

HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE 48TH MEETING HELD ON 16TH APRIL 2008

Present: Lord Stevenson (Chairman)
Ms Angela Sarkis
Mrs Felicity Huston
Lord Hurd

Ms Geraldine Alexander - Secretariat
Mr Jim Barron – Secretariat
Mrs Paula Adshead – Secretariat
[REDACTED] - Secretariat

Apologies

1. There were apologies from Baroness Dean and Lord Dholakia.

Minutes

2. The minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2008 were agreed.

Chairman's update

3. The Commission's list of three nominees would be announced on the 17 April.
4. The Chairman had met the Prime Minister earlier in the week, who had praised the Commission's work. The PM had confirmed that the vacancies for independent members would be advertised shortly. It was noted that the party-political members' term was also due to expire at the end of June. The Chairman would contact Jeremy Heywood to remind him of this fact.
5. There was a possibility of a political list before the end of the current Commission's term. The PM was aware of the need to put forward a list soon if he wished the current Commission to vet it.

Freedom of Information

6. The Commission was updated on the case that had been referred to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) had issued a decision notice which instructed the Commission to release all the information in question other than that which was personal information. The secretariat had sought legal advice on the matter, and had written to the ICO to clarify the extent of the redactions allowed. The Commission was awaiting a response from the ICO. It was noted that a further two cases had been referred to the Information Commissioner.

Financial report

7. The Commission noted the financial report for 2007/08. It congratulated the secretariat on its management of the budget.

End of term and forthcoming work

8. It was agreed that the Commission should consider which nominees it was unlikely to appoint, and inform them of the decision. The Chairman would circulate a list of potential rejected nominees, for members to either add or remove names. The list could then be agreed by the Commission and letters sent to nominees.
9. The existing Commission would publish its last annual report in June, to coincide with the end of members' terms. The report would be an account of the entire life of the Commission, as well as the last year.
10. The Commission planned to recommend a small list in June, of five or less nominees. It was agreed that there were a number of high-quality nominees who had already been interviewed, who could be recommended.

[REDACTED]

As the Commission had identified [REDACTED] as one of its priority areas, it would interview the two nominees before agreeing its final list. It was decided that the Commission's other priority area - arts and culture - should be left to its new members to consider.

Commission Secretariat
April 2008