

The Appointment of a Food Surplus and Waste Champion

From: [REDACTED]

To: 1: Minister Coffey
2: Secretary of State

Date: 15 November 2018

Summary:

The commitment to appoint a Food Surplus and Waste Champion is included in the draft Resources and Waste Strategy.

The role of the Food Surplus and Waste Champion would be to support the delivery of the £15m food waste fund, promote the benefits of reducing food waste to businesses, promote reducing consumer food waste and support the delivery of the food waste commitments in the Resources and Waste strategy. The Food Surplus and Waste Champion would report to Defra Ministers responsible for food waste, for the duration of this Parliament.

This submission sets out the potential role of a Food Surplus and Waste Champion, the process of appointing a champion and, taking account of your thoughts so far, recommends Ben Elliot as the preferred candidate for the role. A biography for Ben Elliot and a list of alternative potential candidates are at Annex A.

Recommendations:

1. Confirm your preference to appoint Ben Elliot as the Food Surplus and Waste Champion and signal that you are content for us not to approach other candidates
2. Comment on our proposed role for the Champion and note the appointment process we will need to follow.

Timing:

By 23 November. We would like to appoint the Champion as soon as possible, as it would be useful to get them started in the role to advise on the delivery of the £15m fund.

Discussion:

1. The Resources and Waste Strategy includes a commitment to appoint a Champion to work with business leaders to ensure that the food waste issue remains at the top of their agendas. He or she will vigorously support the commitments set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan and the policies laid out in this Strategy. The appointment of a Food Surplus and Waste Champion is an unregulated appointment and can be managed in any way deemed appropriate. The most transparent process to appoint the Champion would be to hold an open competition for the role. However, such a process would

take time and we know you are keen to appoint quickly to influence delivery of the food redistribution fund. We have therefore considered a number of potential candidates for the Food Surplus and Waste Champion role. You have put forward Ben Elliot as your preferred candidate, and taking this into account as well as his suitability, we recommend Ben Elliott for this role. A list of alternative candidates and a biography for Ben Elliot can be found in Annex A and B.

2. Ben Elliot has been active in the food waste prevention sphere. He played a central role in driving forward the proposal for a £15m redistribution fund you announced at conference collaborating with FareShare and the Felix Project. Ben Elliot also has proven expertise in bringing organisations together to find solutions and has indicated he is keen to work closely with Defra to deliver the £15m food redistribution fund. Other potential champions we have identified are [Redacted]. We have not approached alternate candidates to determine if they would be interested in such a role. **Are you content with that?**

3. The department has already appointed a Tree Champion and propose to follow the same recruitment process. The next steps in appointing the role will be:
 - Complete due diligence check on the preferred candidate, to ensure that the successful candidate is suitable for the role.
 - Confirm how much time the candidate can contribute to this role, and for how long the candidate will be in the role. For comparison, the Tree Champion volunteers four days a month, and was appointed for a year.
 - Seek No.10 approval for the appointment. When appointing the Tree Champion, No 10 were heavily involved and sought thorough background checks on the successful candidate.
 - Write terms and conditions which will need to go through lawyers.
 - Terms and conditions signed off by SoS.
 - Candidate officially interviewed by SoS.
 - Terms of reference of reference written and signed off by SoS.
 - Terms of reference cleared and put on gov.uk.
 - Comms team prepare for announcement.

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

[REDACTED]