

7 February 2011

## Hereditary Peers' By-election

The death of Lord Strabolgi on 24 December 2010 has created a vacancy among the excepted hereditary peers, which under Standing Order 10 is to be filled by means of a by-election. This notice sets out the arrangements for the by-election.

The ballot for this by-election will be held on Tuesday 22 March, between 10am and 8pm in the Moses Room. Members unable to attend the House on that day in order to vote in person are entitled to apply for a postal vote.

### Background

Lord Strabolgi was one of the 15 hereditary peers elected by the whole House in 1999, from among those ready to serve as Deputy Speakers or in any other office. Therefore, under Standing Order 10(3), his successor will be elected by the whole House. In 1999 the Procedure Committee recommended that any peer elected at a by-election in this category should not be expected to serve as a Deputy Speaker.

**All Members of the House who have taken the Oath, and who are not subject to statutory disqualification, suspended from the service of the House, or on Leave of Absence, are entitled to vote in this by-election.**

The Clerk of the Parliaments is required, under Standing Order 10, to maintain and publish a Register of Hereditary Peers who wish to stand for election as members of the House of Lords. All those on this register are being asked to indicate by Monday 28 February whether they wish to be a candidate in this by-election. A notice including the list of candidates will be sent to all Members on Monday 7 March.

**The deadline for electors wishing to apply for a postal vote is Monday 7 March, and the form attached to this notice should reach the House of Lords Journal Office no later than 12 noon on that date. Ballot papers will be sent to electors at "House of Lords", unless the Journal Office is notified of an alternative address.**

Ballot papers will be prepared by Electoral Reform Services. On 8 March ballot papers will be sent directly to those electors who have applied for postal votes, at the address given in the attached form. Completed ballot papers are to be returned to the Clerk of the Parliaments' Office in the pre-addressed envelope provided, either by post or in person, by **5pm on Tuesday 22 March**.

The Code of Conduct for the by-election, based on that adopted for the elections in 1999, is set out in the Annex.

Candidates in this by-election will be invited to indicate their party or group affiliation; they will also be invited to submit candidature statements of not more than 75 words. The House authorities will circulate these statements, along with the list of candidates, on 7 March 2011.

In addition, candidates in the by-election will be invited to attend a "hustings" event, which will be open to all Members of the House. The hustings will take place on Wednesday 16 March 2011, at 11 am, in the Robing Room.



## Timetable

Monday 28 February, 5pm	Deadline for notification of candidature.
Monday 7 March	12 noon: deadline for applications for postal votes to reach the Journal Office. Notice sent to all Members giving list of candidates and attaching candidates' statements.
Tuesday 8 March	Ballot papers sent to electors who have applied for postal votes.
Wednesday 16 March, 11am	Hustings, in the Robing Room.
Tuesday 22 March	Voting to take place, 10am until 8pm, in the Moses Room Postal votes to be returned to the Clerk of the Parliaments' Office by 5pm.
Wednesday 23 March	Count to take place at 10am. The Clerk of the Parliaments will report the result of the by-election to the House after oral questions (around 3.30pm). The full election results (first preference votes cast for each candidate, and the position after each transfer of votes) will then be made available.

## Voting method

The Alternative Vote System will be used. Voters place the figure 1 in the box next to the name of the candidate they most strongly support, the figure 2 against the next most favoured candidate, and so on. **Voters may cast as many or as few votes as they wish.** In order to be elected, the successful candidate must receive at least as many votes as all the other candidates put together. In the event of this not happening after first preference votes have been allocated, the votes of the candidates receiving the lowest number of first preference votes will be shared out according to the second preference marked on them. This will be repeated until one candidate has at least half of the total valid vote.

Ballot papers will be invalidated if:

- Any number is used more than once, or
- In the opinion of the Returning Officer (the Clerk of the Parliaments) the ballot paper is illegible or ambiguous.

Electoral Reform Services are assisting the Clerk of the Parliaments with the organisation and running of this by-election.

## Enquiries

Enquiries may be addressed as follows:

- By post: Robert Harrison, Journal Office, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW
- By telephone: Robert Harrison (020 7219 0440)
- By fax: 020 7219 0620
- By e-mail: [holjournaloffice@parliament.uk](mailto:holjournaloffice@parliament.uk)

MICHAEL POWNALL  
*Clerk of the Parliaments*

## **Annex: Code of Conduct**

1. Ballot papers will not indicate any qualification or reason why a candidate should be elected.
2. Candidates may not offer hospitality, entertainment or financial inducements to electors intended to influence their votes or likely to have that effect.
3. Candidates may not engage in any activity intended or likely to discredit other candidates in the by-election.
4. Candidates may not solicit votes near the room where the by-election is taking place.
5. If the Clerk of the Parliaments suspects, on reasonable grounds, that some material irregularity or improper conduct may have occurred in the electoral process, he may refer the matter to the Committee for Privileges and Conduct. The Committee may, if it thinks fit, recommend the disqualification of a successful candidate if their election appears to have been influenced by material irregularity or improper conduct.
6. In this code of conduct, “candidate” includes an agent or supporter acting on behalf of the candidate.

**House of Lords By-election under Standing Order 10: vacancy created by the death of Lord Strabolgi on 24 December 2010**

**APPLICATION FOR POSTAL VOTE**

I wish to apply for a postal vote in this by-election.

I understand that the ballot paper will be posted on 8 March 2011, and that it will be sent to me at the House of Lords, unless I provide an alternative address in the box below.

I would like the ballot paper to be sent to me at the following address:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form no later than 12 noon on Monday 7 March 2011 to:**

Journal Office  
House of Lords  
London SW1A 0PW