

**Conduct Committee
Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 4 November at 4pm via MS Teams**

Present:

B. Anelay of St Johns	Vanessa Davies
L. Brown of Eaton-under-Heywood	B. Donaghy
Cindy Butts	B. Hussein-Ece
Mark Castle	L. Mance (Chair)
Andrea Coomber	

With the Clerk of the Parliaments

DELIBERATION IN PRIVATE

1. Deliberation in private (1555 – 1600)

The Committee deliberated in private to prepare for the oral hearing.

2. Oral appeal from Lord Ahmed against the findings and recommended sanction of the Commissioner for Standards (1600 – 1630)

The Committee heard an oral appeal from Lord Ahmed, accompanied by Mr Imran Khan QC. Under the rules set out in the Code, legal advisers are not permitted to speak during the oral appeal. The Committee asked some follow-up questions directly related to issues raised in Lord Ahmed's oral appeal.

3. Deliberation in private (1630 – 1700)

The Committee noted amendments to the minutes of the meeting on 29 October. The minutes of the meeting on 29 October were agreed.

The Committee considered the issues raised in Lord Ahmed's oral appeal and his responses to follow-up questions. The Committee agreed that they had no further questions to ask Lord Ahmed. The Clerk to the Committee privately informed Lord Ahmed that he would not be required to return to the meeting for further questions.

The Committee considered the issues raised in Lord Ahmed's oral appeal and those raised in his written appeal documents. After discussion the Committee agreed to uphold all of the Commissioner's findings.

The Committee considered how much of the original report, the supplementary report and the appeal material should be published.

4. Break in meeting (1700 – 1730)

The Committee adjourned for 30 minutes to allow the Chair to attend another meeting.

5. Meeting resumes, deliberation in private continues (1730 – 1830)

The Committee considered the draft report (COND/19-21/70) and made a number of textual amendments. The Clerk to the Committee would amend the draft report and send it back to the Committee for final approval. Subject to these amendments, the Committee agreed the draft report.

The Committee considered the sanction brief document (COND/19-21/71). The meaning of expulsion from the House was clarified, and the Committee noted that Lord Ahmed would retain his title following expulsion. The Committee noted that throughout the appeal process Lord Ahmed had failed to show any remorse, accept any responsibility or demonstrate any understanding of what Ms Zaman had been through as a result of his actions. It was agreed that this was a significant factor in deciding the sanction.

The Committee discussed the threshold for expulsion from the House, and it was agreed that Lord Ahmed's actions satisfied this threshold. The Committee therefore agreed to the Commissioner's recommended sanction of expulsion.

The Committee considered the publication timetable for the report. It was noted that Lord Ahmed had a criminal trial scheduled to start in late January 2021 and that the Committee's report should be published as far in advance of this date as possible. The Committee also agreed that the motion should be moved by Lord Mance in the Chamber as soon as possible after publication.

The Committee discussed how communications should be managed following the publication of the report.

Chloe Mawson
Clerk to the Conduct Committee
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