



HOUSE OF LORDS

6th meeting
COND/22-23

Conduct Committee

Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 22 March 2023 at 4pm in 2-03, Millbank House and via MS Teams

Present:

Lord Blair of Boughton
Cindy Butts (via Teams)
Mark Castle (via Teams)
Andrea Coomber (via Teams)
Vanessa Davies (via Teams)

Lord Garnier
Baroness Mallalieu
Baroness Manningham-Buller (Chair)
Lord Scriven

With the Clerk Assistant.

DELIBERATION IN PRIVATE

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed Thea Walton, the new ICGS Director, and Sarah Petit, the House of Commons Cultural Transformation Director, to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the meeting on 22 February 2023

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

3. Oral update by the Chair

The Chair updated the Committee on Lord Maginnis of Drumglass, who was reported to have confirmed that he would not be undertaking the behaviour training required for his suspension from the House to end.

4. Commissioners' office oral update

Michael Torrance (Standards Clerk) updated the Committee on current investigations.

5. ICGS oral update

Thea Walton (ICGS Director) introduced herself to the Committee.



6. ICGS review

Note by the House of Commons Cultural Transformation Director (COND/22-23/22)

Sarah Petit (House of Commons Cultural Transformation Director) introduced her paper and presented two further points about balancing transparency and confidentiality, and the geographical scope of the ICGS.

The Chair noted that the relationship between the ICGS and the Lords differs from that between the ICGS and the Commons.

The Committee discussed the scope of the ICGS, with particular regard to non-parliamentary duties and activities, the concept of disrepute, and quality assurance. The Committee expressed concern over conducting ICGS reviews too frequently and too soon after recent ICGS changes. The Committee took note of the forthcoming review.

7. Draft consultation on parliamentary advice and services

Note by the Registrar of Lords' Interests (COND/22-23/23)

Tom Wilson (Registrar of Lords' Interests) introduced his paper. The Committee discussed the desired audience for the consultation. Some felt that external bodies should be consulted, but others felt that the consultation should be focused on members. It was pointed out that the scope of the review was quite narrow, in that it focused on clarification rather than substantive changes, so consulting externally might raise false expectations. The Committee *agreed* that the consultation should focus on members of the House, but that the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) should also be consulted as the Code had originally been based on their proposals. The Chair would seek a meeting with the Chair of the CSPL, Lord Evans of Weardale.

The Committee discussed the timing of the consultation. The Committee agreed that the consultation should take place after the Easter recess, and that any resulting amendments to the Code and Guide should be packaged up with the Committee's other proposed changes in the forthcoming 'compendium' report.

The Committee discussed the draft consultation document. Members emphasised that the document and the Code should be simple and easy to read. The Committee agreed that the phrase "on occasion" should be used in paragraph 20 of the Guide, and that the phrase "issue-related" be removed from paragraph 28.



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8. Any Other Business

The Committee discussed preparation for the joint meeting with the Commons' Standards Committee. Tom undertook to produce a briefing note for that meeting.

The joint meeting with the Commons' Standards Committee would take place in Committee Room 4A and on Teams at 3pm on 19 April. The Conduct Committee meeting would take place directly afterwards.

The Committee adjourned.

Christopher Johnson
Clerk to the Conduct Committee
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