

**SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE
ELECTORAL COMMISSION
FORMAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 6 JULY 2010 AT 11.00 am
SPEAKER'S HOUSE**

Present:

Rt Hon John Bercow, Speaker (<i>ex officio</i>), in the Chair	
Mr Graham Allen MP (<i>ex officio</i>)	Mr Gary Streeter MP

Apologies: Rt Hon. Kenneth Clarke MP, Secretary of State for Justice, Rt. Hon. Sir Gerald Kaufman MP

1. Report on nominated commissioners

The Committee agreed its first report 2010, to be published on Wednesday 14 July 2010

2. Electoral Commission: London Accommodation Project
3. Electoral Commission: Public Awareness Spending
4. Electoral Commission: Additional costs of a UK referendum

The Committee discussed these issues.

The Committee discussed items 2,3 and 4 with the following representatives of the Electoral Commission:

Jenny Watson, Chair
Mr Peter Wardle, Chief Executive
Carolyn Hughes, Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Mr Stephen Rooney, Director of Communications

The Commission representatives withdrew
The Committee further discussed these issues.

5. Decisions of the Committee

London Accommodation Project. The Committee agreed that it was content with the Electoral Commission's proposed plan.

Public Awareness Campaigns. The Committee agreed that the campaigns listed by the Commission should be designated as 'essential'.

UK-wide referendum. The Committee gave its agreement in principle to the Commission's proposed spending in preparation for a UK-wide referendum, to be found from existing resources, in advance of a probable Winter Supplementary Estimate.

6. Any other business

The Committee took note of correspondence from Mr Peter Wardle, Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission, and from Alan Cogbill, Chief Executive of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, detailing each organisation's response to public spending controls.

(Adjourned to a date and time to be decided by the Chair)

SCEC FM 02

**SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE
ELECTORAL COMMISSION
FORMAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 13 OCTOBER 2010 AT 3.00 pm
SPEAKER'S HOUSE**

Present:

Rt Hon John Bercow, Speaker (<i>ex officio</i>), in the Chair	
Mr Sam Gyimah MP	Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps MP
Rt. Hon. Sir Gerald Kaufman MP	Mr Gary Streeter MP
Bridget Phillipson MP	

Apologies: Mr Graham Allen MP (*ex officio*), Rt Hon. Nick Clegg MP (*ex officio*), Naomi Long MP

In the absence of the Speaker Mr Gary Streeter took the chair.

1. Informal minutes of the meeting on 6 July

The minutes of the meeting on 6 July were agreed.

2. Draft plans for 2011-12 to 2015-16 and financial forecasts of the Electoral Commission and Local Government Boundary Commission for England: report from the sub-committee

Mr Gary Streeter, chair of the sub-committee, reported that it had taken evidence from the Electoral Commission and the LGBCE on their draft plans and financial forecasts on Monday 11 October.

The Committee discussed the evidence taken.

Mr Speaker took the chair.

3. Draft plans for 2011-12 to 2015-16 and financial forecasts of the Electoral Commission and Local Government Boundary Commission for England: oral evidence

The Committee discussed these issues.

Oral evidence was taken from the following representatives of the Electoral Commission:

Jenny Watson, Chair
Mr Peter Wardle, Chief Executive
Carolyn Hughes, Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Mr Alex Robertson, Director of Communications

The Commission representatives withdrew

Oral evidence was taken from the following representatives of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE):

Mr Max Caller, Chair
Mr Alan Cogbill, Chief Executive

The LGBCE representatives withdrew.
The Committee further discussed these issues.

4. Decisions of the Committee

(i) Proposed spending on the UK referendum.

Note: The Electoral Commission proposed to spend £9.275 million in total, of which £2.92 million would be required in the year 2010-11. £2.0755 million would be committed immediately. £875,500 would be from the current year's budget and £1.2 million would fall to be paid from the Commission's budget for 2011-12.

The Committee approved the proposal, conditional upon the absence of objection from the Treasury to the money being committed in advance of the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill being passed.

The Speaker asked the Secretary to write to the Treasury accordingly.

(ii) Spending offset from the Welsh referendum budget.

Note: The Electoral Commission sought full approval to use savings from the Welsh referendum budget to offset the funding requirements of the UK-wide referendum.

The Committee gave full approval to this proposal.

(iii) Resource to capital switch.

Note: The Electoral Commission sought full approval for a resource to capital switch of approximately £0.72 million in 2010-11 for the Commission's London accommodation move and other adjustments to capital budgets.

The Committee gave full approval to the proposal.

(iv) Spring Supplementary Estimate.

Note: The Electoral Commission sought conditional approval for a potential Spring Supplementary Estimate of approximately £0.5 million, to make up the shortfall between the 2010 Main Estimate and the revised forecast, which took account of the proposed referendum.

The Committee agreed that it would look to the Electoral Commission to absorb the £0.5 million shortfall which had been identified in 2010-11; and would ask the Commission to look again at whether this could be achieved. However, the Committee remained willing to discuss the matter with the Commission again if it proved necessary.

(v) Other points arising.

The Committee did not wish to make other comments on the draft plans and forecasts of either body at this stage.

5. Any other business

The Committee accepted an offer from the NAO of a presentation on its statutory value for money studies on the Electoral Commission and LGBCE.

(Adjourned until Tuesday 30 November at 10.30 am)

**SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE
ELECTORAL COMMISSION
FORMAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 30 NOVEMBER 2010 AT 10.30 am
SPEAKER'S HOUSE**

Present:

Rt Hon John Bercow, Speaker (<i>ex officio</i>), in the Chair	
Rt. Hon. Sir Gerald Kaufman MP	Naomi Long MP
Mr Gary Streeter MP	

Apologies: Mr Graham Allen MP (*ex officio*), Rt Hon. Nick Clegg MP (*ex officio*), Mr Sam Gyimah MP, Bridget Phillipson MP, Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps MP

6. Informal minutes of the meeting on 13 October

The informal minutes of the meeting on 13 October were agreed.

7. Online publication of formal minutes

The Committee agreed to publish formal minutes of its meetings on its webpage, with effect from the start of the 2010 Parliament.

The formal minutes of the meetings on 6 July and 13 October, with the formal minutes of the sub-committee meeting on 11 October, were agreed to.

8. Designation of posts

Peter Wardle and Carolyn Hughes, the Electoral Commission, were in attendance for this item.

The Chief Executive discussed with the Committee his proposal to designate eleven posts at the Electoral Commission under the provisions of paragraph 11B of Schedule 1 to PPERA, as amended by the Political Parties and Elections Act 2009; and to review designations after approximately one year.

Mr Wardle and Ms Hughes withdrew

The Committee concurred with the Chief Executive's proposal and instructed the Secretary to communicate this to the Chief Executive.

9. Value for money studies by the NAO

Value for Money studies by the NAO: the Committee heard a presentation from Aileen Murphie of the National Audit Office concerning the NAO's statutory value for money studies of both the Electoral Commission and the LGBCE.

5. Work of the Committee in 2010

The Committee informally considered the Chair's draft second report, Work of the Committee in 2010. The Committee agreed that the draft accurately represented the Committee's work.

The Chair requested the Secretary to prepare amendments reflecting decisions taken at the 30 November meeting.

The Committee agreed to consider these amendments by correspondence, meeting again if further discussion should be required to resolve any difficulties.

6. Any other business

The Committee noted a memorandum from the LGBCE concerning the laying of draft Electoral Change orders.

The Committee further noted the appointment of Commissioners to the LGBCE.

(Adjourned until a date and time to be proposed by the Chairman)