



HM Government

Dame Antonia Romeo DCB
Cabinet Secretary and
Head of the Civil Service
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall, London
SW1A 2AS

The Rt Hon Baroness Laing of Elderslie DBE
Chair of the Constitution Committee

By email

2nd June 2026

UPDATING THE CABINET MANUAL

Dear Chair,

I am writing to inform you that the Prime Minister has announced today that the Government will update the Cabinet Manual, to ensure it remains an authoritative record of the UK's constitutional arrangements. He has made a Written Ministerial Statement to set out the decision and rationale to the House, repeated in the Lords by The Rt Hon Baroness Smith of Basildon (HCWS78).

In line with previous recommendations from your committee, this update will ensure the Manual reflects the current constitutional landscape while retaining its authority as a factual and neutral record. The update provides an opportunity to restate the rules and conventions of our system, in the context of the Government's commitment to high standards in public life, helping to make the UK's system and the workings of government more transparent and accessible.

As set out in the PM's statement, the Government will seek feedback from your committees on draft text. The Manual sets out constitutional arrangements from the perspective of the Executive, and so while the Government will not seek Parliament's approval of the text, this engagement is intended to provide a meaningful opportunity

for MPs and peers to support the drafting process. This will ensure the Manual continues to be a non-party-political record of fact.

The Cabinet Manual update is part of a wider programme of work to strengthen the operation of government, including the Review into the Organisation, Performance and Transformation of the permanent Civil Service, which I have agreed with the Prime Minister that I will lead, and which will report in a similar timeframe to the updated Cabinet Manual.

The Government's ambition is to publish the second edition of the Manual in early 2027. This would mean sharing draft text with your committees in the Autumn, and I hope your committee can support us to maintain this timeline. My team will engage with your clerks so that committee members can prepare accordingly.

I am writing in similar terms to the Chair of the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee.

I look forward to working with you and your committee on this important endeavour.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Yan ever' followed by a stylized monogram 'ARW'.

DAME ANTONIA ROMEO DCB
Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service