

## HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION

### MINUTES OF THE 50<sup>TH</sup> MEETING HELD ON 29<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2008

Present: Lord Stevenson (Chairman)  
Ms Angela Sarkis  
Mrs Felicity Huston  
Lord Hurd  
Lord Dholakia  
Baroness Dean  
Lord Jay (Chairman designate)

Ms Geraldine Alexander - Secretariat  
Dr Richard Jarvis – Secretariat  
Maggie O’Boyle – Secretariat  
Kate Campbell – Secretariat  
[REDACTED] - Secretariat

#### Apologies

1. There were no apologies.

#### Minutes

2. The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2008 were agreed.

#### Chairman’s update

3. The Commission welcomed that day’s announcement of two new independent members of the House of Lords – Susan Campbell and David Pannick QC.
4. It was also noted that the Annual Report 2007-08 had been published that day.
5. It was noted that the Commission was still awaiting the outcome of the hearing at the Information Tribunal.
6. Lord Jay updated the Commission on progress with the recruitment of three new independent members to the Commission.

#### Lessons learned

7. The Commission reflected on a number of issues that they felt would be useful for the incoming members to be aware of.
  - Handling nominations where the references present conflicting opinions or where a “cloud” had emerged over a certain individual. These situations were rare, but should be treated on a case by case basis as it would be hard to set common guidelines.

- A major learning point for the Commission had been to introduce the principle that a nomination should not be progressed if the nominee was not at that time resident in the UK for tax purposes. An undertaking to do so would not be considered acceptable.
  - It was noted that some nominated peers were not as visible in the House as the Commission had hoped. For some this may have been due to the stage of their career. It was, however, agreed that more could be done by working with the Convenor of the Cross Benches and potentially with an informal "mentoring" scheme to help those being introduced to the House in establishing an active role.
  - It was noted that there were a number of nominations being held over within the Commission, some of which dated back a number of years. These would need to be considered by the incoming Commission.
  - The Commission discussed how new nominations might be encouraged in the future. It was agreed that a large publicity drive would not be appropriate at this stage, but rather more focussed work based on identified gaps. Progress had been good with encouraging nominations from ethnic minorities, but there was still below average nominations from women, younger people and some faiths. It was also noted that nominations tended to be biased away from the regions because of the prominence of a London base in many peoples' careers.
  - Another issue for the incoming Commission to be aware of was newly created peers seeking to cross the House once appointed.
  - It was felt that the vetting of political appointments had been successful; however it was important that as much due diligence as possible was completed before the nomination was put to the Commission.
  - There was also some discussion about the Prime Minister's use of his ten exceptions.
8. Lord Stevenson closed his final meeting as Chair by thanking everyone involved with the Commission for their work over the past eight years.

Commission Secretariat  
September 2008