Committee on Standards

Website www.parliament.uk/standards

From Kate Green MP, Chair of the Committee

Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP
Leader of the House of Commons

12 September 2019

Dear Jacob,

Committee on Standards: re-appointment in new Parliament

In previous Parliaments there has often been a long interval between the House re-assembling and the re-appointment of the Committee on Standards. In 2017, the House first met on 13 June but it was not till 14 November that the first meeting of the Committee was held.

Other select committees in the current Parliament were appointed somewhat earlier. As you know, it is customary to give priority to re-establishing the Committee of Public Accounts (PAC), because of the importance of its work in scrutinising government spending. PAC held its first meeting in this Parliament on 12 September 2017.

I am writing on behalf of the Committee on Standards to argue that it should be given similar priority in the next Parliament. Since July 2018 the Committee has been given responsibility for considering appeals under the House’s new Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme (ICGS), aimed at tackling bullying and harassment, and sexual harassment. These cases impact directly on the rights of individuals, including House staff and others as well as Members. It is important in the interests of natural justice and fairness to the parties that appeals as well as other stages in the ICGS process are dealt with expeditiously. A general election and its aftermath will inevitably result in an extension to the time taken to process ICGS cases. We do not think it would be right for this situation to be exacerbated by any avoidable delay in re-appointing the Committee on Standards.

I am therefore writing to urge that everything possible is done in the new Parliament by the ‘usual channels’ and the political parties to ensure that the Committee on Standards is re-appointed at the earliest possible opportunity.

I am writing in similar terms to the Shadow Leader of the House and to the chief whips of the four largest parties in the House.

Yours ever,

KATE GREEN MP

CHAIR, COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS