found that the Home Office had failed to comply with equality law in the development and implementation of its hostile environment policies.

Through our dedicated race programme, we are committed to ensuring impact for our work. In the case of our work with the Home Office, this will include entering into a legal agreement to ensure action against the recommendations of our hostile environment report. We have also written to all Government departments to underline their PSED obligations with a view to driving wider improvements in practice.

We are also currently conducting a major investigation into the experiences of ethnic minority workers in lower paid roles in the health and social care sectors, informed by the expertise of our external advisory panel. We hope to publish our report and recommendations next financial year.

We continue to advise Government on policy, including by updating our Roadmap to Race Equality and engaging with the new Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities. To ensure that our work is evidence-led and grounded in the lived experiences of people from ethnic minorities in Britain, we will continue to engage a wide range of stakeholders. This includes funding a civil society report to the UN on the experiences of people from ethnic minorities in Britain, as well as taking action to strength engagement relating to our race programme and wider work.

You will understand that it is not appropriate for the Commission to comment publicly on individual Commissioner appointments.

David has met the statutory criteria for appointment, in having knowledge of equality and human rights and we look forward to working with him. I hope that by setting out our commitments here, this letter acts as reassurance to your members of our ongoing commitment to advance race equality and work effectively with the sector. We highly value our engagement with Equally Ours, which informs and strengthens our work.

Yours sincerely,



Rebecca Hilsenrath

Chief Executive