

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

**HOLAC (18)(1)  
HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION**

**MEETING**

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018 at Millbank House, London**

**Commission Members present:**

Baroness Browning, Lord Clark of Windermere, Baroness Scott of Needham Market, Lord Kakkar (Chairman), Lord Low of Dalston, Professor Gillian Peele, Sir Malcolm Ross

**Civil Service Commission**

Pete Lawrence, Alex Morrow, Maggie O'Boyle.

**Honours and Appointments Secretariat:**

Helen Ewen, Alison Bennett

**Apologies**

1. None

**Minutes of the last meeting HoLAC(17)(2)**

2. The Commission approved the minutes, subject to minor amendments.

**Chairman's Update**

3. The Chairman circulated a letter received from the Director General of the Propriety and Ethics Team, in relation to the transfer of secretariat responsibility from the Civil Service Commission to Honours and Appointments. The Commission was pleased to note that the level of support, and budget, will remain the same. It also noted that independent press office support would be retained.

4. The Chairman spoke about the Burns Report on the size of the House of Lords, and the expanded role for HOLAC that is envisaged. He made it clear in the debate in the House, and underlined this in conversation with the Speaker, that there remains a concern around the mechanism for deciding on suitability of a proposed peer. The

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Commission agreed it should not be drawn in to any controversy on the blurring of the line between suitability and propriety.

5. The Commission agreed that HOLAC would respond formally to the Lord Speaker's Committee if the Prime Minister signals the Government's intention to take up the recommendation in the Burns Report.

6. Maggie O'Boyle gave a communications update, and provided Members with an overview of a Sunday Telegraph story regarding HOLAC nominees.

7. The Chairman confirmed that some of the information used in the story had been derived from published redacted minutes. The Secretariat presented a paper detailing the method that had been used and the possible future steps for HOLAC in relation to security of information. Following discussion, the Commission agreed to report this issue in the Commission's Annual Report but that there was no requirement to report it to the Information Commissioner's office. In future, the minutes of the Commission's vetting discussion (containing sensitive personal information), will not be made public.

9. The Commission considered two individuals who were judged suitable for a peerage following interviews last year, but had been ranked fourth and fifth in that list. It also considered the names of those who had been retained after previous Commission meetings. Do we need to say anything here on the outcome?

**Commission Secretariat  
February 2018**