

**SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
FORMAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 23 JANUARY AT 3.00 PM  
SPEAKER'S STUDY**

Present:

Rt Hon John Bercow, Speaker ( <i>ex officio</i> ), in the Chair	
Rt. Hon. Sir Gerald Kaufman MP	Mark Prisk MP
Mrs Eleanor Laing MP	Gary Streeter MP
Bridget Phillipson MP	

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

The Speaker welcomed Rt. Hon. Mark Prisk MP, Minister for Housing, who had been appointed to the Committee on 17 January by the Prime Minister, in accordance with s2(3) of the PPERA 2000.

**1. Consideration of minutes of the meeting on 4 December 2012**

The formal and informal minutes of the meeting on 4 December were agreed.

**2. Recruitment of an Electoral Commissioner with responsibility for Wales: consideration of draft report**

The Committee considered the recommendation of the independent panel chaired by Dame Denise Platt, relating to the recruitment of an Electoral Commissioner with responsibility for Wales.

The Committee agreed to endorse the panel's recommendation that Gareth Halliwell be proposed for appointment, subject to the outcome of statutory consultation.

**3. Governance of the Electoral Commission and the LGBCE**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Electoral Commission dated 28 November 2012.

**4. Electoral Commission – public awareness resource plans**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Electoral Commission dated 14 September. The Committee agreed that further information should be sought from the Electoral Commission.

Peter Wardle, Chair, Carolyn Hughes, Director of Finance and Alex Robertson, Director of Communications, the Electoral Commission, were invited to join the meeting.

The Committee discussed the matter. The Commission representatives withdrew.

**5. Any other business**

There being no other business, the Committee adjourned at 3.36pm.

The date and time of the next meeting to be advised.

**SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
FORMAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 19 MARCH AT 3.00 PM  
SPEAKER'S STUDY**

Present:

Rt Hon John Bercow, Speaker ( <i>ex officio</i> ), in the Chair	
Rt. Hon. Sir Gerald Kaufman MP	Mark Prisk MP
Mrs Eleanor Laing MP	Gary Streeter MP
Bridget Phillipson MP	

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

**1. Consideration of minutes of the meeting on 23 January 2013**

The formal and informal minutes of the meeting on 23 January were agreed.

**2. Work of the Committee in 2012: consideration of draft report**

The Committee informally considered the draft report.

The Committee agreed to copy a letter from the Minister for Political and Constitutional Reform, included at Appendix 3 of the draft Report, to the Electoral Commission and to the leaders of political parties.

The draft report and appendices were formally read, and agreed to.

The Committee agreed to provide the Electoral Commission with embargoed copy of the report.

**3. Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General: consideration of draft Report**

The Committee considered the draft report and appendices.

The draft report and appendices were formally read, and agreed to.

The Committee agreed that no further clarification of the value for money studies by the National Audit Office was required.

**4. Consideration of draft main estimate and five-year plan 2013/14 – 2017/18 submitted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)**

The Committee considered the draft main estimate and five-year plan.

The Committee agreed that it would take oral evidence from Max Caller CBE, Chair of the LGBCE, and Alan Cogbill, Chief Executive of the LGBCE.

Oral evidence was taken.

Mr Caller and Mr Cogbill withdrew.

The Committee agreed the LGBCE draft main Estimate 2013/14. The Committee agreed the LGBCE draft Corporate Plan 2013/14 – 2017/18 subject to the provision of an explanatory note in relation to Table 3.

The Committee agreed that minor or technical adjustments might be made by the secretariat to the estimate or plan, in consultation with HM Treasury, without formal reference back to the Committee.

#### **5. Any other business**

The Committee considered a letter dated 12 March 2013 from Rt. Hon. Nick Clegg MP, the Deputy Prime Minister.

It was agreed that the Electoral Commission should be asked to provide information on the development of the communications strategy for Individual Electoral Registration.

There being no other business, the Committee adjourned at 4.10 pm. The next meeting of the Committee would be on Wednesday 24 April at 2.30 pm.

**SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
FORMAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 24 APRIL AT 2.30 PM  
SPEAKER'S STUDY**

Present:

Rt Hon John Bercow, Speaker ( <i>ex officio</i> ), in the Chair	
Rt. Hon. Sir Gerald Kaufman MP	Mark Prisk MP
Mrs Eleanor Laing MP	Gary Streeter MP

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

**1. Consideration of minutes of the meeting on 19 March 2013**

The formal and informal minutes of the meeting on 19 March were agreed.

**2. Amendment of the LGBCE five-year plan**

The Committee further considered the draft five-year plan together with a draft footnote to Table 3, setting out the nature of the Commission's costs, offered in a letter from Alan Cogbill, Chief Executive of the LGBCE dated 25 March.

The Speaker confirmed that HM Treasury had not objected to the amendment.

The amendment was agreed to. The draft five-year plan was approved.

**3. Appointment of Electoral Commissioners**

The Committee considered a request from Jenny Watson, Chair of the Electoral Commission, that Tony Hobman should be re-appointed as an Electoral Commissioner from 1 January 2014 until 31 December 2017.

Jenny Watson's letter set out the basis for the request, including her assessment of Mr Hobman's effectiveness in post to date.

Having considered the letter the Committee agreed to recommend Mr Hobman's re-appointment, subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation.

**4. Electoral Commission draft main estimate 2013/14, draft five-year plan 2013/14 – 2017/18 and request to raise the public awareness cap.**

The Committee considered the Electoral Commission draft main estimate 2013/14, draft five-year plan 2013/14 – 2017/18 and related correspondence.

Formal oral evidence was taken from Peter Wardle, Chief Executive, Carolyn Hughes, Deputy Chief Executive and Alex Robertson, Director of Communications, Electoral Commission.

The witnesses withdrew.

The Committee agreed that the secretariat should follow up any outstanding issues with the Commission.

(i) Draft estimate 2013/14

The request for resources in the draft main estimate 2013/14 was approved, subject to changes in the presentation of the estimate.

(ii) Five-year plan 2013/14 – 2017/18

The Committee agreed that the Commission should include in its five-year plan its estimated requirement for resources for 2015/16. The Commission should also include details of its planned programme of work in relation to overseas voters.

Further consideration of the five-year plan was deferred, pending production of a revised draft.

(iii) Letter from the Deputy Prime Minister dated 17 April

The Committee agreed that the Electoral Commission should provide further periodic reports on its plans for public awareness activity in relation to IER.

(iv) Section 13 PPERA cap

The Committee agreed that it was willing to support the Commission's request for the cap on public awareness expenditure under the PPERA 2000 to be raised to £9.5 million in 2014/15. The Committee would be willing to consider a request to raise the cap in 2015/16 subject to the Commission's further reports on the effectiveness of its public awareness activity, and future forecasts of anticipated expenditure in that year.

(v) Programme of work for IER

The Committee approved the Commission's overall approach on IER. The Commission's outline expenditure forecast for IER was approved as a basis for future planning, and subject to annual approval through the formal estimates process.

**5. Proposals for amendment of Schedule 1 to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000**

This item was deferred until the Committee's next meeting.

**6. Any other business**

There being no other business, the Committee adjourned at 3.36 pm.

**SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
FORMAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 2 JULY AT 4.00 PM  
SPEAKER'S STUDY**

Present:

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

Apologies: Graham Allen MP (*ex officio*), Rt Hon. Nick Clegg MP (*ex officio*), Mark Prisk MP.

**1. Consideration of minutes of the meeting on 24 April 2013**

The formal and informal minutes of the meeting on 24 April were agreed.

Three urgent items of business had been considered by correspondence, following the late cancellation of the Committee's meeting on 5 June. These were:

- (1) seeking approval of the presentation of the Electoral Commission's draft main estimate;
- (2) seeking approval of the Committee's draft Fourth Report 2013, on the proposed re-appointment of Tony Hobman to the Electoral Commission; and (separately)
- (3) seeking the inclusion with that report of a letter received after the consultation deadline from Rt. Hon. Peter Robinson MLA, concerning Mr Hobman's re-appointment.

The votes received on questions (1) and (2) above were recorded as:

<p><i>Aye</i></p> <p>Naomi Long Bridget Phillipson</p>	<p><i>No</i></p> <p>Sir Gerald Kaufman</p>
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On question (3) the recorded votes were:

*Aye*

Naomi Long,  
Bridget Phillipson  
Gary Streeter.

**2. Report from Alan Cogbill on industrial action at the LGBCE**

The Committee considered the matter.

Alan Cogbill, Chief Executive of the LGBCE, was invited into the meeting.

The Committee further discussed the matter.

The Committee agreed to write to the LGBCE.

Alan Cogbill withdrew.

**3. Letter from the Electoral Commission concerning reports on public awareness activity.**

The Committee approved a proposal from the Electoral Commission offering a timetable for reports requested by the Committee on public awareness activity relating to Individual Electoral Registration (IER)

**4. Proposals for amendment of Schedule 1 to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000**

The Committee considered the matter.

The Committee agreed to discuss the matter further at its next meeting.

**5. Electoral Commission draft five-year plan 2013/14 – 2017/18**

The Committee considered a revised version of the draft five-year plan which had been submitted on 22 May.

Jenny Watson, Chair, Peter Wardle, Chief Executive, Carolyn Hughes, Deputy Chief Executive and Alex Robertson, Director of Communications, were invited in to the meeting.

The Committee discussed the plan with the Commission's representatives

The Committee approved the draft five-year plan in the version submitted on 22 May.

**6. Any other business**

**(i) Appointment of nominated Commissioners to the Electoral Commission in 2014**

The Committee noted that initial appointments made to the office of nominated Commissioner from the three main Westminster parties would expire in September 2014.

The Committee agreed to seek advice from Speaker's Counsel on the interaction of sections 3 and 3A of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 relating to the appointment of nominated Commissioners.

The Committee adjourned at 4.52 pm to a date and time to be confirmed by the Chair.

**SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
FORMAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 3 SEPTEMBER AT 3.45 PM  
SPEAKER'S STUDY**

Present:

Rt Hon John Bercow, Speaker ( <i>ex officio</i> ), in the Chair	
Rt. Hon. Nick Clegg MP	Mark Prisk MP
Rt. Hon. Sir Gerald Kaufman MP	Gary Streeter MP
Bridget Phillipson MP	

Apologies: Mrs Eleanor Laing MP, Naomi Long MP.

**1. Consideration of minutes of the meeting on 2 July 2013**

The Speaker noted a typographical error in the informal minutes. A reference in paragraph 3 of item 1 to the office of the Deputy Prime Minister should read 'the Cabinet Office'.

The minutes were agreed, subject to this correction.

**2. Discussion: Governance of the Electoral Commission and LGBCE**

The Committee considered a note by the Secretary concerning the details of changes proposed to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Change Act 2000.

**3. Appointment of nominated Commissioners to the Electoral Commission.**

The Committee considered a note by the Secretary concerning the procedures for appointment or re-appointment of nominated Commissioners to the Electoral Commission, under sections 3 and 3A of the PPERA 2000.

The Committee noted that the three largest nominating parties at Westminster for the purposes of the Act were the Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrat parties.

It was agreed that the Speaker should write to the leaders of each of the qualifying parties under the Act to ascertain their intentions in respect of appointments due in 2014.

It was agreed that the leaders of the qualifying parties should be consulted upon the procedures which would be used in respect of those appointments.

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**4. Any other business: appointments outside the Electoral Commission**

The Committee considered a letter from Jenny Watson, who had been invited to take up the post of Chair of the Independent Complaints Panel connected to the Portman Group, in addition to her work with the Electoral Commission.

The Committee adjourned at 4.23 pm to a date and time to be confirmed by the Chair.

**SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
FORMAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 26 NOVEMBER AT 3.00 PM  
SPEAKER'S STUDY**

Present:

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

**1. Consideration of minutes of the meeting on 3 September 2013**

The Speaker noted a typographical error: the reference to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Change Act 2009 should have been to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 .

The minutes were agreed, subject to this correction.

**2. Discussion: Appointment process for nominated Electoral Commissioners**

The Committee considered responses from the leaders of the qualifying parties to its consultation on the process for appointing nominated Electoral Commissioners.

The Committee confirmed the appointment process as consulted upon, and requested that Mr Speaker request nominations from each party as it became appropriate to do so. An outline of the process is attached to these minutes.

The Committee appointed the following to consider nominations from the parties:

Dame Denise Platt, Chair, Rt Hon Sir Gerald Kaufman, Naomi Long, Mr Gary Streeter, Jenny Watson (Electoral Commission)

**3. Electoral Commission and LGBCE draft estimate and business plan.**

The Committee agreed that the Estimate and business plan for the Electoral Commission and the LGBCE should be considered in draft. It appointed the following sub-committee to undertake this: Mr Gary Streeter (Chair), Rt Hon Sir Gerald Kaufman, Brandon Lewis.

**4. NAO value for money studies on the Electoral Commission and the LGBCE**

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The Committee considered the scope of these value for money studies, and approved the NAO's proposals.

**Any other business**

Brandon Lewis reported that Professor Colin Mellors, the Deputy Chair of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, had been reappointed for a new term, and that a new Commissioner would be appointed very shortly

The Committee adjourned at 3.32 pm to a date and time to be confirmed by the Chair.