



HOUSE *of* LORDS

INFORMATION

THE ELECTION AND ROLE OF THE NEW LORD SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS - BRIEFING

Why is the House of Lords electing a Speaker?

On 12 June 2003 the Prime Minister's Office announced changes including an end to the judicial function of the Lord Chancellor and his role as Speaker of the House of Lords, the creation of a Department for Constitutional Affairs and new arrangements for Judicial appointments.

The House of Lords appointed a select committee on the Speakership of the House in 2003 and again in 2005, both chaired by Lord Lloyd of Berwick. The committees' recommendations form the basis of the arrangements for a Lord Speaker which the House has agreed.

What is the timetable for the election?

5 June (5pm)	Closing date for candidatures
6 June	Candidates list published and sent to all members of the House of Lords, together with a statement of each candidate's parliamentary service, their entry in the Register of Lords' Interests, and election addresses of up to 75 words
7 June	Ballot papers for those requesting a postal vote
28 June (10am to 8pm)	Voting
4 July (2.30pm)	Results announced

How will the result be announced?

On 4 July the Lord Chancellor, Lord Falconer of Thoroton, will process into the Chamber for prayers as usual. The Clerk of the Parliaments will announce the name of the successful candidate after prayers (i.e. shortly after 2.30pm). The Lord Chamberlain will signify Her Majesty's approval from the Despatch box. The new Lord Speaker will then take over the Woolsack from the Lord Chancellor.

Will the role of the new Lord Speaker differ from that of the current Lord Chancellor in exercising his duties as Speaker?

Unlike the Lord Chancellor the Lord Speaker:

- will be able to offer procedural advice to the House, except at question time

- will take the chair in Committee of the whole House
- will make the preliminary decision on Private Notice Questions
- will decide on the *Sub judice* rule
- will act as an ambassador for the House of Lords both in the UK and abroad
- will chair the House Committee will be responsible for security
- is not appointed by the Prime Minister is elected by the House
- is not a member of the Cabinet and has no government department
- has no judicial role in the House of Lords.

What title will the Speaker have?

The Lord Speaker (whether a man or a woman).

Will the role of the Speaker affect the current roles of the Leader of the House, the Government Chief Whip and the Chairman of Committees?

The role of the **Leader of the House** during question time will not be affected but preliminary decisions on Private Notice Questions and the Sub judice rule will transfer to the new Lord Speaker.

The **Government Chief Whip** will continue to advise the House on speaking times in debates, but the new Lord Speaker will be able to assist on questions of procedural guidance.

The **Chairman of Committees** will remain the spokesman of the House Committee but will cease to be its Chairman. The Lord Speaker will also assume responsibility for security of the House of Lords parts of the parliamentary estate.

Will the Speaker be elected for a fixed term?

The Lord Speaker is elected for a maximum of five years and may serve for no more than two terms.

How much will the Speaker be paid?

The Lord Speaker's salary will be £102,685. This is the same salary as a Cabinet Minister in the Lords. In addition the Lord Speaker will be entitled to an office-holder's allowance, currently £33,990 (220 times the overnight allowance for backbench members), or a London Supplement of £1,667.

[MORE]

Will the Lord Speaker be able to claim any other allowances?

The Lord Speaker will be able to recover the same expenses as other office-holders, namely:

- secretarial expenses incurred in respect of Parliamentary duties, subject to an annual limit of £5,025 per annum. (Secretarial support will be provided for Speaker duties – see below)
- travelling expenses between home and the House of Lords
- expenses of a spouse or civil partner and dependent children travelling to a parliamentary occasion in London (subject to a maximum of 15 return trips per person per annum).

How will the Lord Speaker differ from the Speaker of the House of Commons?

The House of Lords remains self-regulating. The Lord Speaker has no power to act in the House without the consent of the House so:

- will not call the House to order or rule on points of order as the Commons Speaker does
- will not call members to speak
- will not select amendments.

How many Deputy Speakers will there be?

There will be about 12 deputies. (There are presently 25 Deputy Speakers)

How are they chosen?

Each session the House appoints a panel of Deputy Chairmen, nominated by the Committee of Selection. From time to time Her Majesty the Queen appoints current members of the panel as Deputy Speakers.

What ceremonial duties will the Speaker perform?

The Lord Speaker:

- will participate in the State Opening of Parliament (but he/she will not hand the Speech to Her Majesty the Queen)
- will take part in state and parliamentary events in Westminster Hall
- will usually be a member of the Royal Commission for Prorogation (the means by which a session of Parliament is prorogued – i.e. brought to an end).

What will the Lord Speaker wear?

In the Chamber the Lord Speaker will wear a gown but no wig. On ceremonial occasions they will wear either parliamentary robes or ceremonial robes in black with a gold trim.

How much will the robes cost?

The gown for the Chamber will be approximately £700. The black and gold robes will cost approximately £10,000.

What staff will the Speaker have?

The Lord Speaker will have one Private Secretary and one Personal Secretary.

What office and other accommodation will the Lord Speaker have?

The Lord Speaker and associated staff will take over some of the office accommodation currently occupied by the Lord Chancellor and his staff. The rest of the office accommodation will return to the House of Lords for its use, in due course.

Some of the current Lord Chancellor's apartment (the residence) will be used by the Lord Speaker for example, meeting visiting parliamentarians. There will be overnight accommodation but the apartment will not be used as a residence. The rest will be used by the House itself. The River Room will remain the principal State Room of the House of Lords and will be used, as now, for official entertaining.

11 MAY 2006

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