

Committee on Standards

Influencing Code of Conduct investigations

Sixth Report of Session 2024–26

HC 1571

Committee on Standards

The Committee on Standards is appointed by the House of Commons to oversee the work of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, except in relation to the conduct of individual cases under the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme; to examine the arrangements proposed by the Commissioner for the compilation, maintenance and accessibility of the Register of Members' Financial Interests and any other registers of interest established by the House; to review from time to time the form and content of those registers; to consider any specific complaints made in relation to the registering or declaring of interests referred to it by the Commissioner; to consider any matter relating to the conduct of Members, including specific complaints in relation to alleged breaches in the Code of Conduct which have been drawn to the Committee's attention by the Commissioner; and to recommend any modifications to the Code of Conduct as may from time to time appear to be necessary.

Current membership

[Alberto Costa](#) (Conservative; South Leicestershire) (Chair)

[Paula Barker](#) (Labour; Liverpool Wavertree)

[Gill Furniss](#) (Labour; Sheffield Brightside and Hillsborough)

[Sir Francis Habgood](#) (Lay member)

[Prof Michael Maguire](#) (Lay member)

[Mehmuda Mian](#) (Lay member)

[Dr Rose Marie Parr](#) (Lay member)

[Anna Sabine](#) (Liberal Democrat; Frome and East Somerset)

[Dr Neil Shastri-Hurst](#) (Conservative; Solihull West and Shirley)

[Victoria Smith](#) (Lay member)

[Gareth Snell](#) (Labour; Stoke-on-Trent Central)

[Dr David Stirling](#) (Lay member)

[Michael Wheeler](#) (Labour; Worsley and Eccles)

[Carys Williams](#) (Lay member)

Powers

The constitution and powers of the Committee are set out in Standing Order No.149. In particular, the Committee has power to order the attendance of any Member of Parliament before the Committee and to require that specific documents or records in the possession of a Member relating to its inquiries, or to the inquiries of the Commissioner, be laid before the Committee.

The Committee has power to refuse to allow its public proceedings to be broadcast. The Law Officers, if they are Members of Parliament, may attend and take part in the Committee's proceedings, but may not vote.

Publication

This Report, together with formal minutes relating to the Report, was Ordered by the House of Commons, on 11 December 2025, to be printed. It was published on 11 December 2025 by authority of the House of Commons. © Parliamentary Copyright House of Commons 2025.

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Contacts

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Influencing Code of Conduct Investigations

1. On 24 September, Calvin Bailey MP wrote to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards in relation to an investigation presently under way into the conduct of another Member of the House of Commons. Rule 14 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the House states that Members must not lobby the Commissioner in a manner calculated or intended to influence his consideration of whether a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred, or in relation to the imposition of a sanction. The Commissioner cannot rectify cases in which he has been lobbied, so referred this case to the Committee on Standards. We agree that Mr Bailey breached the rule. Mr Bailey has accepted that, has apologised to the Commissioner and has sought to withdraw his letter.
2. We have chosen to publish this brief report to deal speedily with Mr Bailey's breach. We are unable to publish a full report on his conduct at this stage because the case about which Mr Bailey approached the Commissioner remains unresolved and we would seek not to breach confidentiality in relation to that case or potentially to affect its progress. We will publish our full findings on Mr Bailey and the Commissioner's memorandum to us in due course once proceedings in the other case conclude.
3. We concur, however, with the Commissioner's view that the breach is minor and inadvertent. Mr Bailey's action, no matter how well intentioned, was muddled and clearly inappropriate. He has learned a lesson and has promised to reflect on how more properly to raise matters in future.
4. **CONCLUSION**
We consider that no further action is necessary in relation to Calvin Bailey's breach of Rule 14 of the Code.

5. We take this opportunity to remind all Members of the House that seeking to influence the outcome of an investigation is a breach of the Code of Conduct. Rule 14 of the Code reads:

Members must not lobby a member of the Committee on Standards, the Independent Expert Panel or the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, or their staff, in a manner calculated or intended to influence their consideration of whether a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred, or in relation to the imposition of a sanction.

Formal minutes

Tuesday 9 December 2025

Members present:

Alberto Costa, in the Chair

Paula Barker

Sir Francis Habgood

Michael Maguire

Mehmuda Mian

Dr Rose Marie Parr

Anna Sabine

Dr Neil Shastri-Hurst

Victoria Smith

Gareth Snell

Dr David Stirling

Michael Wheeler

Carys Williams

Dr Neil Shastri-Hurst declared that he would take no further part in the inquiry.

Influencing Code of Conduct investigations

Draft report (*Influencing Code of Conduct investigations*) proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 5 read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Sixth Report of the Committee to the House.

None of the lay members present wished to submit an opinion on the Report (Standing Order No. 149(8)).

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Adjournment

The Committee adjourned.

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the [publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Session 2024–26

Number	Title	Reference
3rd	Register of Interests of Members' Staff	HC 943
2nd	Andrew Bridgen	HC 832
1st	Bob Stewart	HC 455
2nd Special	Register of Interests of Members' Staff: Government Response	HC 1176
1st Special	1st Special - The House of Commons standards landscape: how MPs' standards and conduct are regulated: Government Response	HC 637