Dear Mary

I am writing in relation to your letter of 26 January regarding the Public Appointments Commissioner for Scotland’s report *Diversity Delivers – three years on*.

At its meeting on 24 April, the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee took evidence from the Commissioner on a number of issues, including her work in relation to the consideration of equal opportunities within the process for appointments to public bodies in Scotland.

Among the matters addressed by the Commissioner were her thoughts of the incorporation of *Diversity Delivers* into the revised Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies in Scotland. I have enclosed the relevant official report extract for your information.

Yours sincerely

Dave Thompson MSP
Convener
Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee
Finally, with regard to “Diversity Delivers”, the 2011 code incorporates a number of the strategy’s recommendations to mainstream diversity. For example, the code’s requirement for a tailored approach derives directly from the strategy’s recommendation for alternative approaches to application and assessment.

The committee will have noted, from various reports and correspondence, that the targets that were set for year 3 of “Diversity Delivers” implementation have not been met. I await the most up-to-date application statistics from the Scottish Government; I am sure that the officials will refer to those in evidence.

How was the implementation of “Diversity Delivers” supported? Following its launch in 2008, my office and the Government’s central team agreed an action plan, monitored its implementation, revised the actions as required and assessed the impact. The recommendations in “Diversity Delivers” are split into three periods: short term, medium term and long term. At the end of the short-term period, three years after the launch of the strategy, I produced my report “Diversity Delivers—three years on”, which contains a review of the action that was taken and its impact on targets.

Having reviewed the strategy, I believe that the recommendations that it contains are as relevant now as when it was launched. My successor may wish to review and revise it in consultation with the Scottish Government, but my recommendation for the foreseeable future would be to focus on areas that have not yet been addressed and to take action to move them forward. Specific actions that I believe would be of benefit are the finalisation of a competency framework, which the Government has been working on, and appointments-specific training for selection panel members.

In summary, the revised code and the regulatory framework give my assessor, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament a firm basis for a public appointments process that meets the needs of this nation. The Scottish Government is committed to an improvement plan. All that is now required is the commitment and ability to implement it effectively.