



HOUSE OF LORDS

Report from the Commissioner for Standards

The conduct of Lord Lea of Crondall

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Commissioner for Standards

The independent Commissioner for Standards is responsible for considering any alleged breaches of the Codes of Conduct.

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Code of Conduct for Members, Guide to the Code of Conduct and Code of Conduct for Members' Staff

The present Code of Conduct for Members of the House of Lords was agreed on 30 November 2009. Amendments to it were agreed by the House on 30 March 2010, 12 June 2014, 25 February 2016, 9 February 2017, 3 April 2017, 30 April 2019, 18 July 2019, 16 March 2020 and 8 July 2020.

The Guide to the Code of Conduct was proposed by the Committee for Privileges (2nd Report, Session 2009–10, HL Paper 81) and agreed by the House on 16 March 2010. The Guide was amended on 9 November 2011, 6 March 2014, 13 May 2014, 24 March 2015, 25 February 2016, 9 February 2017, 3 April 2017, 30 April 2019, 18 July 2019, 16 March 2020 and 8 July 2020.

The Code of Conduct for House of Lords Members' Staff was agreed on 13 May 2014. Amendments to it were agreed on 24 March 2015, 30 April 2019, 18 July 2019, 16 March 2020 and 8 July 2020.

The Codes and Guide are kept under review by the Conduct Committee.

Advice

The Registrar of Lords' Interests advises members of the House and their staff on their obligations under the Codes of Conduct.

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Registers of Interests

A list of interests of members and their staff can be found online: www.parliament.uk/hlregister

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The conduct of Lord Lea of Crondall

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. On 30 April 2019 the House of Lords introduced changes to the Code of Conduct which, for the first time, explicitly set out that bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct were breaches of the Code of Conduct. It also introduced new procedures for dealing with complaints of bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct. Further details are given in Chapter 4.
2. This report deals with a complaint made about Lord Lea of Crondall in January 2020.
3. In considering this complaint I have been supported by Sam Evans, Associate Practitioner, CMP Solutions, and James Whittle, one of the Clerks who assist me in my work. I wish to place on record my thanks to them for all their help, while also acknowledging that I am solely responsible for the conclusions reached and the decisions made in this investigation.
4. I also wish to thank the complainant for their engagement in the process. I am well aware that making complaints under a relatively new process against members of the House takes courage. I am grateful to QR¹ for this.
5. By its nature, any report into allegations of bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct will include content that some readers may find upsetting or offensive. My aim is to reflect fairly and fully the evidence I gather in the course of an investigation and not to censor or in any way minimise views expressed or material uncovered. I believe this transparency is essential to helping the House of Lords to be an institution where everyone is valued and respected, and where it is clear that bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct are not tolerated. This means that reports into allegations of bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct will often make for difficult reading.
6. **The findings and discussions in this case relate to behaviour that constitutes bullying.**

¹ The complainant in this case has asked to remain anonymous. Therefore, these initials bear no relationship to the complainant's name and throughout this report plural pronouns, rather than gendered singular pronouns, have been used.

CHAPTER 2: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

QR's complaint

7. On 14 January QR sent an email to my office setting out details of an incident the previous week involving Lord Lea. QR explained that they had been contacted by a security officer at one of the entrances to Parliament who wanted to know if QR had any notification of a Dr K to see Lord Lea. QR checked the records, including emails, and told the security officer that there was no record of any such visit being booked.
8. Around 15 minutes later, Lord Lea came and asked if his guest had arrived. QR explained that Dr K had arrived but as there had been no booking he had not been allowed to enter. QR phoned the security officer to check if Dr K was still outside and went out to double check.
9. QR was informed by the security officer outside that as Dr K had a limited parliamentary pass, he had gone to another part of the estate to wait. QR reported this back to Lord Lea who “became very angry, raised his voice” and told QR to phone the part of the estate Dr K had gone to and to “get Dr [K] back immediately”. QR explained that this was not possible.
10. Lord Lea then told QR to “actually go to [the place Dr K had said he was going to] and find Dr [K] and bring him back and again”. QR explained that this was also not possible, to which Lord Lea said, “are you refusing to do as you’re told?”. As QR tried to explain the reason, Lord Lea “put his hand up and told me not to speak to him further.”
11. QR said that Lord Lea then came back and asked QR to “explain again why Dr [K] had not just been let in and why I had not phoned him to check whether or not he was expecting Dr [K].”
12. QR said that Lord Lea had lowered his voice and was somewhat calmer in this second exchange. Lord Lea explained that Dr K had an email from him as proof of his invitation to the House. QR explained that, for security reasons, simply having an email was not sufficient. QR reported that “Lord Lea was incredulous that anybody could falsify an email, that it was possible or indeed that anybody would do it.” Again, QR explained the reasons for not allowing Dr K to enter but “Lord Lea said that he did not believe me and that he would be taking the matter further and would be contacting my superior.”

Immediate and longer-term effect on QR

13. In their complaint, QR said “I felt belittled and undermined by this incident, especially as there were quite a few other people present. It was unnecessary to speak to me, or indeed anyone, in this way especially as I had explained that the security of him and the Palace was of paramount importance to me and my colleagues.”

Lord Lea's response

14. Lord Lea wrote in response to the complaint that he was “keen to apologise in person to [QR] for seriously upsetting [them] on the day.”
15. Lord Lea explained that Dr K was his contact at the training providers contracted by Parliament to provide sanctioned training. This was Lord Lea's first meeting with Dr K after agreeing to remedial action in response to

earlier complaints about his conduct.² He was therefore anxious that the meeting went well and was distressed that arrangements had not worked as he had expected. He said he was already tense ahead of the meeting and, as this problem arose, he began “to feel very anxious at the prospect of a total fiasco”. In his interview with us he emphasised this point about his anxiety at the time saying, “What was going through my mind right from the start is: this is a nightmare.”

16. In his interview with us he said that he had not been angry—which to his mind suggested “taking something out on [QR]”—but was “losing my cool, getting very agitated”. He agreed that it was reasonable for QR to interpret this as anger.
17. His recollection of some of the details of the incident varied from that of QR but he broadly agreed with the facts of the incident.
18. However, Lord Lea’s view was that the incident had arisen as a result of a lack of “empathy” on both sides. He said, “It becomes like two dogs confronting each other; we were taking on roles which I don’t think we’d planned to take on.”
19. Although Lord Lea’s account varied in places, particularly in interpretation of his intentions and the factors that led to the exchange becoming difficult, he recognised that his conduct had had a negative effect on QR, which he regretted. He said, “my exasperation [at the situation] means I hurt [QR] and I just want to say I’m very, very sorry about that.”
20. He explained that he had since discussed the incident with Dr K as part of his behaviour change training and how “after an [*sic*] rather argumentative exchange” but one “without any disrespect being intended”, those involved can “get back to a situation where they can relate to each other in a normal way”. This was what he wished to do by making a sincere apology to QR.

Finding

21. This behaviour met the criteria for bullying, and was a breach of the Code of Conduct.

Outcome

22. In his written and oral responses to the complaint, Lord Lea said that he hoped to be able to resolve matters with QR without the need for a further report. In the terms of the Code of Conduct, this would be an agreed resolution.³
23. I discussed Lord Lea’s response with QR.
24. There were a number of points during my interview with Lord Lea where he did not accept the allegations made or disagreed about details of QR’s account. In particular, during the interview Lord Lea’s position appeared to be that the incident had occurred more because of fault on both sides rather than as a result of his own conduct. He also considered that a contributing factor was QR’s lack of empathy with his concerns and he referred to what

2 *The conduct of Lord Lea of Crondall*, House of Lords Commissioner for Standards published 14 January 2020 <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-commissioner-for-standards/Report-on-Lord-Lea-of-Crondall.pdf>

3 See paragraph 142 of *Guide to the Code of Conduct* (ninth edition)

he considered QR's lack of experience in post as having contributed to the situation arising. When I spoke to QR it became clear that they did not accept the accuracy of these aspects of Lord Lea's response.

25. While I do not doubt the sincerity of Lord Lea's desire to make amends with QR and that he genuinely regrets the impact of his conduct on QR, I cannot accept an agreed resolution as an appropriate outcome as there is disagreement between the respondent and complainant on important aspects of the incident and the causes behind it.
26. However, QR was content to resolve the case by remedial action. The remedial action I proposed was a letter for apology from Lord Lea to QR (sent via my office).
27. Lord Lea has already been undertaking bespoke behaviour change training and coaching as a result of my earlier report into his conduct. As this incident took place before he began that work and as it became clear during this investigation that Lord Lea had already discussed this incident during his coaching, I do not consider it proportionate to require him to undertake further training.
28. I wrote to Lord Lea to explain that I considered his proposal for an agreed resolution to be an inappropriate outcome and to propose a remedial action of a written apology. He agreed.
29. As QR and Lord Lea agreed that Lord Lea would write a letter of apology to QR, this is the outcome to the complaint made by QR. Lord Lea has already written to QR.

CHAPTER 3: PROCESS AND CHRONOLOGY

30. Following the receipt of the complaint in January 2020, I carried out a preliminary assessment to establish whether the complaint engaged the Code of Conduct, and concluded that it did so.
31. I informed Lord Lea of the complaint, sent him the details that the complainant had provided to me, and asked for his written response.
32. I interviewed Lord Lea in March. As his written and oral responses made detailed references to matters which I considered to be personal and confidential, including details of the bespoke behaviour change training and coaching he was undertaking following my earlier report, I did not consider it appropriate to provide QR with his responses in full. I therefore provided QR with a summary of Lord Lea's responses.
33. After providing QR with this summary, I interviewed QR in May 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this interview took place by telephone.
34. Both Lord Lea and QR were given the opportunity to review the transcripts of their interviews for factual accuracy and to clarify or add further detail if necessary.
35. In accordance with paragraph 155 of the Guide to the Code, I sent each the factual aspects of my report.⁴ In relation to QR, I not only asked them to let me know if they disputed any of the facts in the draft report, but also if they were satisfied that I had protected their anonymity sufficiently.

⁴ QR's complaint was made under the eighth edition of the Code. While this investigation was carried out the Code was updated twice. For convenience, paragraph references in this report relate to the tenth edition of the Code available online at the time of publication: www.parliament.uk/hl-code

CHAPTER 4: RELEVANT ASPECTS OF THE CODE

36. On 30 April 2019, the House agreed a revised Code of Conduct. This included, for the first time, explicit reference to the Parliamentary Behaviour Code. Paragraph 10 of the Code says:

“Members of the House should observe the principles set out in the Parliamentary Behaviour Code of respect, professionalism, understanding others’ perspectives, courtesy, and acceptance of responsibility. These principles will be taken into consideration when any allegation of bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct is under investigation.”

37. Paragraph 17 says that “Members are required to treat those with whom they come into contact in the course of their parliamentary duties and activities with respect and courtesy” and makes clear that “[b]ehaviour that amounts to bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct is a breach of this Code.”
38. The revisions to the Code also expanded its scope where complaints of behaviour amounting to bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct are concerned. For other types of conduct the Code’s remit is “the discharge of their parliamentary duties” and it does not extend to “duties unrelated to parliamentary proceedings, or to their private lives”. Paragraph 17 applies more broadly to “the standards of conduct expected of members in performing their parliamentary duties and activities whether on the Parliamentary estate or elsewhere.”⁵

Parliamentary Behaviour Code and definitions of bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct

39. The Parliamentary Behaviour Code, included as Appendix A to the Code of Conduct, sets out six principles of conduct:
- Respect and value everyone—bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct are not tolerated;
 - Recognise your power, influence or authority and don’t abuse them;
 - Think about how your behaviour affects others and strive to understand their perspective;
 - Act professionally towards others;
 - Ensure Parliament meets the highest ethical standards of integrity, courtesy and mutual respect;
 - Speak up about any unacceptable behaviour you see.
40. Appendix B of the Code defines bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct at some length, drawing from definitions included in the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme Delivery Report.⁶

5 See paragraph 3(a) of the Code of Conduct.

6 Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme Delivery Report, published July 2018: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/news/2018/1%20ICGP%20Delivery%20Report.pdf>.

Bullying

41. As only the definition of bullying is relevant to this case it is useful to summarise it here.
42. Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving an abuse or misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, undermined, humiliated, denigrated or threatened.
43. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority and can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.
44. Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct.
45. Bullying behaviour may be in person, by telephone or in writing, including emails, texts or online communications such as social media.
46. It may be persistent or an isolated incident and may manifest obviously or be hidden or insidious.

Anonymity

47. Paragraph 134 of the Guide to the Code of Conduct says:

“Where complaints relate to bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct the identity of the complainant will be shared where necessary with those directly involved in the investigation but will not usually be made public during the investigation, or on publication of the report, unless the complainant desires otherwise. This may involve some redaction in reports. Those involved in the investigation are under an obligation to protect the identity of the complainant and a failure to do so may constitute a breach of the Code as well as a contempt of the House.”
48. The complainant in this report, QR, has opted to retain their anonymity. Much of the evidence quoted is therefore redacted or summarised in order to ensure QR cannot be identified. Copies of letters, transcripts of meetings and other evidence gathered in this investigation have not been reproduced in this report as to do so would unacceptably risk QR’s anonymity. As the finding in this case is that Lord Lea bullied the complainant, personal characteristics, such as gendered pronouns, have been removed as they are not an integral part of the complaint.

External investigator

49. Paragraph 139 of the Guide to the Code says:

“In cases involving bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct, the Commissioner is supported by independent investigators. The Commissioner may delegate to the investigator to the extent she considers appropriate any of her investigatory functions.”
50. As noted above, in this case I was supported by Sam Evans of CMP Solutions.

CHAPTER 5: PRINCIPLES RELATING TO INVESTIGATIONS AND OUTCOMES

51. The provisions in the Code for dealing with bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct are still relatively new and I have only completed a handful of complaints since they were introduced. As I have done in my earlier reports, I therefore wish to set out the principles that I have applied, and will apply in future, in reaching decisions as to the appropriate ways to proceed and sanctions to agree or recommend.

Fairness and natural justice

52. The Guide to the Code of Conduct states that:
- “In investigating and adjudicating allegations of non-compliance with this Code, the Commissioner and the Conduct Committee shall act in accordance with the principles of natural justice and fairness.”
(paragraph 137)
53. The question of how the rules of natural justice apply to the respondent was extensively discussed in a previous investigation and may be consulted in the second report of that investigation.⁷
54. The requirement of fairness applies to both complainant and respondent, and here I set out how I interpret this principle.
55. I do not give any advantage to one or the other in the investigatory process; for both I offer the same options and conduct interviews in the same way. I seek documentary or third-party corroboration of any disputed evidence and assess the reliability of evidence using the same criteria for both parties, which does not include any assumption that status, power or reputation makes one person’s evidence inherently more reliable than that of someone of lesser status, power or reputation.
56. Where there are points in an investigation where the parties must agree to a particular proposal, I will take particular care to ensure that agreement is freely given, and for the right reasons.
57. Paragraph 141 of the Guide to the Code says that “Members, and in cases involving bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct the complainant, are given an opportunity to review and, if they so wish, challenge the factual basis of any evidence supplied.”
58. Paragraph 155 of the Guide to the Code sets out the process for this, requiring me to:
- “share with the member a summary of the evidence she has obtained upon which her findings will be founded, so that the member has an opportunity to comment on it. In cases involving bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct, the Commissioner will provide the complainant with the same opportunities to challenge or comment on the evidence.”
59. Fairness also requires that where mediation is under consideration at an early stage in the investigation, any response to the complaint by the respondent

7 Committee for Privileges and Conduct, *Further report on the conduct of Lord Lester of Herne Hill* (3rd Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 252)

will be made available to the complainant before mediation takes place, even if no report of the facts has been prepared.

Proportionality

60. The next principle is that of proportionality. This is implicit in the Code and the Guide to the Code, which envisage a range of appropriate outcomes in the event of a breach. Some of these can be recommended by me but must be imposed by the Conduct Committee or the House. Others can be decided by me with the agreement of respondent and, in cases of bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct, the complainant.

Remedial action

61. An outcome proposed by me and agreed to by the complainant and respondent is referred to as “remedial action”. The Guide to the Code sets out where such an outcome might be proportionate and what it might involve:

“Remedial action may be agreed if the complaint, though justified, is minor and is acknowledged by the member concerned.” (paragraph 146 of the Guide to the Code)

“In cases involving bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct any remedial action recommended at the end of an investigation will need to be agreed by both the member and the complainant and possibly negotiated through mediation. Remedial action in such cases may include the respondent apologising to the complainant or agreeing to attend appropriate training.” (paragraph 148 of the Guide to the Code)

62. “Minor”, in this context, does not mean trivial, and does not imply that the effect on the complainant has been minor. Rather, it acknowledges that in the full range of behaviours covered by the provisions, the behaviour complained of is at the lower end of the range.
63. Allegations of bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct may only be dealt with by remedial action with the consent of both the complainant and the respondent. Although their consent is necessary, it is not sufficient; I also have to decide that it is a proportionate response.
64. If the respondent is the subject of complaints relating to conduct similar to that previously dealt with by remedial action, I would take into account this apparent lack of modification in his or her conduct when considering whether further remedial action would be appropriate.

Sanctions imposed by the House

65. Some sanctions can only be imposed by the House: suspension, denial of access to the system of financial support for members or the facilities of the House, and expulsion. These are the more severe sanctions available and would be used where the behaviour complained of was at the higher end of the range.
66. It may also be necessary to resort to a sanction imposed by the Conduct Committee for less severe breaches if remedial action, even if considered proportionate by me, cannot be agreed by the parties or is not proportionate as it has proven to be ineffective in the past.

Agreed resolution

67. The Guide to the Code of Conduct also provides for an outcome prior to any finding by “agreed resolution”:

“At any time during an investigation involving bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct the Commissioner may reach an agreed resolution with both the complainant and the member under investigation. At the Commissioner’s discretion, such an agreed resolution can bring the investigation to an end. In this case, it is at the discretion of the Commissioner, having consulted the complainant and the member, whether a report is published on her webpages on the parliamentary website.” (paragraph 151)

68. This outcome differs from remedial action in that:
- no finding is reached;
 - no sanction is imposed (though the parties may agree to some action as part of the agreement); and
 - a report is not necessarily published. If no report is published, the existence of the complaint and investigation will remain confidential indefinitely.
69. The Guide to the Code does not stipulate when this course of action might be suitable, but I would expect it to be the exception rather than the norm and would expect it only to apply as a result of the particular circumstances of the case.
70. Two factors to which I would anticipate paying particular attention when considering a request for an agreed resolution would be the motivation behind any such request and the need for the enforcement of the Code of Conduct to be as open and transparent as possible.
71. In particular, I would want to be sure that a complainant was choosing an agreed resolution in his or her own interests, rather than those of the respondent, and that a respondent who disputed the accuracy of the complainant’s account was not agreeing to this outcome simply to avoid publicity.

Openness and transparency

72. The principles of openness and transparency may be relevant when considering proportionality.
73. If I, or the Conduct Committee, uphold a complaint, the Code requires that a report is published, naming the respondent.
74. Publication is not a sanction, but the effect of publication is, in my view, a matter that I can take into account when considering the proportionality of any sanction I may impose, as publicity may itself be a very effective catalyst for change in the respondent’s behaviour.
75. The educative benefits of openness and transparency require me in most, if not all, cases to publish in my report significant details of the respondent’s agreed and alleged behaviour, and its effects on the complainant. This is the case even though the respondent may be deeply embarrassed at the descriptions

of the behaviour, and the effects of the behaviour on the complainant, being made public. Publishing the details allows readers to assess whether their own behaviour requires modification to avoid the possibility of a complaint being made and upheld and allows readers who may have been affected by similar or equivalent behaviour to recognise that they have a remedy. Publishing the details also shows members of the House the behaviour of their colleagues that they should be challenging in accordance with paragraph 9(g) of the Code of Conduct that they show leadership by challenging poor behaviour wherever it occurs, and the requirement in the Behaviour Code to speak up about any unacceptable behaviour they see. All these effects, over time, should improve the working environment of the House of Lords.

76. However, against these benefits has to be set the risk of causing upset or offence to some readers by setting out this material. I am convinced that my reports must reflect fairly and fully the evidence I gather in the course of an investigation, without censoring, concealing or minimising events and reactions described, or views expressed, as I believe this transparency is essential to helping the House of Lords to be a workplace where everyone is valued and respected, and where it is clear that bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct are not tolerated. To protect readers from unexpectedly coming across material which may distress or anger them, introductions to reports will contain a warning, as in this report, which will specify the nature of the material under discussion.

CHAPTER 6: ACCOUNT OF THE KEY FACTS AND EVIDENCE

QR's complaint

77. On 14 January QR sent an email to my office, setting out details of an incident the previous week involving Lord Lea. QR explained that they had been contacted by a security officer at one of the entrances to Parliament who wanted to know if QR had any notification of a Dr K to see Lord Lea. QR checked the records, including emails, and told the security officer that there was no record of any such visit being booked.
78. About 15 minutes later, Lord Lea approached QR:

“[he] asked if his guest Dr [K] had arrived. I explained that we had had no booking for Dr [K] but that I would check to see if he was still outside. I phoned [my colleague on duty] and then physically went outside. The SO [security officer] told me that Dr [K] did not have Lord Lea’s phone number but as he had [a limited pass] (I was not aware of this fact until this point) he was going to go to [another part of the Parliamentary Estate] , get a cup of coffee and email Lord Lea. I explained this to Lord Lea who became very angry, raised his voice and told me to phone [the place Dr K had said he was going to] and get Dr [K] back immediately. I explained that I was unable to do this and the reasons why. He then told me to actually go to [the place Dr K had said he was going to] and find Dr [K] and bring him back and again, I explained why I was unable to do that. Lord Lea asked me ‘are you refusing to do as you’re told?’ and I started to explain again why it was not possible. Lord Lea then put his hand up and told me not to speak to him further.

Throughout I followed established [...] procedures and remained calm, polite and professional.

At this point [a colleague] arrived to take over the duty. I attempted to phone [my line manager] to no avail. (I understand that he was on his way to the [entrance where I was working] at this point). I had started to hand over to [my colleague] when [an officer] on duty told me that Lord Lea wanted to talk to me again. He asked me to explain again why Dr [K] had not just been let in and why I had not phoned him to check whether or not he was expecting Dr [K]. Lord Lea had now lowered his voice and was somewhat calmer. I explained that this was not possible and the reasons why, one of the main ones being [the impracticality of doing so at that entrance]. Lord Lea then went on to explain that Dr [K] had an email from him and I explained why we do not accept this. Lord Lea was incredulous that anybody could falsify an email, that it was possible or indeed that anybody would do it. I explained [...] how important security was and how seriously we [...] take it. Lord Lea said that he did not believe me and that he would be taking the matter further and would be contacting my superior.

I felt belittled and undermined by this incident, especially as there were quite a few other people present. It was unnecessary to speak to me, or indeed anyone, in this way especially as I had explained that the security of him and the Palace was of paramount importance to me and my colleagues.”

Lord Lea's evidence

79. Ms Evans and I carried out a preliminary assessment and concluded that it would be appropriate to investigate whether Lord Lea's conduct constituted a breach of the Code of Conduct. I wrote to QR with information about my next steps, and wrote to Lord Lea on 23 January 2020, enclosing the complaint from QR; explaining that, as a result of my preliminary assessment I had concluded that there was sufficient evidence to establish there was a prima facie case to be investigated and:

“In particular, I intend to investigate whether the following provision of the Code of Conduct has been breached:

“Members are required to treat those with whom they come into contact in the course of their parliamentary duties and activities with respect and courtesy. Behaviour that amounts to bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct is a breach of this Code. The bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct provisions apply to behaviour that took place after 21 June 2017 (the start of the 2017 Parliament). Behaviour that took place before this date may still constitute a breach of the personal honour provision if undertaken in the performance of the member's parliamentary duties and activities.” (paragraph 17 of the Code of Conduct)

80. I asked Lord Lea to send me a full and accurate account of the matter in question, and he replied to me on 7 February:

“I am keen to apologise in person to [QR] for the serious upset I caused on the day. I can now add some further elucidation though I am not claiming that I or anyone else can give a verbatim account of precisely who said what when—one would have needed tape recorders to be sure of that.

After sitting in the waiting area for about 10 minutes I gave my name and asked [QR] at about 1405—whether [a check could be made] with [a security officer] about the arrival of my guest: QR said something like ‘oh, somebody had come a few minutes previously and I think giving your name and I said that no such guest had been booked in’.

At this point when I was on the point of saying I would go [to see the other officer] and sort it out, [QR] said that the [officer] had told him (Dr [K]) to go to [a different entrance]; there was no record of him having a booking; maybe he had volunteered that he would go to the [other entrance] and wait there—I don't remember whether QR specified which. I asked [QR to ring a colleague at the other entrance ...] to explain the misunderstanding, so that he would come back over to [where I had arranged to meet him].

I started to feel very anxious at the prospect of a total fiasco. This was to be the first of my training sessions about which I was naturally feeling a bit tense in any case, not knowing quite how this would work and what to expect and so on. Also, I had booked the room for an hour and a half—that the room was needed after that time and as the time had dragged on it would be impossible for me I thought to complete a full session and all of this was adding to my anxiety.

This was coupled with the fact that [QR] said that the email which Dr [K] had with him at my suggestion was not relevant because it could have been easily forged, at which point I expostulated that this was the first time that anyone had suggested such a thing: I had always been advised positively to make sure that a guest had an email to confirm to the police post that he or she was the person concerned. (I can supply the email if necessary by agreement with Dr [K]—see later)

I naturally made the point that in my case and that of many others, the arrangement for a visitor being booked in was made in person at the front desk or on the telephone and therefore although I could not prove the point, it was the first time in 20 years that I have been told that I had not booked my visitor in”

81. He then asked QR to make a phone call to the part of the parliamentary estate to which Dr K had said he would go, or to let him use the phone, and when he was told neither was not possible:

“I said something along the line that I couldn’t believe what [QR] has said and it was a very sensible request in the circumstances

Link with February 5 session with Dr [K]

The second time I met Dr [K] was at this last Wednesday’s session (February 5). We moved on to how I could avoid—or to some degree lessen—the way in which tense situations lead me to flaring-up.

We took as a good example the January [...] case as it was something which we both knew a lot about—namely the difficult sequence of events at the start in relation to our meeting for the first time a month ago—some parts of the picture being ones which I knew more than he did about and parts of it the other way round.

There are two or three aspects to how one analyses something like this and there is

- (i) the question of was some error made by someone or other and that led to the regrettable incident
- (ii) how the different parties behaved in dealing with it and
- (iii) after an rather argumentative exchange—- one without any disrespect being intended—there is the question how the protagonists can best get back to a situation where they can relate to each other in a normal way ... obviously in principle saying good morning to each other quite often in the future.

On the first of these Dr [K] added that he had been told by security that his email was insufficient to gain access without a booking having been recorded in the system available to [QR] the [officer] had rung the front desk and they confirmed that they had no record of anyone being booked in.

Dr [K] opined that in these circumstances what I should be aiming for was to find an agreed route towards being able to make a sincere apology to the person—probably at a meeting convened by you yourself

I said that I had already taken the first steps to inform the Commissioner that this was exactly what I was seeking—indeed I had initially picked up the reference to arranging a meeting in her (ie your) letter dated January 23

My third meeting, in a week's time, with Dr [K] will be next Wednesday. The plan is that it will be centred on ways in which I can keep down the temperature when I react to difficult situations like this”.

82. Lord Lea then provided some confidential information relevant to his behaviour change training. He continued:

“I trust that this suffices to cover the ground—albeit with the special features to which I have drawn to your attention. I look forward to a meeting with you being arranged in due course”.

83. I interviewed Lord Lea on 9 March 2020, assisted by Mr Whittle. He was accompanied by Lord Monks.

84. In the meeting with Lord Lea we discussed the various points raised by QR in their complaint.

85. Lord Lea explained that his guest that day was his contact at the training providers contracted by Parliament to provide sanctioned training. This was Lord Lea's first meeting with his guest after agreeing to remedial action in response to the earlier complaints about his conduct. He was therefore anxious that the meeting went well and was distressed that arrangements [to meet his visitor] had not worked as he had expected:

“I was getting very concerned about a fiasco happening before my very eyes. This was me just about to meet somebody who was going to play a key part in my life, to not put too much on to it, and, for reasons which I still find quite hard to fathom, he had been sent away or he'd said, 'Blow it, I'm not going to stand here in the rain or whatever. I'll go away'. What was going through my mind right from the start is: this is a nightmare. I'd booked the room for an hour and a half; it was the first time I'd met this chap. He will think I'm incompetent, for a start, if I didn't [let security know] and, secondly, arising from that, the people here didn't like me even showing them an email. There's an email saying, 'Here's the red dot on the map and there's the sentry post, and here is ...', and so on. That was the point at which—perhaps I'm jumping to your next question—that was the point at which I think [QR] said, 'Well, it could have been forged'.”

86. QR said that during the incident Lord Lea became very angry, raised his voice to QR and told them to get his guest back immediately. We discussed both QR's interpretation of his mood in their exchange and their account of what he said.

87. Though he did not think it would be right to describe him as getting angry, Lord Lea agreed that as the situation unfolded he was “losing my cool, getting very agitated.”. He said:

“‘Anger’ implies, as I understand the normal use of the word ‘anger’—anger is I was taking something out on [QR]. Well, I think that's not what was happening. I was getting very, very concerned.”

88. When pressed, Lord Lea agreed that it would be reasonable for someone, unaware of the importance of the guest to Lord Lea, to interpret him losing his cool and being agitated as anger.

89. We also discussed the conversation between QR and Lord Lea. His recollection of the conversation differed from QR's:

“I remember that conversation. I would cavil only at ‘get him back immediately’ as the tone of voice was, ‘Can’t we ring him up and get him back?’, rather than I was making a peremptory instruction.”

90. He later said:

“Again, telling [QR] isn’t how it was. I said, ‘Well, can you not help me at all? Can you just ring them?’ [QR] said, ‘I can’t do that. It’s not part of my duties’. What flashed through my mind is, ‘How do I get out of this hole then?’ So I was agitated and said, ‘Well, you know, if you can’t ring [your colleague], you can’t help me that way. Can I use the phone and ring [using your] phone, because the phone over there is a taxi phone?’, and [QR] said, ‘No, I might have another call coming in’.

...

I said something like, ‘Well, can’t you help me at all?’, and included in that was, ‘How do we get him back from [the other part of the Estate]? You go over there? I go over there. If you can’t telephone’, you know, this is a fiasco. And, yes, I did say ... ‘Can’t somebody go over there?’”

91. While for the most part Lord Lea’s recollection of the conversation was a variation on QR’s, he did not accept that he had said anything like “Are you refusing to do as you’re told?”, as reported by QR. He said:

“No, I don’t accept that. I would never say that to anybody. I mean, I don’t know what words it was that made [QR] think it was that I said it that way.”

92. We discussed Lord Lea’s surprise that his guest wasn’t logged as being expected and why showing a printout of an email to the police officer at the sentry point was not sufficient. Lord Lea ultimately accepted that he cannot have followed the proper procedures on this occasion and that his guest was not logged as being expected but he explained why he had not understood at that time:

“As I say, it’s the first time in 20 years—I’ve been here 20 years—that that’s happened to me.”

93. He explained what he understood to be the various ways of booking a visitor into the Parliamentary Estate and that he had thought sending an email would be sufficient. He said that when QR told him it was not enough:

“I did express some surprise and astonishment at, when [QR] said, ‘But that could have been a forgery’.”

94. We asked whether he had said that he didn't believe QR when they explained the situation to him. Lord Lea's interpretation of his remarks was different. He said:

"I didn't say I didn't believe [QR]. I'm not trying to split hairs. ... I didn't believe that it could be the case that the worry was that the email could have been forged. I didn't believe [QR] is a different—a different use of the verb. ... I didn't believe it—not that I didn't believe [QR]."

95. In the course of our conversation, Lord Lea accepted that Parliament required a high level of security but remained astonished that it might be a realistic concern that someone could forge an email from him in order to gain access to the Estate.

96. In his view, the fact that the conversation became in any way confrontational was due to a lack of understanding on both sides:

"But there was a huge misunderstanding based on what I thought was something where it may well be that the mistake was on their side and therefore a little bit of leaning over backwards to be helpful wasn't happening in a way that I thought, because I was very, very anxious that this fiasco was brought to an end as soon as possible."

97. He also said:

"The famous word 'empathy', which I've come across many, many times in the last few weeks, is a word that I think your colleague introduced at the last meeting, and I think that the point came up: it takes two to get empathy. It becomes like two dogs confronting each other; we were taking on roles which I don't think we'd planned to take on."

98. In his written response to the complaint, Lord Lea had described his exchange with QR as being "argumentative". We asked him to expand on this. He said:

"Perhaps it's not the best word I should have used. I was obviously trying to think of a different solution. Is there another solution? What about this solution?", and I felt that there was no give. May I use this word empathy, because it's been used about me being short of it, but this is a conversation which, as the phrase goes, was going nowhere. It wasn't trying to pick up but what we could then do, although, and again it is partly in retrospect, hindsight—whatever the difference is between hindsight and retrospect—but the actual objective position in retrospect was not as bad as what I had feared, namely, that he'd gone over there, and they wouldn't know who he was, and he disappeared off the face of the earth and I'm feeling dreadful about it. So I just wanted to leave no stone unturned, just to try and get hold of him. ... I think we were both probably in different degrees of not empathetically—not empathising with the other person's problem, I think probably, rather than being argumentative."

99. We suggested that this characterisation of the situation might not take into account that QR had only limited options to offer given that Lord Lea's guest had already gone to another part of the Parliamentary Estate and that QR was trying to explain something that had happened previously. Lord Lea disagreed:

“I think probably [QR] did have more options than what [they] thought [they] had. I don’t know how long [QR’s] been in the job, but [QR] wasn’t very senior; [QR] isn’t very senior, and I think anybody a bit more senior might have said, ‘Well, hold your horses. Just have a seat. Calm down. Have a seat for a minute and I’ll see what I can do’, or something like that. That didn’t happen.”

100. We asked Lord Lea if he understood why QR had said that they felt belittled by his behaviour. Lord Lea considered this carefully before responding. He said:

“I was exasperated by the whole situation; there’s no doubt about that. Point two arising from that, it would be not true—it would not be essentially true to the centre of the dilemma—to say that I was exasperated with [QR]. If I was exasperated with anybody, it was [with the officer who had originally told Dr K he could not come in] and the misunderstanding [there and why didn’t he] say, ‘Can you find out whether a bloke called Lord Lea is in existence? Can you ring him up? Can you find him, and then we’re fine?’

So I think that—I can understand how come [QR’s] put this last *démarche* in here for those reasons, and I, if I get the chance, it will be a very good example of where I would like to apologise profusely, because I—my exasperation means I hurt [QR] and I just want to say I’m very, very sorry about that. But it’s part of this problem that if—there’s a difference between the use of the word ‘exasperated’ or use of the word ‘belittle’—that I was doing some belittling and [QR] felt belittled by my sounding off in exasperation.

COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS: Lord Lea, that’s an answer. What you’re saying is you understand that [QR] felt belittled; that wasn’t your intention. That’s what you’re saying, isn’t it?

LORD LEA: Yes.”

101. Throughout our interview, Lord Lea was keen to stress that he very much regretted matters having happened the way they did. He considered much of it to have arisen from a misunderstanding but one that he was keen to explain and to rectify:

“[QR] was taking it and other remarks as me wishing to, intending to, setting out to contradict [them], and I think this is true of the conversation generally. If [QR] thought I was at every point trying to contradict [them], I think that it would be very nice sometime if I could say to [QR], ‘Look, I’m very sorry’, but I—I don’t know how to do this but I think this is coming across as something which was not part of my volition.

...

Well, in this situation it is overwhelmingly true that me having upset [QR] is something I deeply regret, and I think that, going back to—I was just on about belittling—I really want to apologise and say, ‘Look, I do understand why, for example, you thought this was something to do with belittling’. I was beside myself, and, you know, this was a fiasco

and it had major consequences for me and it could have been or it would have had more major consequences at that time, I thought.”

102. At the end of the interview Lord Lea repeated his wish to apologise to QR and to try and “mend fences” and he also raised the possibility of an agreed resolution.
103. Paragraph 151 of the Code of Conduct sets out:
- “At any time during an investigation involving bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct the Commissioner may reach an agreed resolution with both the complainant and the member under investigation. At the Commissioner’s discretion, such an agreed resolution can bring the investigation to an end. In this case, it is at the discretion of the Commissioner, having consulted the complainant and the member, whether a report is published on her webpages on the parliamentary website.”
104. Lord Lea explained that he thought this would be a suitable outcome in view of his contrition for the hurt he had caused QR. He also acknowledged that he had been upset by what he described as inaccurate reporting in the media with regard to the report of the previous investigations and that he was anxious about the reception a further report would receive.
105. We agreed that we would discuss this option with QR when we interviewed them.

QR’s evidence

106. On 8 April I sent QR a copy of the summary of Lord Lea’s interview, together with his request that they consider an agreed resolution, and invited QR to a remote interview with myself and Sam Evans, assisted by James Whittle, which took place on 12 May 2020.
107. I told QR that in his interview Lord Lea had accepted that his behaviour towards QR had led to them feeling belittled and undermined, although that had not been his intention. I therefore explained to QR that the basis for a finding of bullying had been made out, but the investigation was not yet finished, and therefore it was still possible to have an agreed resolution, if both QR and I agreed this was the right outcome.
108. I explained that my position on an agreed resolution was that QR would have to want this outcome in their own interests, and not just in the interests of Lord Lea, and that QR would not be criticised if they decided they wanted the investigation to reach a conclusion, rather than be dealt with through an agreed resolution.⁸
109. Sam Evans then had a discussion with them about QR’s views on Lord Lea’s evidence.
110. QR said that some benefit had already arisen from the complaint, as they now knew that Lord Lea regretted his behaviour and wanted to apologise.
111. However, QR still had concerns with some of his evidence. For instance

8 I had set this approach out in general terms in my earlier reports into the conduct of Lord Stone of Blackheath and into Lord Lea of Crondall.

- he did not seem to accept that he had caused the problem through failing to make the booking correctly;
 - he appeared to feel that QR was partly to blame for not sorting out the problem and being argumentative;
 - he had suggested that if QR had been more senior or experienced they would have handled the situation better.
112. QR explained to us that they had worked for many years in customer service of one sort or another and was well used to dealing with people who were angry and upset about things outside their control. QR was not argumentative during the incident with Lord Lea, and if they had been, they would have expected Lord Lea to have complained and would have expected to be in serious trouble. QR said it was their job to be as helpful as possible; if there had been anything they could have done, they would have done so, regardless of Lord Lea's behaviour.
113. At this point I intervened to say that, having listened to what QR was saying, I did not think that an agreed resolution would be an appropriate outcome, as QR did not agree with Lord Lea's account of events, or his assertion that there was fault on both sides.
114. I asked QR if they were willing to accept my decision on this, or whether there were other reasons why they would like an agreed resolution. QR said they would accept my decision.
115. We discussed whether QR would wish to have any restrictions placed on Lord Lea, such as requiring him to use an entrance where QR was not usually on duty, and they said that this would not be necessary. QR agreed that they were used to dealing with difficult people in their previous jobs:
- “The difference, of course, in this job is that you can't answer back in any way, shape or form and it is almost like I know this sounds crazy a game we play, you know. Peers know that or 99% of them accept that and so there is a sort of level of this superpoliteness. I have never worked anywhere so polite as in the House of Lords, so it is sort of quite a shock when someone behaves like this and, you know like I said at the beginning if he had kept it to the first bit, I wouldn't have complained about him, but it was when he came back and went into it again, because I think everyone is entitled to be having a bad day and get cross and take it out on somebody, to be honest, to a certain extent”.
116. QR also told us that they had been on duty at an entrance subsequently used by Lord Lea, and there had been no issues.

CHAPTER 7: FINDING

117. QR alleges that Lord Lea breached the Code of Conduct by his behaviour towards them. Paragraph 10 of the Code provides that:

“Members of the House should observe the principles set out in the Parliamentary Behaviour Code of respect, professionalism, understanding others’ perspectives, courtesy, and acceptance of responsibility. These principles will be taken into consideration when any allegation of bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct is under investigation.”

118. The Behaviour Code is at Appendix A of the Code, and states:

“whether you are a visitor or working in Parliament at Westminster or elsewhere, there are clear guidelines in place on how you should be treated, and how you should treat others.”

Respect and value everyone—bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct are not tolerated

119. QR said that Lord Lea’s behaviour towards them on [...] January resulted in their feeling belittled and undermined and this was compounded by the presence of other people who heard what he said. This is dealt with in more detail below at paragraph 128.

Recognise your power, influence or authority and don’t abuse them

120. Lord Lea’s behaviour on [...] January appeared to come from a place of power, influence and authority, so it can safely be assumed that he recognised these attributes in his interaction with QR. However, by treating QR angrily and rudely, and failing to apologise at the time, he abused his power, influence and authority, as is clearly shown by QR’s realistic description of the expected behaviour of staff to members

Think about how your behaviour affects others and strive to understand their perspective

121. Lord Lea said that he did not intend to belittle or undermine QR, which suggests he gave little thought at the time to the effect of his behaviour on QR. Subsequently, and with the assistance of his behaviour change training, he has accepted the effect of his behaviour on QR and shown some evidence of being able to understand QR’s perspective. However, this understanding was quite limited, as he continued to feel that QR had contributed to the difficulty he was complaining about.

Act professionally towards others

122. Although professional behaviour is not defined, it seems unlikely that Lord Lea’s behaviour towards QR would fit within any definition of professionalism

Ensure Parliament meets the highest ethical standards of integrity, courtesy and mutual respect

123. Some of the comments on previous requirements also apply here.

Speak up about any unacceptable behaviour you see

124. This is not relevant in this case.

Bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct

125. Though the Code of Conduct provides for the Behaviour Code to be taken into consideration in an investigation, paragraph 17 says that it is only behaviour that amounts to bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct that constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct.

126. At the preliminary assessment stage I concluded that the behaviour complained of could amount to bullying, if proved on the balance of probabilities.

127. Lord Lea accepted, with some reservations and variation, that he had behaved as set out in the complaint, thereby proving the alleged behaviour more conclusively than on the balance of probabilities.

Did Lord Lea's behaviour amount to bullying?

128. For a finding of bullying to be made out, it is not necessary to show that Lord Lea intended to make QR feel vulnerable, upset, undermined, humiliated, denigrated or threatened; it is enough to show that his behaviour had this effect. As shown in the narrative, QR felt belittled and undermined by Lord Lea's treatment of them.

129. **I find therefore that Lord Lea's conduct towards QR amounted to bullying.**

CHAPTER 8: OUTCOME

130. Under the Code of Conduct, when I uphold a complaint of bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct, I must produce a report for publication and identify an appropriate outcome, which can range from no action to expulsion from the House. Three possibilities follow:
- if the conduct complained of, though justified, is towards the lower end of the scale of seriousness, is acknowledged by the member concerned, and is agreed by both the complainant and the member, the matter can be dealt with by remedial action;
 - if remedial action is proposed, but either the complainant or the member does not agree to it, my report and recommended sanction go to the Conduct Committee; and
 - if the complaint is too serious to be dealt with by remedial action, my report and recommended sanction also go to the Conduct Committee.
131. If my report goes to the Conduct Committee, any of my findings can be appealed by the complainant and the respondent. The respondent can also appeal my recommended sanction. Nothing will be published until the outcome of any appeal, at which point the Conduct Committee will publish its own report, to which my report will be annexed. Some sanctions require the agreement of the House, in which case the Conduct Committee reports to the House. Other sanctions may be imposed by report of the Committee alone.
132. If the case is dealt with by remedial action, I publish my report on my webpage, and have the option of reporting to the Conduct Committee.
133. As noted above, Lord Lea proposed resolving QR's complaint by agreed resolution. However, for the reasons I set out above, I did not consider this to be an appropriate outcome.
134. I have upheld QR's complaint and found that Lord Lea's conduct amounted to bullying.
135. In making the necessary decisions on outcome, I have been guided by the principle of proportionality. The first matter for me to consider was whether the complaint was minor, so could possibly be dealt with by remedial action. The factors that I considered were:
- the behaviour complained of was relatively minor and a one-off incident, although the effects on QR were unpleasant;
 - my previous report on the conduct of Lord Lea and the remedial action agreed in relation to those complaints; and
 - the wider impact of decisions made in cases like these on the working environment and culture of the House of Lords.
136. I considered whether the fact that I had previously found Lord Lea to have breached the Code by failing to adhere to the Behaviour Code should remove remedial action as an option. I concluded that this would be inappropriate. The incident took place before Lord Lea had begun the bespoke behaviour change training and coaching he was required to undertake as a result of

the previous complaints. It would be wrong, therefore, to conclude that the previous remedial action had failed to have any effect and that an escalation of sanction was required. Indeed, Lord Lea's response to this complaint made it clear that he was already using the behaviour change training and coaching sessions to address his conduct and the incident that led to this complaint was one he had already been discussing extensively in those sessions.

137. I also considered the effect on others of decisions made in this case. The purpose of the recent changes in the Code is to create a working environment in which bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct have no place. For the new provisions to work, they have to be used. This means that complainants have to have confidence in the process. I think it is reasonable to assume that many complainants will be looking for an outcome that is fair, as quick as possible, and into which they have some input. Remedial action meets these criteria as it can only take place if the complainant agrees, and it brings an end to the process.
138. I discussed remedial action with QR and my conclusions on the appropriateness and utility of requiring further behaviour change coaching and training.
139. We discussed Lord Lea's wish to apologise in person. QR did not want this as they did not want to discuss the incident directly with him. However, they shared Lord Lea's desire for them to return to a situation where they could relate to one another in a normal, professional way once this investigation was completed.
140. QR agreed that a letter of apology—sent via my office—would be appropriate.
141. I wrote to Lord Lea to propose a remedial action of a written apology. We met again to discuss this proposal more fully and he readily agreed to it and sent the letter of apology soon afterwards (see Appendix 1).
142. **As QR and Lord Lea agreed that Lord Lea would write a letter of apology to QR, this is the outcome to the complaint made by QR.**

Conclusion

143. This is my fourth report published following an investigation carried out under the new provisions relating to bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct.
144. I would like to repeat my thanks to the complainant.
145. Lord Lea cooperated with the process and was open and frank at meetings and has shown a clear effort to address and improve his behaviour in the light of my previous report. I thank him for this.
146. I hope that those reading the report will not seek to identify QR. They experienced behaviours that they considered inappropriate and unacceptable in the workplace, and had the courage to use the new process to challenge that behaviour. By doing so they have taken forward the expressed wish of the House of Lords that unacceptable behaviour should be called out.
147. **QR has asked for privacy and has been given it throughout the investigation.** QR now wants to be able to continue at work normally, which may be difficult if they are identified as the complainant. Attempts to identify QR will not only create awkwardness but may also deter others

making complaints in future. I would therefore ask that QR's wishes are respected.

APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF APOLOGY FROM LORD LEA TO QR

I am writing to apologise fully and unreservedly for my conduct on [date]. Although I was under some stress at the time, the way I addressed you was unacceptable and wrong. The Standards Commissioner is now likely to find that it constituted bullying—one of the three stated categories along with harassment and sexual misconduct identified as infringements in the Code.

I am not known for being a bully: I acknowledge having been very argumentative—highly audibly so—on that fateful day, concerning the predicament I found myself in regarding the apparent disappearance of my newly appointed trainer and you said you had felt ‘belittled’ as a consequence. I have from that very afternoon been undergoing counselling and bespoke coaching on how to change my behaviour and hopefully learned how to be far more measured and empathetic in my conduct in future.

I am sorry that in conversation with the Commissioner you were apparently not able to agree to my giving you this apology in person—which would have revealed the sincerity of my deep regret at the sequence of events: but I trust that you will find—albeit in many ways as a second best—this written apology acceptable both in substance and in the way I have expressed my very sincere sentiments about this highly regrettable episode.

Moreover, I want to assure you that I have no hard feelings about anything you have done in making the complaint and you will notice, I hope, a more cheerful presence when we next meet.