

**THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS
COMMISSION**

**Members of the Independent Expert Panel:
Nomination of Candidates**

Report presented to the House of Commons by the Speaker

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Commissioners

The Speaker (Sir Lindsay Hoyle) (Chair), The Leader of the House of Commons (Jacob Rees-Mogg), Valerie Vaz, Sir Charles Walker, Dame Rosie Winterton, Pete Wishart, Dr John Benger (Clerk of the House), Ian Ailles (Director General), Jane McCall (External member) and Dr Rima Makarem (External member).

Secretary to the Commission: Marianne Cwynarski.

Assistant Secretary: Robert Cope.

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Introduction

1. On 15 October 2018 Dame Laura Cox DBE published a report following her independent inquiry into the bullying and harassment of House staff. The report recommended that steps should be taken “to ensure that the process for determining complaints of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment brought by House staff against Members of Parliament will be an entirely independent process, in which Members of Parliament will play no part.”
2. On 23 June 2020 the House agreed to establish an independent panel of eight experts to determine complaints against Members brought under the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme. At the same time Standing Orders No. 150A to 150D were made and Standing Order No. 150 was amended to give effect to the resolution.
3. Standing Order No. 150C provides that Members of the Independent Panel shall be appointed by a resolution of the House and that the period of appointment of each member shall be specified in the resolution and shall not exceed six years. In July 2020 the House of Commons Commission agreed on a recruitment process which would meet the requirement in Standing Order No. 150C that it should be fair and open.
4. Posts were advertised on the Parliamentary website and through advertisement and search by recruitment consultants. There were 134 applicants. These were reduced through sifts and interviews to a shortlist of nineteen for final interview in October 2020 by a Selection Panel comprising Sarah Davies (Clerk Assistant and Chair of the selection panel), Saira Salimi (Speaker’s Counsel), Dame Laura Cox DBE (external member, author of the Cox Report) and Steven Haines (external member, lay member of the Bar Standards Board).
5. The Selection Panel made a report to the Commission, recommending eight candidates for appointment. The panel further recommended that four of the new appointments should be for a term of six years and four of the new appointments should be for a term of four years.

The nominated candidates

6. Following the exacting process set out above, the House of Commons Commission proposes the following eight candidates to the House:
 - Mrs Lisa Ball
 - Monica Daley
 - Mrs Johanna Higgins
 - Sir Stephen Irwin (Chair)
 - Professor Clare McGlynn
 - Miss Dale Simon
 - Sir Peter Thornton
 - Dr Matthew Vickers
7. The eight candidates represent a combination of experience and qualities which should reinforce public confidence in the independent element in the House's disciplinary processes for cases involving bullying and harassment and sexual misconduct.
8. In line with the Selection Panel's recommendation, the Commission proposes that Monica Daley, Miss Dale Simon, Sir Peter Thornton and Dr Matthew Vickers be appointed for a term of six years and Mrs Lisa Ball, Mrs Johanna Higgins, Sir Stephen Irwin and Professor Clare McGlynn for a term of four years.

ANNEX – BRIEF DETAILS OF NOMINATED CANDIDATES

MRS LISA BALL

Lisa Ball has two decades' experience determining cases and complaints in a range of fields including bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination, misconduct and professional standards. In 2008 she was appointed as one of the first independent members of the Armed Forces Service Complaints Panel and since 2009 she has also acted as the independent member of the Queen's Counsel Complaints Committee.

Lisa has previously served in various independent and lay roles and is a trained mediator.

MONICA DALEY

Monica Daley is a barrister of 25 years' standing. She has acted in a judicial capacity since 2006, first as a Fee-Paid Property Judge of the Residential Property Tribunal and also, more recently, as a fee-paid judge for both the Health and Social Care Tribunal and the Special Education and Disability Tribunal dealing with appeals in cases involving sensitive and confidential issues.

Monica brings her legal knowledge and experience to her current role as a legal assessor for the Fitness to Practise committee of the Nursing and Midwifery Council where she is responsible for advising on procedure and the law.

In 2015 she was appointed as one of the first cohorts of independent legal Chairs of the Police Misconduct committee for East England. This role involved making preliminary decisions and chairing cases involving a wide range of allegations of police misconduct.

MRS JOHANNA HIGGINS

Johanna Higgins is currently a Northern Ireland Commissioner for the Criminal Cases Review Commission, a panel member for the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution, and a panel member for the Civil Legal Services Appeal Panel, Northern Ireland.

Johanna is a barrister of 27 years call and has worked as a senior public prosecutor in Northern Ireland. She has extensive experience of criminal casework, criminal appeals, judicial review, historic cases, adjudication and community care law.

SIR STEPHEN IRWIN

Sir Stephen Irwin was appointed Lord Justice of Appeal in 2016 and acted as the supervising justice for extradition and national security cases until his retirement in October 2020. He is a member of the Privy Council and continues to sit part-time as a deputy Lord Justice of Appeal.

Stephen was a High Court judge from 2006 to 2016. Between 2013 and 2016 he was Chairman of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) and from 2011 to 2018 he was Chairman of the Judicial Security Committee responsible for judges' safety. He spent seven years as a tutor on the Judicial College leadership course.

Prior to his judicial career Stephen had extensive experience as a barrister, was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1997, and in 2004 took on the high-profile role of Chairman of the Bar for England and Wales.

PROFESSOR CLARE MCGLYNN QC (HONS)

Clare McGlynn is a Professor of Law at Durham University, with particular expertise in criminal law. A qualified solicitor, she was appointed QC (Hon) in 2020 in recognition of the influence of her research on law and policy reform, particularly image-based sexual abuse and extreme pornography.

Clare was a member of Durham University's Sexual Violence Taskforce and undertakes sexual violence and misconduct investigations within the university, as well as supporting other institutions regarding their sexual misconduct policies. She also has experience of adjudicating claims of bullying and harassment.

Clare has held several leadership roles at Durham including as Deputy Head (Research) of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health, Director of the ESRC Impact Acceleration Fund and member of its governing body, the University Council.

MISS DALE SIMON

Dale Simon is currently working as a Non-Executive Director at the Parole Board where she is a member of the Management Committee and the Chair of the Standards Committee. Dale also sits as an independent panel member for public appointments for the Ministry of Justice, acts as a lay chair of Fitness to Practice Hearings for the Nursing and Midwifery Council, and is a member of the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

Dale was an advocate consultant for Phase II of The Young Review with responsibility for liaising with statutory and voluntary organisations, taking forward the recommendations of the Young Review to reduce the disproportionality negative outcomes for young Black Asian and Minority Ethnic and/or Muslim men in the criminal justice system.

She is a qualified barrister (currently not practicing) and had an extensive career with the Crown Prosecution Service where she was the Director for Public Accountability and Inclusion and had corporate responsibility for hate crime and violence against women and girls. She also spent three years as Head of the Office for Judicial Complaints handling serious and sensitive judicial investigations.

In 2013 Dale was awarded a CBE for services to equality and diversity.

SIR PETER THORNTON QC

Sir Peter Thornton is a retired judge. He was a Senior Circuit Judge between 2007 and 2016 sitting at the Central Criminal Court, hearing cases involving murder, terrorism and serious sexual offences. He also sat as an appellate judge in the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) and in the High Court on inquest appeals.

Peter was the first person to hold the post of Chief Coroner of England and Wales, between 2012 and 2016. In that role he led the coroner service into a new era, with reform, modernisation, reduction of delays, extensive programmes of training, revision of draft regulations and new written guidance.

Peter has chaired five appeals and disciplinary panels, including misconduct panels for academic staff at University College London. He is currently a Visiting Professor at King's College London and trains judges in the UK and abroad.

DR MATTHEW VICKERS

Matthew Vickers is currently Chief Ombudsman and Chief Executive of Ombudsman Services, which is the UK's energy and telecommunications ombudsman. He is responsible for procedural and administrative justice, ensuring that investigations are carried out with empathy and balance and that decisions are consistent and well-reasoned.

Matthew was previously CEO of the Scottish Legal Complaints Commission (SLCC) which is responsible for the investigation of complaints about the legal profession in Scotland. In that role he was responsible for establishing the SLCC's credibility and legitimacy with the public and legal profession.

Matthew has also worked for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and in various commercial and not-for-profit organisations.