

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 1 February 2012

Present

Lord Lang of Monkton (Chairman)
Sir Colin Budd
Lord Dholakia
Lord Macdonald
Sir Hugh Stevenson

Secretariat

Ms Geraldine Alexander (Secretary)
Ms Kate Campbell
Dr Richard Jarvis
Ms Maggie O'Boyle
Ms Beth Watson

Apologies

1. General The Lord Walker of Aldringham sent his apologies.

Case discussion

2. An applicant met with the Committee to discuss the provisional recommendation on his case.

Minutes of last meeting

3. The minutes of the previous meeting on 7 December 2011 were agreed.

Chairman's update

4. The Committee's website had received over around 10,500 hits in 2011.
5. The Committee had received a copy of Gus O'Donnell's letter to Permanent Secretaries about the Rules.
6. A meeting between the Chairman and Sir Bob Kerslake, the new Head of the Civil Service, was being arranged.
7. The closing date for the Cabinet Office's recruitment of new members of the Committee had now passed. Interviews were due to take place within the next month.
8. The Committee's visits programme was continuing, with visits to the Home Office, MoJ, BIS and Transport planned for February and to the Ministry of Defence in early March. The Committee was particularly keen that the visit to MoD raised issue on the timeliness of business applications and the difficulty

experienced in some cases in the Committee obtaining further relevant information.

9. A triennial review of the Committee was announced by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, Francis Maude, in December. The review will commence this financial year and the expectation is that it will take into account the findings and recommendations of PASC following its recently announced inquiry. No further detail was available on who would undertake the review.
10. The Chairman reported on recent cases which had attracted media attention.

Consultancies policy

11. The Committee considered the paper on its approach to applications for independent consultancies. It agreed that its policy should be amended so that the conditions on all independent consultancies require applicants to seek the Committee's confirmation that each individual commission would be permissible under the terms of the consultancy. An applicant would need to make a case for this direct to the Committee before a commission was accepted, and if agreed, it would be published once the commission was taken up or publicly announced. If the Committee took the view that a commission may be outside of the terms of the consultancy, then the applicant would need to make a full application under the Rules.
12. The Committee was aware that this new approach may require additional resources and it invited the secretariat to discuss this issue with the Cabinet Office. The secretariat was also invited to plan the process and take forward implementation of the policy immediately.

Public Administration Select Committee

13. The Committee discussed the issues and questions paper published by PASC.

Communications

14. The Press Officer updated the Committee on recent press coverage.

Any other business

15. The next meeting would be on 29 February at 1 Horse Guards Road.

Committee Secretariat
February 2012