

**THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS
COMMISSION**

**External members of the House of
Commons Commission: nomination of
candidates**

Report presented to the House of Commons by the Speaker

Ordered by The House of Commons to be printed 18 May 2021

Commissioners

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

Secretary to the Commission: Marianne Cwynarski CBE.

Assistant Secretary: Robert Cope.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

External members of the House of Commons Commission: nomination of candidates

Introduction

1. Since the 2014 Report by the House of Commons Governance Committee, and the subsequent passing of the House of Commons Commission Act 2015, the Commission has been required to have two external members who are appointed by Resolution of the House. The external members cannot be Members of either House or members of staff of either House.
2. Since the addition of the external members, the practice has been to appoint each for an initial period of three years, with the option of extension for a further two years.
3. Jane McCall served as an external member on the Commission for over five years, and her appointment ended on 30 April, having been extended by the House in January to allow time for the recruitment of her successor. Rima Makarem's three-year term will end on 30 September. However, owing to other commitments, she has given notice that she will not be seeking an extension to her appointment.

Recruitment process

4. In February, the Commission agreed the recruitment process to appoint a new external member, including the following essential and desirable skills and experience required for the successful candidate:

Essential

- Senior executive leadership experience within a complex organisation in either the private, public or not-for-profit sectors.
- Experience of non-executive work on public or private sector boards, including participation in ancillary non-executive duties such as senior appointment processes.
- Excellent analytical skills combined with strong decision-making skills that have been tested and proven on complex and sensitive issues.
- Extensive experience of successfully managing relationships with a range of senior stakeholders, which demonstrates the ability to work in a complex political environment.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills, with the ability to inspire confidence and respect.
- A commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Desirable

- Experience of assurance and/or audit processes.
 - A combination of commercial and public sector experience.
 - Familiarity with the workings of Parliament.
 - Experience of leading and managing major programmes of organisational change, OR experience of the delivery of digital or estates projects.
5. The post was advertised online in one of the main broadsheets, on the House of Commons careers site, the Cabinet Office website for public appointments, the Civil Service jobs website, two non-executive director websites, and the Vercida website.
 6. In March, a sifting panel, consisting of the then Shadow Leader of the House, Valerie Vaz MP, the Clerk of the House, Dr John Benger, and the Secretary to the Commission, Marianne Cwynarski CBE, shortlisted four candidates for interview by the selection panel in April.
 7. The selection panel comprised:
 - Mr Speaker (Chair)
 - Leader of the House, Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP
 - Shadow Leader of the House, Rt Hon Valerie Vaz MP
 - Isabel Doverty, a former Civil Service Commissioner
 - Clerk of the House, Dr John Benger
 - Secretary to the Commission, Marianne Cwynarski CBE

The nominated candidates

8. Following the process set out above, the selection panel recommended to the Commission that Louise Wilson and Shrinivas Honap be nominated as its new external members, with Louise replacing Jane McCall, and in due course, Shrinivas replacing Rima Makarem. The expectation is that both will also serve on the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, and that Shrinivas will replace Rima Makarem as chair of that committee.
9. Louise Wilson is a business leader with an international career combining commercial expertise with extensive non-executive experience in the public, private and charitable sectors. She established her career at Accenture and gained global marketing and commercial expertise at Procter & Gamble, Pepsi-Co and The Coca Cola Company. She founded an international marketing and sponsorship company, and following London's successful bid, served as the Client Services Director of the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games.
10. She has previously undertaken non-executive roles across a range of business and charitable organisations spanning education, heritage, culture, visitor attractions, faith and diversity including, Historic Royal Palaces, the University of Nottingham,

DRET Education Academy Trust, the International Women's Forum, Harvard Vatican Leadership Trust, the Marketing Group of Great Britain, The Queen's Commonwealth Trust and currently with the Northern Ireland Office and the National Emergencies Trust.

11. Shrinivas Honap is a chartered accountant by profession and served with Vodafone, Capita, KPMG and Egg during his executive career. He currently holds the following non-executive roles: Chair at the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency, Non-Executive & Chair of Audit at UK Atomic Energy Authority, Office of the Public Guardian, Rural Payments Agency, and Low Level Waste Repository Ltd, and has recently been appointed to the Civil Service Pensions Board. He also serves as a lay member for the Speaker's Committee on the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority and panel member at the Competition and Market Authority and Pensions Determination Panel.
12. He has previously served as Non-Executive in the NHS, British Transport Police and Office of Legal Complaints. His particular interests are in large transformation programmes, risk management, finance and developing technology.
13. The Commission believes that both candidates bring a diverse range and depth of experience. This will hugely benefit the work of the Commission in the coming years as the House of Commons Administration prepares for the challenges of Restoration and Renewal, the adoption of new ways of working in light of the experience of the pandemic, and the implementation of a refreshed strategy for the House Service.
14. All the candidates were required to provide written declarations regarding past political activity and potential conflicts of interest. In the case of both candidates, the selection panel was satisfied that neither had undertaken any political activity within the last five years that might affect the perception of their political impartiality. The panel was also satisfied that neither candidate had any private, voluntary, charitable, or political interests that might pose a conflict of interest in conducting the role of external member of the Commission.
15. As such, the House of Commons Commission recommends that the House appoint both candidates as external members, each for an initial period of three years.