

HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE 55th MEETING HELD ON 14 JULY 2009

Present: Lord Jay (Chairman)
Baroness Dean
Lord Dholakia
Prof Dame Joan Higgins
Lord Hurd
Dr John Low

Kate Campbell (secretariat)
Matthew Carey (secretariat)
Pam Cooke (secretariat)
Maggie O'Boyle (secretariat)

Apologies

1. Apologies were received from Baroness Campbell and Richard Jarvis. (Lord Jay had spoken to Baroness Campbell on the telephone before the meeting to discuss her views on the agenda items).

Chairman's update

2. The Chairman reported on the meetings he had attended since the last Commission meeting. These were:
 - Meeting with other Principals of the "ethical regulators"
 - Lords Committee on the Code of Conduct
 - Baroness D'Souza and Lord Bassam / Lords Speaker (separate meetings) – at which issues such as future improved coherence in the induction of new Peers and future outreach (particularly following the proposed HoLAC research project) were considered.

Minutes

3. The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2009 were agreed.

Matters arising

4. The appointment of David Freud had now been announced.
5. It was confirmed that the names of the Commission's two recent appointees (Dame Nuala O'Loan and Sir Jonathan Sacks) had been publicly announced on Monday 13 July. Photocopies of the press coverage were distributed for information. Generally it was felt that the announcement had been well received.



7. Proposals for legislation on House of Lords reform – the Chairman summarised his understanding of the key issues at the time of the meeting:

- Draft Constitutional Renewal Bill, to include some Lords reform provisions, planned for 2009/10 session.
- Draft House of Lords Reform Bill to be introduced in the next session, but unlikely to pass into law before the next General Election.

8. The Chairman outlined lines he intended to take at his forthcoming appearance before PASC. He would speak on a personal basis unless expressing a view held by the Commission as a whole, such as that Ministerial appointments should go through the Commission's vetting process.

9. The Chairman was due to meet the Leader of the Lords shortly to discuss how in future the Commission might give account of its work to the House of Lords.

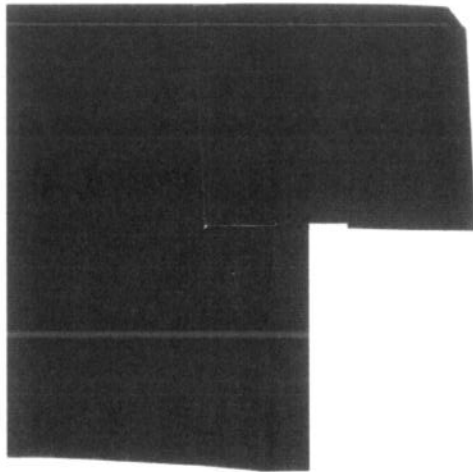
10. Approaches to Commission members:

- It was agreed that, if individual Commission members were approached privately by nominees or by supporters of nominees, they would stress that all Commission decisions were collective.

- To ensure clarity on the handling of prior knowledge of a nominee issue or when a Commission member was acquainted with a nominee, and as part of its review of procedures, the secretariat was asked to prepare a paper looking at the current "declaration of interests" form to ensure it is clear and meets current requirements.

Discussion of names/handling of outstanding nominations

- Since the last Commission meeting, 4 sub-committee meetings had been held to review all outstanding nominations in detail and to make recommendations to the full Commission.
- The decisions of the sub-committees had been communicated to all members for their consideration.
- All Commission members had subsequently notified the secretariat of the names of those nominees on the long-list who they wished to be considered for the next round of interviews.
- The secretariat had collated the submitted names into a short-list for further consideration by the Commission.
- The Commission considered and ratified the decisions of the sub committees and decided that the following nominees should be invited to interview in September/October:



- All nominees on Annex A will be sent letters by the secretariat over the next few weeks to advise them that their nomination will not be progressed any further.

Communications – Press Officer's Report

- The Press Officer gave a verbal report on those issues which had not already been covered earlier in the meeting, including the report and letter from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which had received publicity in the Sunday Times.

Freedom of Information – verbal update

11. The secretariat provided an update on the outstanding cases, including those which had been received since the last meeting.

Research Project

12. A written update had been provided by the secretariat, including the proposal produced by Dr Russell which had now been cleared by the Cabinet Office Finance Director for a single-tender procurement process.
13. The Commission felt that the proposal had captured the key aspects of their needs.
14. Dr Jarvis was asked to clarify whether, and by whom, the work will be checked and/or peer-reviewed prior to publication (if it is to be published).
15. It is planned that Dr Russell will update the Commission personally at their meeting on 15 October 2009.

Any other business

16. No further items were raised.

Commission Secretariat
July 2009