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Mr William Wragg MP
Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London
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Sent via email

20 July 2023

Government Response to PACAC Report, *Propriety of Governance in Light of Greensill*

Dear William,

I am pleased to enclose the Government's response to PACAC's report on *Propriety of Governance in Light of Greensill*. The Government has been managing the response to this report together with reports from the Committee on Standards in Public Life and Nigel Boardman on similar themes.

In response to these reports, the Government is introducing a wide-ranging programme of reform to strengthen ethics and integrity in central government.

In particular, we will be introducing fundamental reforms to the Business Appointment Rules to modernise the system, improve its usability for applicants and - most importantly - ensure that the integrity of Government is protected. To protect and defend the principles of ministerial discretion and appointment by merit in the public appointments process, we will implement a number of recommended reforms to improve accountability and transparency. We are also clarifying our compliance arrangements across government departments.

You will have seen via the publication late last year of an updated Ministerial Code that the Government is maintaining the existing terms of reference for the Independent Adviser. The Government does not believe that ethics bodies should be established in new primary legislation, as the position between the Executive and Parliament in relation to these scrutiny bodies is carefully balanced.

We are further introducing comprehensive reforms to improve the quality and accessibility of departments' transparency returns, alongside linked reforms to the Register of Consultant Lobbyists. I look forward to the Committee's reflections on this aspect of the response in the final report of your Lobbying and Influence inquiry.

May I thank the Committee for its work on these important matters.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'O Dowden', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Rt Hon. Oliver Dowden CBE MP
Deputy Prime Minister**