

Attah, Ekpe - Cabinet Office

From: Alexander Geraldine - HOLAC (Cabinet Office)
Sent: 13 January 2011 09:07
To:
Subject: Watson/02 response email
Attachments: Public bodies review letter Oct 2010.pdf

Dear Mr. Watson

I am writing in response to your request of 14 December for information under the Freedom of Information Act. In relation to questions (a), (b), (c), (d) and parts (i)(A), (ii)(A) and (ii)(B) of question (e) the Commission does not hold any information.

In relation to question (e)(i)(B), I attach a letter received by the Chairman of the Commission, Lord Jay.

If you are unhappy with the decisions made in relation to your request you may ask for an internal review. Please contact

Dr Richard Jarvis
Head of Independent Offices
3rd Floor
35 Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BQ

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please quote the reference number in the title of this email in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Geraldine Alexander

Geraldine Alexander
HoLAC Secretariat
35 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BQ

Under the Freedom of Information Act, please provide me with:

- (a) All documents - including emails - submitted by your organisation to central government departments and/or government ministers, as part of the Coalition Government's Comprehensive Spending Review since 12th May 2010.

This would include any letters, briefings or option papers prepared by your organisation outlining the impact that changes and/or reductions to its budget(s) may have on the service(s) you deliver.

- (b) All documents - including emails - submitted by your organisation to central government departments or government ministers, as part of the Coalition Government's Public Bodies Review since 12th May 2010.

This would also include any letters, briefings or option papers prepared by your organisation outlining the impact that reform or abolition would have on the services you deliver.

- (c) Any revised business, explanatory papers, options papers or letters submitted by your organisation (including electronic communications) to central government departments or government ministers to accommodate changes to your organisation's budgets following this year's Comprehensive Spending review.

- (d) Any revised business, explanatory papers, options papers or letters submitted by your organisation (including electronic communications) to central government departments or government ministers to accommodate changes to your organisation's structure following this year's Public Bodies Review.

- (e) Any further correspondence (i) received by your organisation directly from ministers, or their offices, and (ii) sent to ministers, or their offices, regarding the affect of the (A) Comprehensive Spending Review and (B) Public Bodies Review on your organisation since 12 May 2010.

This would also include any written or electronic correspondence that details the process your organisation should follow in order to make such submissions to these reviews.

I understand that under the Act, I should be entitled to a response within 20 working days of your receipt of this email.

Some parts of this request may be easier to answer than others. Should this prove to be the case, I would ask that you release available data as soon as possible - rather than hold up the entire request.

I would prefer to receive this information electronically. If the decision is made to withhold some of this data using exemptions within the Act, please inform me of that fact and cite the exemptions used.

If you need any clarification then please contact me at the number below or via email. Under your section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance I would expect you to contact me if you find this request unmanageable in any way.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that you have received this request, and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours faithfully,

Tom Watson MP – West Bromwich East

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Alexis Cleveland
Director General
Corporate Services

Fifth Floor
22 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2WH

Web www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

**PROTECT – PERSONAL
UNTIL ANNOUNCEMENT ON 14TH OCTOBER**

Lord Jay of Ewelme GCMG
Chair, House of Lords Appointments Commission
35 Great Smith Street,
London SW1P 3BQ

13th October 2010

Dear Lord Jay

Public Bodies Review

You will be aware that the House of Lords Appointments Commission was part of the wider Public Bodies Review work undertaken by the Government over the summer. A decision has been made that no reforms are required to the Commission on the grounds of its impartiality function. The Minister for the Cabinet Office will be announcing the outcome of the Public Bodies Review tomorrow and, in respect of the Commission that you chair, it will say:

- House of Lords Appointments Commission– Retain on grounds of impartiality

The decision not to propose reform of the House of Lords Appointments Commission has been made in the context of the Public Bodies Review, on the basis of the three tests as follows:

- does it perform a technical function?
- does it need to be politically impartial?
- does it act independently to establish facts?

I would be grateful if you would not share this decision publicly until after the wider Government announcement by the Minister tomorrow, although you will no doubt wish to put in place arrangements for your Commission members and secretariat to be informed of the outcome following the public announcement.

Yours sincerely

Alexis Cleveland

Alexis Cleveland



HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION

35 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BQ
Information Pack: 020 7276 2315, General Enquiries: 020 7276 2005
Facsimile: 020 7276 2602
Internet: <http://lordsappointments.independent.gov.uk>
E-mail: enquiry@lordsappointments.x.gsi.gov.uk

9 February 2011

Dear

Freedom of Information Request:

Thank you for your letter of 19 January requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I will address each of your three requests for information in turn.

Firstly, you asked how much it costs to process, investigate, and assess each nomination received by the Commission. I am unable to provide the cost because the Commission does not hold this information. For your information, I enclose a copy of the most recent annual report, which contains a summary of the Commission's expenditure at paragraphs 26-27 (on page 5).

Secondly, you asked for the methodology used to assess whether a candidate meets the Commission's published criteria; whether there are any unpublished criteria; if so, what they might be; and whether there are any unpublished disqualifications. The assessment process and selection criteria against which all nominees are considered is published in the Commission's information pack and on its website, and I attach the relevant page from the website as an annex for ease of reference. I can confirm that the Commission does not use any unpublished criteria when assessing nominees and that there are no unpublished disqualifications.

Finally, you asked for any statistics the Commission might have about the backgrounds of those who have submitted applications; and specifically, how many have held paid public sector appointments; have private sector experience; or were London-based. The Commission does retain some monitoring data about those who have applied, including a record of their ethnicity, area of principal residence, average age and gender. I am happy to provide this information below. The monitoring data retained by the Commission is not sufficiently detailed to enable me

Members:

Baroness Campbell of Surbiton DBE, Lord Hart of Chilton, Professor Dame Joan Higgins,
Rt. Hon. Lord Howard of Lympne QC, Lord Jay of Ewelme GCMG (Chairman),
Dr. John Low CBE, Baroness Scott of Needham Market *

to provide you with a break-down of the number of applicants who have held public or private sector employment.

Statistics for nominations received since May 2000

1. Age and gender of nominees:

Number of nominees: 4,600
Number of male nominees: 3703 (80%)
Number of female nominees: 897 (20%)
Average age of male nominees: 56
Average age of female nominees: 54
Combined average: 55

2. Area of primary residence at time of nomination:

Area	Number of nominees	Percentage
East Anglia	273	6%
East Midlands	260	5%
Greater London	1324	29%
North East	131	3%
North West	374	8%
Northern Ireland	92	2%
Scotland	225	5%
South East	814	18%
South West	411	9%
Wales	50	1%
West Midlands	192	4%
Yorkshire	266	6%
Unknown	188	4%
Total:	4600	100%

3. Declared ethnic origin of nominees:

Ethnic origin	Number of nominees	Percentage
African	53	1%
Bangladeshi	42	1%
Caribbean	71	2%
Chinese	19	<1%
East African	37	1%
Indian	212	4%
Other Asian origin	52	1%
Other Black origin	9	<1%
Pakistani	128	3%
White	3769	82%
Other	95	2%
Not specified	113	2%
Total:	4600	100%

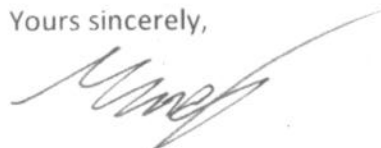
If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request or wish to request an internal review, you should write to:

Geraldine Alexander
Team Leader
House of Lords Appointments Commission
3rd Floor
35 Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BQ

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,



Matt Carey
Commission Secretariat

Enc

Annex A: excerpt from the House of Lords Appointments Commission's website setting out the nominations process and eligibility and selection criteria.¹

Nominations for Non-Party Political Membership of the House of Lords

The House of Lords Appointments Commission has two functions:

- to make recommendations for non-party political life peerages; and
- to vet nominations for life peers, including those made by the political parties, for propriety.

This page explains how to submit a nomination for non-party-political membership of the House of Lords. **Section 1** explains how to submit a nomination. **Section 2** sets out the assessment process, as well as the vetting checks undertaken by the Commission before it recommends individuals for appointment. **Section 3** contains information about membership of the House of Lords, including details of remuneration, which may be relevant to those thinking of submitting a nomination.

Section 1: How to apply

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

1.1. You are eligible for consideration as a non-party-political member of the House of Lords if you are over 21 years of age and are a British, Irish or Commonwealth citizen. You must also be resident in the United Kingdom for tax purposes and accept the requirement to remain so.

1.2. The Commission is committed to the independent and fair assessment of nominations against its stated criteria. Its recommendations will be made on merit and not on the basis of age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, background, religion, race, colour or ethnic origin. The Commission recognises the role it can play, through an open, meritocratic process, in ensuring that the composition and balance of the House better reflects the different experience and backgrounds of those living in the United Kingdom.

1.3. Building on the remit placed on it by the Government, the Commission seeks to recommend people:

- with a record of significant achievement within their chosen way of life that demonstrates a range of experience, skills and competencies;
- with the ability to make an effective and significant contribution to the work of the House of Lords, not only in their areas of particular interest and special expertise, but the wide range of other issues coming before the House;
- who are willing to commit the time necessary to make an effective contribution within the procedures and working practices of the House of Lords. This does not necessarily mean the same amount of time expected of "working peers". The Commission recognises that many active members continue with their professional and other working interests and this can help maintain expertise and experience;
- with some understanding of the constitutional framework, including the place of the House of Lords, and the skills and qualities needed to be an effective member of the House – for example, nominees should be able to speak with independence and authority;

¹ <http://lordsappointments.independent.gov.uk/nominations.aspx>

- who are able to demonstrate outstanding personal qualities, in particular, integrity and independence;
- with a strong and personal commitment to the principles and highest standards of public life;
- who are and intend to remain independent of any political party. Nominees and the Commission will need to feel confident of their ability to be independent of party-political considerations whatever their past party-political involvement. For this reason, all nominees are asked to respond to the questions on political involvement and activities which are similar to those used for most public appointments;
- who are resident in the UK for tax purposes and accept the requirement to remain so.

1.4. The Commission will apply these criteria consistently to all nominees. It continues to welcome views on the criteria and the assessment process, and how these might be developed further in the future. Any changes to the criteria will be published.

Submitting a Nomination

1.5. The Commission will consider self-nomination and nomination by another person or organisation. If you are nominating another person you should pass a copy of the nomination form, the Commission's criteria and the supporting information to your nominee. Alternatively, you can contact us with details of your nominee and we can send an information pack direct to him or her. Your nominee should then complete the nomination form and either return it direct to the Commission or ask you to do so on their behalf. You may wish to write to the Commission outlining the reasons for your nomination, paying particular attention to the Commission's criteria. While it would be helpful if such letters are attached to a completed nomination form, this is not essential and the Commission will ensure that all letters it receives are linked to the appropriate nomination.

1.6. All nominations will be considered against the same criteria regardless of whether they are self-nominations or nominations made by another person or organisation.

1.7. All nominees should complete the same nomination form, **addressing the Commission's criteria** [opens a new page]. This can be done in hard copy and sent to the Commission's offices at 35 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BQ or sent electronically by **email** [opens your default email editor]. A copy of the form can be found **here** [opens a Word document]. **Please read these notes carefully** before submitting a nomination [opens a Word document].

1.8. The Commission will find it helpful if a CV is provided to support the nomination form. It will help the Commission if this is set out in a way that relates to the Commission's criteria for assessing nominations.

1.9. There is no closing date for nominations. When the Commission began its task it set a closing date for its first round of recommendations. However, the nomination and assessment process is now a continuous one, with small numbers of recommendations being made at regular intervals.

1.10. All nominations are acknowledged within 15 working days of receipt. Please note, however, that it may be some considerable time before you hear about the outcome of your nomination. You are welcome to update your nomination at any time during this period.

1.11. If you wish to withdraw your nomination from consideration, please inform the Commission immediately. The Commission treats all nominations and supporting information in confidence.

References

1.12. The Commission believes that references play an essential part in assessing the quality and propriety of nominees. All references will be treated in confidence.

1.13. As a minimum, you are asked to provide details of two referees including a work-related referee (where relevant) and a personal referee. You may provide details of more referees if you think it will help the Commission with its assessment. Please include details of these with the nomination form.

1.14. Referees should be able to demonstrate their knowledge of a nominee and show how he or she could contribute to the work of the House of Lords.

1.15. Please note that, at this stage, the Commission only requires contact details for each referee. It is not necessary for written references to be included with nominations. The Commission may contact referees to request written references as part of the assessment process, and may also discuss a written reference with them.

Political activity and donations

1.16. You should be able to bring a perspective and contribution to the work of the House of Lords that is independent of party-political considerations. Party-political activity or membership of a political party is not a bar to nomination. However, nominees will need to satisfy themselves and the Commission that they are comfortable operating outside a party-political framework whatever their past involvement. The nomination form includes questions on current and past political activities that are similar to those used for most public appointments.

1.17. You must declare any donation – either of money or in kind - loan or credit arrangement made with a political party whether or not the donation, loan or credit arrangement was declarable to the Electoral Commission. This requirement covers all donations, loans or credit arrangements - regardless of when they were made - whether given directly by yourself or indirectly, for example, by a business or trust over which you exercise significant direction, or by a trade union of which you are or were an holder or major supporter. You must also declare any personal financial relationship between you and a senior member of a political party.

1.18. Donations, loans and credit agreements made to or with a political party by close family members, such as your spouse or partner, should also be declared, as should any close personal financial relationship between them and a senior member of a political party.

Section 2: The Assessment Process

2.1. The Commission's recommendations for appointment are made on the basis of individual merit and the ability to make an effective contribution to the work of the House of Lords.

2.2. The detailed assessment process is subject to review. However, in line with best practice, it broadly consists of five main stages:

Stage 1

Before the assessment begins, a number of objective checks on eligibility are made. For example, it is a statutory requirement that appointees to the Lords be UK, Commonwealth or Irish nationals, aged over 21. The Commission has also decided that nominees should be resident in the UK for tax purposes. Nominees who do not meet these criteria will not be considered further.

Stage 2

The Commission's Secretariat carries out the first sift. Each team member makes an initial assessment of the nomination against the published criteria. The team then discuss their separate assessments and agree a final recommendation for discussion by a sub-committee.

Stage 3

A sub-committee of the Commission meets to discuss the Secretariat's recommendations. The sub-committee considers all the nominations and ensures that the assessments are consistent with the selection criteria.

Stage 4

The Commission interviews the nominees it judges best meets the published criteria. The interview will also address the nominee's skills in relation to the role of a Peer. At least two of the Commission members, including the Chairman, meet each interviewee. References are usually taken up before this stage.

Stage 5

Following the interviews, the Commission reviews all the information about the shortlisted nominees before drawing up its final list of recommendations.

Interview

2.3. The Commission will call you for interview if you are being considered for recommendation. The Commission is likely to interview many more people than it is able to recommend.

Unsuccessful Nominations

2.4. Please be patient in following up your nomination. Do not expect a response within the same time as you would from a "normal" job application. The Commission may wish to consider nominations over a long period of time. Once the Commission has decided, however, not to recommend a nominee for appointment, it will let the nominee know as soon as possible. The Commission does not undertake to provide reasons as to why a nominee has been unsuccessful.

2.5. Please note that your nomination form will be destroyed three months after you are informed of the Commission's decision. Nomination forms and supporting material will not be returned. All nominees are welcome to submit a further nomination in the future, particularly if they have developed skills and experience relevant to the published criteria.

Checking or vetting nominations for propriety

2.6. The Commission is charged with vetting all recommendations for life peerages to ensure nominees have upheld the highest standards of propriety. This includes those nominees it wishes to recommend for non-party-political membership of the House of Lords.

2.7. The Commission will wish to be satisfied, amongst other things, that nominees are not and never have been a threat to the national security of the United Kingdom or any other country; that they have complied, in a straightforward way, with their obligations in relation to taxation and the receipt of benefits; and that there are no serious doubts about their integrity in relation to their working life. The Commission expects nominees to be resident in the United Kingdom for tax purposes.

2.8. Past criminal convictions will not automatically disqualify candidates. The Commission will take into account convictions for serious criminal offences but believes strongly in the rehabilitation of offenders. In that spirit, nominees are encouraged to provide details of convictions or any other matters that they believe should be brought to the Commission's attention.

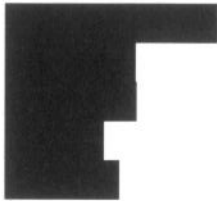
2.9. The Commission's scrutiny of nominations includes significant political donations made by nominees, using thresholds set by the Electoral Commission.

2.10. The nomination form includes a section requesting the nominee's consent to releasing information in the nomination form to enable further inquiries to be made. The Commission will need to check with former employers, Government departments and agencies, other organisations and individuals to provide an assurance as to the propriety of nominees. This will be done in confidence.

2.11. You can find out more about the Commission's vetting role [here](#) [opens a new page].

HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION

35 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BQ
Information Pack: 020 7276 2315, General Enquiries: 020 7276 2005
Facsimile: 020 7276 2606
Internet: <http://lordsappointments.independent.gov.uk>
E-mail: enquiry@lordsappointments.x.gsi.gov.uk



23 February 2011

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information Request: [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I will address each of your three requests for information in turn.

Firstly, you asked whether any individuals have been appointed to the House of Lords who have been members of one of the devolved assemblies, specifically the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, who have not been MPs. I can confirm that the Commission holds information on three individuals who meet these criteria.

Secondly, you asked for the names and party affiliation of any such individuals. I am able to provide you with the names and party affiliation of those (three) individuals who have been appointed to the House of Lords since the House of Lords Appointments Commission was established in May 2000, as follows:

Name and dates of appointment	Party
Lord (Michael) German; Appointed to the House of Lords 2010. Member of Welsh Assembly.	Liberal Democrat
Lord (Jack) McConnell of Glenscorrodale; Appointed to the House of Lords 2010; Member of Scottish Parliament.	Labour
Baroness (Jenny) Randerson; Appointed to the House of Lords 2010; Member of Welsh Assembly.	Liberal Democrat

In answer to your third question, I can confirm that members of the devolved assemblies are not barred from membership of the House of Lords.

Members:

Baroness Campbell of Surbiton DBE, Lord Hart of Chilton, Professor Dame Joan Higgins,
Rt. Hon. Lord Howard of Lympne QC, Lord Jay of Ewelme GCMG (Chairman),
Dr. John Low CBE, Baroness Scott of Needham Market

Finally, I should add that although the devolved assemblies in Wales and Scotland were created only a year before the Appointments Commission was established, you may wish to contact the House of Lords Information Office to find out whether any other such appointments have been made (on 020 7219 3107 or by email at: hinfo@parliament.uk). The biographies of members of the House of Lords are published on the Parliament website at: www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/lords/.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request or wish to request an internal review, you should write to:

Geraldine Alexander
Team Leader
House of Lords Appointments Commission
3rd Floor
35 Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BQ

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Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Matt Carey
Commission Secretariat