



HOUSE OF LORDS

Report from the Commissioner for Standards

The conduct of  
Lord Patel of Bradford

### *Commissioner for Standards*

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

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### *Registrar of Lords' Interests*

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*

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### *Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme helpline*

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# The conduct of Lord Patel of Bradford

## THE CONDUCT OF LORD PATEL OF BRADFORD

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### Summary of complaint

1. On 17 November 2022, my office received a complaint from a member of the public, Mr Martin Butterworth, regarding the conduct of Lord Patel of Bradford.<sup>1</sup>
2. Mr Butterworth alleged that Lord Patel of Bradford had failed to register his role as Chair of the Advisory Board to the India Business Group in the Register of Lords' Interests.

### Relevant aspect of the Code

3. Paragraph 12(a) of the Code of Conduct states that “In order to assist in openness and accountability members shall ... register in the Register of Lords' Interests all relevant interests, in order to make clear what are the interests that might reasonably be thought to influence their parliamentary actions.” The Guide to the Code of Conduct sets out what constitutes a relevant interest.

### Preliminary assessment

4. Once I had verified<sup>2</sup> that Lord Patel was the Chair of the Advisory Board of the India Business Group, I considered it necessary to launch an investigation to determine if he was in breach of the Code of Conduct.

### Summary of investigation

5. I wrote to Lord Patel on 30 November to provide him with a copy of the complaint and inform him that I had launched an investigation. I invited him to submit a full written response to the allegation.
6. Lord Patel responded to my letter on 1 December. He told me:

“I, with the help of my executive officer [redacted], always register all my relevant interests - we did have a discussion with the Registrar's Office about what I should and should not register (please see attached email trail 23/4/18) - as I am Patron, President and Chair of various charities and organisations which are purely voluntary and/or philanthropic<sup>3</sup>... this runs into a very long list.

“We were advised that anything that under category 10 non-financial interests, paragraph 100, “other honorary posts” (on page 26 of the Guide) is therefore considered to be excluded from registration.

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1 The investigation and report were completed by Akbar Khan.

2 Lord Patel's role is listed on the India Business Group's website: <http://www.theindiabusinessgroup.com/site/advisory-board/> [accessed 16 January 2023]

3 Social Work England, 'Register of interests' (5 January 2023): <https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/about/board/register-of-interests/> [accessed 16 January 2023]

“My role at the India Business Group is as Patron Chair of the company. I hereby confirm that the role is honorary and purely voluntary for which I have not at any stage and do not receive any financial remuneration, allowances or rewards from the company. I am not a Director of the company. In terms of the scope of my role, from brief time to time, I have been involved in attending/chairing relevant meetings and/or hosting events in an honorary capacity. I do not have any formal interest in the business and do not get involved in the day-to-day affairs.

“In the circumstances as set out above and given the nature of the role, I do not consider the position to have [been] a registrable interest.”

7. On 21 April 2018, Lord Patel’s executive officer emailed the Registrar of Lords’ Interests to ask for Lord Patel’s entry in the Register of Interests to include his role as “Patron of a number of not-for-profit/charitable organisations working in health, education, social care and criminal justice sectors”. The Registrar responded that patronages do not need to be registered. However, the Registrar was not asked about Lord Patel’s specific role with the India Business Group. If the Registrar had been asked about this role, he would have advised that as a non-financial interest which involved certain duties it should be registered.

### **Finding**

8. **I conclude that Lord Patel of Bradford should have registered his role as Chair of the Advisory Board of the India Business Group and is therefore in breach of paragraph 12 of the Code of Conduct.**
9. **However, I consider this to be a minor and inadvertent breach because Lord Patel misunderstood the requirements of the Code of Conduct and the advice he received from the Registrar of Lords’ Interests, for which remedial action is an appropriate outcome. I proposed that correcting his entry in the Register of Interests would be sufficient remedial action in this case. Lord Patel has since corrected his Register of Interests.**
10. I am grateful to Lord Patel of Bradford for his cooperation in this matter and for his prompt response.