

HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE 46TH MEETING HELD ON 10TH DECEMBER 2007

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

Mr Jim Barron – Secretariat
Mrs Paula Adshead – Secretariat

Apologies

1. There were apologies from Geraldine Alexander of the Secretariat.

Minutes

2. The minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2007 were agreed.

Chairman's update

3. The Chairman and Lord Hurd had given evidence to PASC (Propriety and Honours) on 11 October. The Chairman had subsequently met Tony Wright MP who paid tribute to the work of both the Commission and its Secretariat. He expected to issue a report by the end of the year.
4. The Chairman had recently received a letter from [REDACTED]. It was agreed that the response would confirm that the Commission's selection processes were set out its website and that all of its decisions were collective. [REDACTED]
5. The Hansard report of Lord Steel's Bill was discussed. It was noted that there was a number of positive references to the Commission, particularly from Lord Bilimoria and Baroness D'Souza. The report also mentioned correspondence between the Commission and the Prime Minister regarding Lord Laidlaw and residency for tax purposes. It appeared that Lord Hunt had given Lord Oakeshott an understanding to show him the Prime Minister's letter. The Chairman had declined to release the correspondence in line with the Commission's policy of maintaining confidentiality on all communications with the Prime Minister.
6. The Commission was reminded about the nomination of [REDACTED]. Following further enquiries, it was agreed that he would not be suitable for appointment and

that the Commission should continue to look for a comparable nominee.

7. The Chairman had spoken to Gus O'Donnell about advertising for new Commission members. In the absence of a response, he would speak to him again in the New Year. It was suggested that he might also speak to Baroness Ashton, Leader of the House of Lords about the future of the Commission.

Appointments

8. Introducing the discussion of names, the Chairman stressed the importance of focussing on the under-represented areas in the House – Europe, security, environment, nursing, business and industry, arts and sport. With regard to the latter categories, the Chairman had been in contact with DCMS about possible nominees and members were asked to put forward their own suggestions.
9. The Commission had been impressed by the number of good candidates to emerge from recent interviews. It concluded that a small list of appointments should be announced in the New Year comprising [REDACTED] (the Chairman would speak to him first to confirm his availability).
10. The Chairman declared that [REDACTED] was being considered for an [REDACTED] (in which he had no involvement) and would undertake to mention this in his letter to the Prime Minister.
11. Following a discussion of other priority names, it was agreed that another list of appointments should be announced in March or April. The Chairman would write to Gus O'Donnell setting out the Commission's position regarding timings.
12. The Chairman agreed to circulate an email from [REDACTED] about one of the potential appointees, [REDACTED].

The next six months

13. It was agreed that preparations for a new Commission should be put in hand and members were asked to give some thought to how this should be organised. The Annual Report, which was due to cover the year up to the end of March, could be delayed by a few months to cover the end of the Commission's term.

Commission Secretariat
December 2007