

HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE 64th MEETING HELD ON 17 January 2011

Present: Lord Jay (Chairman)
Baroness Campbell
Lord Hart
Prof Dame Joan Higgins
Lord Howard
Dr John Low

Geraldine Alexander (secretariat)
Matthew Carey (secretariat)
Richard Jarvis (secretariat)
Maggie O'Boyle (press officer)

Apologies

1. Apologies were received from Baroness Scott.

Chairman's update

2. The Chairman welcomed the new members to the Commission.
3. The Chairman updated the Commission on correspondence since the last meeting in November.
4. At the request of the Committee for Standards in Public Life, the Chairman had written a letter about the Commission's vetting process to inform the Committee's enquiry into Party-political funding. The Committee had subsequently invited Lord Jay to attend one of its meetings, a date for which was yet to be arranged.
5. Lord Jay would be appearing before the House of Lords Constitution Committee on 16 February. It was noted that Lord Hart was a member of the Committee, but that he planned to absent himself from that meeting.

Minutes of 62nd and 63rd meetings

6. The minutes of the meetings held on 20 October and 3 November 2010 were agreed.

Discussion on Lords reform

7. Lord Hunt of Wirral's report on retirement from the House of Lords was published on 13 January. The Commission noted the report but acknowledged that it had not yet been debated by the House.

8. The Commission discussed the progress of Lords reform. It agreed that it would continue in its work of appointing a small number of cross-bench peers but would keep the matter under review.

Consideration of HoLAC nominations (paper 3)

9. The Commission considered the paper on the handling of nominations. It agreed that members would review, before the next Commission meeting, the five nominations which had been either interviewed or retained for interview by the last Commission.
10. The Commission agreed that sub-committees should be set up to consider the 45 new nominations received since 1 September 2010. The importance of all members being involved in sub-committees and interview panels was noted.
11. It was suggested that there could be some minor changes to improve the nomination process. The secretariat was invited to develop a paper on this for consideration at the next Commission meeting.

Lobbying of the Commission (paper 4)

12. The Commission agreed its lobbying policy, as set out in the paper.

Vetting of party-political nominees (paper 5)

13. The Commission considered the paper on the vetting of party-political nominees and agreed that it was timely for the vetting criteria to be reviewed. The secretariat was invited to draft a paper for the next Commission meeting.

Communications

14. The press officer updated the Commission on recent press enquiries.

Freedom of information

15. The Commission was updated on recent FOI requests.

Any other business

16. Correspondence from [REDACTED] regarding the appointment of [REDACTED] in the party-political list was circulated and noted by the Commission.
17. The Commission agreed that it would continue to meet regularly. The secretariat would contact members to set up dates for the year ahead.