

## HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION

### MINUTES OF THE 60th MEETING HELD ON 26 MAY 2010

Present: Lord Jay (Chairman)  
Baroness Campbell  
Baroness Dean  
Lord Dholakia  
Prof Dame Joan Higgins  
Lord Hurd

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

#### Apologies

1. Apologies had been received from Baroness Dean and Dr John Low, both of whom the Chairman had spoken to in advance of the meeting.

#### Minutes of the 58<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Commission

2. The minutes of the previous meetings on 23 February and 13 April were agreed.

#### Chairman's update

3. The Commission's four cross-bench appointees had been announced and introduced to the House before the general election. There had been some factual media coverage of the appointments.
4. The Commission's annual report and the UCL research had been published.
5. The vetting of both the working peers list and the dissolution list was concluded, and the lists were likely to be announced later in the week.
6. The Chairman had appeared before the House of Lords Constitution Committee on 10 March. He welcomed the opportunity to report on the work of the Commission to a committee of the Upper House.
7. The Chairman reported on a number of meetings he had since the Commission last met. He had met [REDACTED] a former nominee, with whom he had discussed both [REDACTED] and the Commission's analysis of gaps in the House of Lords. Meetings had also been held with the leaders in the House of Lords of the three main parties, as well as with Baroness D'Souza. The Chairman had taken the opportunity to emphasise that the

Commission expected political parties to take responsibility for ensuring that checks were made on nominees before they were put to the Commission for scrutiny.

8. The Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 had been passed in the wash-up before the general election. The Commission noted that one effect of the Act was that members of the House of Lords were no longer able to have "non-dom" status.

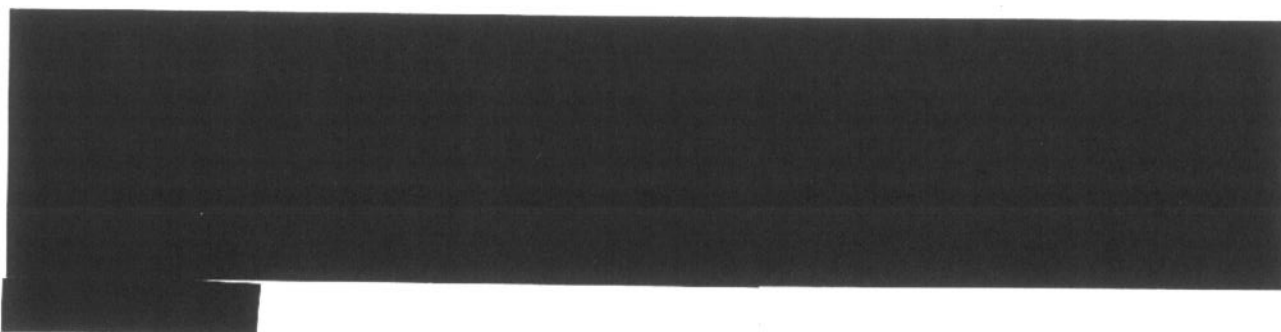
#### **Outcome of election: implications for the Commission**

9. The Commission discussed the implications of the coalition government's policy on Lords reform. It was agreed that the Commission would welcome clarity on its role and future work, and that therefore the Chairman should speak to Jeremy Heywood, Permanent Secretary at No.10.

#### **Outcome of election: handling strategy for nominations**

10. It was agreed that the Commission would continue with its sifting and would let nominees know the outcome, where possible, once there was more clarity on the future of cross-bench appointments. The Secretariat would circulate a list of unsuccessful nominees to all members as an aide-memoire before letters were sent to them.

#### **Vetting: Prime Minister's exception**



#### **Vetting: ministerial appointments**

12. The paper on ministerial vetting was considered. It was agreed that the Commission's recent experience of vetting ministers had been successful and that, wherever possible, it would wish to be asked to carry out this task in the future. The Commission considered that it had received sufficient information during the inevitably curtailed vetting process to make a proper decision on the candidates. It concluded that on this basis, it would normally be able to consider ministerial appointments against the usual definition of propriety. Given the short time involved, the Chairman, consulting as many other members as possible, would advise the Prime Minister on the propriety of nominees.
13. The Secretariat was invited to begin discussions on the agreement of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission and No.10. It was agreed that any document produced should be published.

**Communications**

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

**Freedom of Information**

15. The Commission had responded to a request for a review of a previous freedom of information request.

**Any other business**

16. The next meeting of the Commission was scheduled for 14 July 2010.

Commission Secretariat  
May 2010

