

MPs' outside interests

Written evidence

Submissions 53-92

Submission number	Name
53	William Bryan
54	Peter Kidwell
55	Eleanor Forster
56	Iain Macpherson
57	Revd. Ian Hamilton
58	Peter Craine
59	R Cullen
60	Paul Wilkins
61	Rt Hon Sir John Wheeler DL
63	Revd. Chris Goble
64	Gerard Cashley
65	Adam Vaughan
66	Brian Todd
67	Roy Lote FCA
68	James Bevis
69	Colin Stocks
70	Helen Rowe
71	John Giles
72	Cat Cortese
73	Bethan Powell
74	Matthew Foweraker
75	Dad Chaney
76	Andrew Albert Hall
77	Adrian J Card
78	Maria Caulfield MP
79	Rt Hon Sir Richard Ottaway
80	Gary Scott
81	Edward Leigh MP
82	Colin Hulley
83	Clive Dyson
84	Trevor Pedley
85	William Hair
86	Martin Walker
87	Stephen King
88	Graham M Phillips
89	Sir Roger Gale MP
91	Jonathon Djanogly MP
92	Martin Brown

SUBMISSION 53

The answer is very simple. Once you are elected as a MP then you have no second job. You are elected to serve the people of the borough who form your constituency. To do any other work is not possible, as you cannot fully commit yourself to serving the people who elected you. Your rate of pay is £74,962 per year if you cannot survive on this then to be honest one cannot possibly expect you to be able to perform your duties. What should happen though is that the job you had before you became a Member of Parliament is kept open for you once your tenure as said MP has finished either through retirement as MP or loss of election.

William Bryan

SUBMISSION 54

Benefitting from insider knowledge from being Chancellor and passing the knowledge of government plans and strategy to beneficiaries is totally wrong and should be made illegal and his payments confiscated.

Peter Kidwell

SUBMISSION 55

Dear Sirs,

I am keeping this short!

MPs get a far better salary than most members of the general public, topped up by generous allowances. Their constituents, and indeed the people of the UK, should be able to relax in the knowledge that MPs are spending their time doing work in and for parliament - no other job should be allowed to distract from that, no second or third, in fact no job at all.

It is a common complaint today that MPs seem divorced from the people and have no idea how they actually feel about things. The mere fact that it is deemed necessary to have a consultation about this particular topic proves that.

Yours faithfully

Eleanor Forster

CSPL MPs' outside interests review

Sirs,

I am responding to your consultation on MPs outside interests and am doing so as a constituent and private individual. I do not represent any business, organisation, or group.

Like your review, my response has been prompted by recent coverage of additional outside interests for one former minister but I have felt for many years that being an MP/MSP/MEP should be a full-time occupation, and that some MPs outside interests that we read about in the press cannot possibly be considered “reasonable”.

1. What would be acceptable in a “real” job?

Looking at “normal” people in “normal” jobs, terms and conditions of employment will typically exclude any employment which might be considered to conflict with the “day job” and will require authorisation before secondary employment of any type is taken on.

In addition, it would normally be accepted that any such secondary employment should be outside normal hours and will not affect performance of day to day duties. It is also noted that there might be issues around the Working Time Directive.

When we read of politicians missing important votes (the day job) so they can, say, appear in court to represent a paying client, that is not something that would be acceptable for civil servants or public sector employees. I see no difference if the politician is taking time out to attend a board meeting or to deliver a paid lecture.

2. Different treatment of Benefit Claimants

Similarly, we often hear of politicians complaining about Benefit Cheats, and sanctions being imposed on benefit claimants who miss an appointment – what is the difference between them and a politician taking a hugely higher salary from the taxpayer while taking time off to make money for themselves elsewhere? That is doubly frustrating when the politician is making money by virtue of their elected position rather than a skill or qualification that they have.

3. Benefit to the public from outside work?

Some might argue that outside employment brings new skills to our politicians but I have to disagree. We now have more career politicians who have no experience outside the world they inhabit and I don't think it is sensible to be paying these people a full salary while they gain experience elsewhere.

If they don't have the experience, why on earth do they feel qualified to stand for office? And who do they think they will benefit/help in a role that they are apparently unqualified for?

My employer pays me a good salary for the skills and experience I have brought to their business but will not pay me to go and gain experience elsewhere and would simply not allow me to take on any work that might impact on their business or on my performance. Why should we pay politicians while they go off to gain experience elsewhere?

Elected politicians are very well paid to represent their constituents and that should be a full time job. If a politician takes time away from their job, I see no reason why I should be paying them for that time that should be devoted to serving and representing their constituents. If they prefer these lucrative outside posts they should resign and force a by-election.

4. Impact on employment statistics (This one is slightly tongue-in-cheek)

I have very little doubt that there are better candidates for most/all of these outside roles. If the politicians would limit themselves to a single employment we might see a tiny improvement in unemployment figures!

5. What would I like to see happen?

Ideally I would like to see all outside work stopped, perhaps with the exclusion of newspaper columns and written work, competed away from Parliament in what would sensibly be considered their own time – i.e. not during parliamentary debate or voting, and not when they might be expected to be working in their constituency.

Yours faithfully

Iain Macpherson

SUBMISSION 57

My humble opinion is that Mr George Osborne seems a little greedy in the current situation that the United Kingdom finds itself in.

Revd Ian P.Hamilton

- 1) With regard to your review on the above subject. I don't think MP's should have second jobs. If they are doing the MP job correctly, they should not have time for external work activities. Furthermore, any other outside interests should be fully transparent. Having a second job can clearly create a conflict of interest and major corruption - for example being a director of a health company whilst privatising the NHS. Or in the case of Theresa May, letting her husband have large numbers of shares in G4S whilst privatising the prison service.
- 2) What annoys me about British MPs is that they do not accept that they are employees of the British public. This to me indicates that there is a lack of democracy in this country. By making MPs concentrate on parliamentary business only, it might focus their minds a bit more.
- 3) If MPs have time for external work activities, does that not indicate that they have too many support staff?
- 4) Conversely, deprived areas require more work by the MP than affluent areas. I feel it is unfair that an MP like George Osborne should be able to take on numerous jobs simply because he represents a rich area.
- 5) I also feel that the arguments that are made for keeping the status quo are nonsense. For example, the "need" for MPs to have current knowledge of the outside world. MPs should not consider their job as a life-long career option in the first place.
- 6) You ask how my proposals could be implemented. Simple. Make it law and take away parliamentary privileges.
- 7) I write this as an individual who is fed up with MPs getting bloated salaries and pensions, expense fraud, subsidised facilities, exaggerated egos, and out dated parliamentary traditions. One rule for us and a different one for MPs. Cash for questions etc.

Hope this helps,

Peter Craine

SUBMISSION 59

I'm responding as a British citizen and voter, to the consultation on whether MPs should have second jobs.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/mps-outside-interests-cspl-review>
<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-39456771>

Here is my view:

Whether an MP has other jobs should be a decision for their constituents. Where there is a significant change to the MP's workload or interests, the constituency should not have to wait until the next scheduled election to exert this right. A fair and reasonable system should be created to let constituents reassess their support for the MP; perhaps by by-election. Possible triggers for a by-election are (1) a measure of MP's outside interests (by-election held if a threshold is crossed); (2) a measure of local demand for a by-election, such as in a local referendum or petition. Each local community could set its own procedure for making this decision, to ensure a locally appropriate process that is fair both to voters and the MP.

Thank you for your interest.

Mr R Cullen

SUBMISSION 60

I write in relation to the review of MPs' second jobs.

My personal feeling is that becoming an MP for a constituency should be the primary full time role of an MP. Many members bring experience with them from other walks of life prior to becoming an MP and I believe they should be allowed to conduct extra work in this role whilst being an MP. This knowledge can be used within parliamentary work.

However a set amount of time limit should be allowed for this extra work outside of parliament. When an MP has several outside roles it is blatantly obvious that that the role of MP becomes secondary.

One extra role/job would seem sufficient.

Paul Wilkins

SUBMISSION 61

There can be no objections to MPs having outside interests either paid or unpaid providing they are proportionate and do not inhibit the fulfilment of Parliamentary duties. These should include the free availability to serve on standing and select committees, be able to attend and participate in debates, to personally respond to their constituents' requests and correspondence. To fulfil these functions implies only token absences from the Palace of Westminster. To attend Parliament in the afternoons only implies that other Members gave to taken on extra burdens, this being both morally and ethically wrong.

The Right Honourable Sir John Wheeler, DL

SUBMISSION 63

My view is simple - MPs should not have a second job where they are paid significantly large sums as it can easily persuade them to act for the interests of the company or organisation not constituents, or where it would normally be a second full time job. I write as a member of the clergy whereby I can have many other interests but am not paid for them, and they often are linked to my work. If the implications are that MPs haven't enough to do (and I don't think that is the case) there are within every constituency opportunities for volunteering! I think MPs should be able to write for newspapers etc to get their arguments across but not be beholden to that newspaper. I don't agree that a political office constitutes the same as an outside job, but I do wonder where the democracy is with regard to the speaker when their constituents effectively have no one to speak for them in parliament.

As a separate but perhaps related argument there should be bought in every constituency an MPs house which can act as office etc for the time of the mp, in the same way clergy live in vicarages etc. The country would then own them and it would make security etc easier to manage.

Rev Chris Goble

SUBMISSION 64

Dear Sir, in my opinion MPs should be subject to exactly the same rules as they enforce in other public servants. There should be no other employment save any that is connected to a sport or hobby such as; refereeing junior matches or acting as stewards or marshals at public events. In no case should any of these activities be conducted during the hours that said MP should be working either in Parliament or in their constituency.

Yours faithfully,
Gerard Cashley

SUBMISSION 65

To have another paid job, on top of being an MP, exposes their motivations for the wrong ones. They are paid well enough to support whatever family they have. I understand that you do not have the power to prohibit but you do have the power to define the backdrop.

If will not mean that you attract less qualified people. It will mean that you attract less financially motivated ones. An MP has the opportunity to effect positive change in their constituency and their country. This opportunity should be seized rigorously and unendingly.

There is a massive distrust of politicians in this country. Committees should take every chance they get to address this. For me, this is a big opportunity to do so. The distrust has become debilitating to effective public engagement and democracy.

Please be bold.

Adam Vaughan

SUBMISSION 66

I am afraid I believe that Members of Parliament are being paid quite a lot more than most of their constituents and should have NO other jobs while they are Members of Parliament.

No one can do two jobs to the full satisfaction of each.

Brian Todd

At today's meeting of the Blackburn with Darwen Older Peoples Forum it was unanimously agreed that all Members of Parliament should have a single job as Constituency Member of Parliament exclusively

Brian Todd

SUBMISSION 67

Dear Sir,

I have long thought that for MPs' to have second jobs is wrong and not good for their constituents. There always is going to be a conflict of interests with the job paying most getting priority every time. Also having occasionally had to have two jobs you cannot give all your talents due to tiredness, lack of time and distractions. This practice should stop even if it means giving MPs a pay rise

Yours faithfully
Roy Lote

SUBMISSION 68

Dear whomever it may concern,

I believe that while serving as a member of parliament you should hold no other paid positions as its blatantly obvious that it compromises their judgement. If they're unhappy that being an MP doesn't pay well enough than I suggest they don't become an MP as their salary being over three times the average wage seems more than generous.

I also believe they should not be allowed to be landlords as again this makes them more than likely to favour landlords interests than tenants.

Yours sincerely,

James Bevis

SUBMISSION 69

In my opinion I do not think that an MP can do two or more jobs at a hundred per cent level well. I am now retired but when I was working it took up ten hours a day. The message being sent by MPs doing second jobs is that The MP role is easy and that they are not fully committed to it. If my MP had a second job I would seriously have to think about voting for him in the future.

Colin Stocks

Dear Committee,

1. I am a stay-at-home mum and I am deeply concerned that the role of an MP is becoming a side-line activity for some members of the House. £70000 is a perfectly adequate sum of money to live on comfortably and I don't see why MP's should be allowed access to other full time jobs. As a civil servant for 9 years I would never have been allowed to do so, even though as an experienced counter terrorism expert I was only earning £27000 a year and it was not enough to live on comfortably in London.

2. An MP's role is a full time job and with Brexit coming up it can only get busier. The people of the UK are experiencing real struggles with Brexit, emotionally and practically, and it is important for them to feel that they have their MP's full attention.

3. I am so concerned for people on low incomes about the unexpected consequences of Brexit that I have started a website www.getabrexitbuffer.com which offers people ideas on how they can use the next 2 years to prepare. It is self-funded and non-commercial. It aims to help people build a buffer around themselves and their families to protect against the problems that Brexit may bring and also be in a better position to take advantage of the opportunities it may create. I am doing this because I don't think the government will have time to prepare each family individually, but it will never get any traction if the very people needed to help spread the word are otherwise engaged on something else more profitable.

4. I feel that MP's should be able to write books or articles if it is about their work but not just run roughshod over the important role an MP has in our society. We need to feel we can trust our politicians but that cannot happen if we feel many use it as a way of accessing better paid jobs later on. There are too many truly vulnerable people in our society to have a parliament with one eye focussed on something else.

5. MPs should have to declare all their external work on their website, irrespective of how small it may be with payment amounts included. The consequences for failing to do so should be severe. If I had had a second job at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and had not declared it, I would have been dismissed immediately as it would have invalidated my DV clearance level. MPs should be no different.

6. Thank you for reviewing this. I feel very strongly that Parliament should have a reputation for honesty and it is essential for our future social cohesion at this difficult time.

Yours sincerely,
Helen Rowe

SUBMISSION 71

To whom this may concern

I am against any paid employment for MPs outside of their duties as an MP. They are paid by us to represent us and that should be a full time job, not part time. It also means that they cannot be brought of by interest groups from the outside Or represent companies interests which will be against some of their constituency. Response required to see that this is getting somewhere.

John Giles

SUBMISSION 72

It is only obvious that ANY additional job for an MP carries with it a conflict of interest. An MP owns a restaurant: she/he will push to relax health and safety regulations and will take the visiting foreign leaders to dinner in her own brassiere. An MP is at the head of a building company: she/he will hire her own company to build council houses with public money. An MP is editor of a newspaper: she will erase any criticism the newspaper may raise against her own party and even omit news that reflect poorly on her party's performance.

When I heard Osborne had become editor of the Evening Standard, I thought the UK was on the road to becoming like Italy, where Berlusconi was the owner of three major television stations for years while being Prime Minister. The difference between the two countries seems to be that in Italy there was an appropriate law against conflict of interest (which Berlusconi breached), while in the UK Osborne has done the misdeed legally. The Italian case might have been in many senses worse than the British one. However, Italy had better antibodies in place than the UK, which does not seem to have any.

The problems that the Osborne affair raises are three: conflict of interest, free press (as in press free from the control of politics), time allocation (how much time can we expect an MP with two additional jobs in the press and in finance to dedicate to his job of political representative??).

Bottom line is: politicians are supposed to work towards the common good, and a politician's personal ties to a business make the temptation for her to pursue her personal interest above the interest of everyone too appealing. A liberal democracy should appreciate how severe a threat conflict of interest is, and none of us wants the UK to become like the US, where lobbyism is not only legal, it is the normal procedure of democracy.

My advice is: outlaw ANY additional jobs for MPs. Anything short of this would amount to failure.

Cat Cortese

SUBMISSION 73

To whom it may concern

Being an MP is supposed to be a full time job. The job of an MP is supposed to be to be there in parliament to stand for the voices of their constituency. They are paid generously for this and recently have had pay increases above that of any public sector worker. They are paid expenses for this.

This government is determined to undermine all other public sector workers, demoralising them by trying to ruin their reputations, instigating efficiency savings (otherwise known as redundancies). Trying to turn the public against those who actually do work towards helping them. This government frowns upon doctors who supplement their earnings (which this government are constantly attacking) as they say if doctors are working full time how do they have time to do extra work.

This government needs to ensure it is not one rule for MPs and one for the rest of society. MPs should NOT be allowed to have second jobs and must always declare their own private income from other companies or investments!

I trust that this consultation will ensure that the right decision is made. Ban MPs from having any extra jobs.

Yours faithfully

Bethan Powell

SUBMISSION 74

I fail to see how, upon being paid nearly triple the average UK wage, plus expenses; an MP needs to be earning additional money. They are paid to be full time servants of their constituents and their country and should act as such.

Matthew Foweraker

SUBMISSION 75

I don't think ex MPs' or current MPs' should be allowed to work for a media company where they can influence the vote of the public.

Dad Chaney

SUBMISSION 76

Hello

I feel strongly that MP's should not have any other jobs and they should be spending their time purely on their MP's work. If they want more money then change to a better paid job!

Regards

Andrew Albert Hall

Dear Sir / Madam,

I was born in 1960 and I grew up in the 1970s aware that we had politicians who had perhaps fought in World War 2, worked in mines or other heavy industries, law, science, technology and business, all people with different backgrounds but all with a hinterland and an experience of the real world. It seemed to be with these people that holding office as an MP was a goal to aim for and that it was not the first step on a career ladder for that big directorship in the City or a job with the EU, UN, NATO or some other big body, becoming an MP was the prize.

It bothers me that one of the 2015 intake tried to be elected to office with two major political parties before being elected for a third party, smacks of desperation to me. I now watch that person's career progression with interest because I do not understand how you change your politics so much and what the selection committees thought of that person's change of views.

I understand if MPs lose their seat they need another career but it has always bothered me that MPs who have handled privatisations of State assets have gone onto roles within those companies when they have ceased to be Government ministers, after a time limit has elapsed. Surely a well-paid directorship with a company you have had a role in privatising should not be permitted.

My final point I must make is that how can we have an MP that was Chancellor of the Exchequer less than one year ago working for a company that has a shareholding in Uber (he was part of a Government that allowed that company unregulated access to the UK) and has also bought "Bradford and Bingley " mortgages that the State has owned since 2008. He was making policy in Government, and Blackstone has benefited from that policy. It is like asking somebody, "what first attracted you to your multimillionaire partner?" It does not seem ethical to me but as we have seen over the last ten years normal rules apply to everyone apart from those that Politicians choose not to apply them to, chiefly themselves.

Yours faithfully

Adrian J Card

SUBMISSION 78

I wish to respond to the consultation.

I currently do some work as a nurse on the hospital bank in a London hospital. I find this very helpful for my work as a MP in terms of keeping up to date on health issues. I only do 30 hours a month and do these as night shifts over a weekend or in recess instead of taking any leave. In this way it does not impact on my work as a MP. I get paid on average £100 for a twelve-hour shift, which I declare on the register of members' interest.

If we want people from other backgrounds coming in to parliament, instead of professional politicians, we must allow them to keep their professional practice. I am in a very marginal seat and to keep my nursing registration I have to do 480 hours over 3 years. If I were forced to give this up I would leave parliament and return to nursing full time now.

I also incurred over £50k worth of debt to get elected between 2010 and 2015, which may not be a huge sum to many but it is to me, and I cannot take the chance of having no job to return to should I not be re-elected in 2020.

I hope that helps the consultation.

Maria Caulfield MP

Dear Sirs,

I write to express the view that parliament and governance as a whole is enhanced by allowing MPs to hold outside interests.

Parliament is an assembly of men and women who bring wide ranging experiences to the benefit of parliamentary debate. All walks of life are present, right across the spectrum. Trade Unionists, academics, professionals, sportsmen, businessmen, servicemen, the list is endless - they are all there

If you haven't experienced something you cannot have an opinion. To cut MP's off from their backgrounds has the consequence that they have to rely on others for information. In my opinion this is a mistake as such information is inevitably tempered by self-interest and is often inaccurate.

Providing there is transparency and full declarations of interest MP's should be able to have outside interests. Indeed there is a perfectly respectable argument that MP's should be encouraged to do so.

Best wishes

Rt Hon.Sir Richard Ottaway

SUBMISSION 80

I believe that ministers should have a balanced approach to outside interests junior ministers and ministers without portfolio should only be able to have a 2nd paid job if the following is met. No conflict with main job of representing constituents. The overall time in 2nd job over a parliamentary week should not be over 10% total work time.

Gary Scott

SUBMISSION 81

Dear Sir

It is useful to Parliament for MPs to have a broad range of continuing experience. Some part time work need not prevent any MP from being an effective Parliamentarian. We also want to encourage high calibre people to remain in Parliament. Not all MPs can, should or want to be Ministers. Indeed we want to encourage independence.

Edward Leigh MP

Review of MPs' Outside Interests

Dear Ms Bainsfair,

Thank you for your letter 10.04.17 acknowledging my previous letter.

I write again, first to strengthen some earlier points I made, and second, to make and raise an additional one.

First. The well established facts of general lack of faith in the full probity of MPs, have become highly dangerous to the democratic wellbeing of the nation. All too often I hear the remark, "well they're all in it for what they can get out". I believe the majority of MPs are honest and hard-working, but the persistence of contrary views is most disturbing. However, it really is the case that MPs, like Caesar's wife, must be above suspicion. It's here that the recent example of George Osborne is so undermining.

Second. The observation is often made that MPs can better act as national democratic representatives if they have expertise beyond their work in Parliament. This observation can be most disingenuous and especially where it leads to highly lucrative financial reward. And in any case, as a matter of routine, MPs should be so highly involved within their constituencies that they develop expertise about say schools, hospitals, factories, etc. etc. None of this work should receive remuneration. If an ex-cabinet minister like George Osborne is intent on developing useful expertise beyond his existing knowledge, then why can't he volunteer to become a classroom assistant or work for the charity shelter? How such volunteering would raise public respect for MPs.

There is no need to acknowledge receipt of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Colin Hulley

SUBMISSION 83

MPs should work to a contract, which should have the same terms that any employer would seek to enforce, including:

- A specific commitment of time to the job. Most of us would expect to put in 5 days a week, with 25 days paid holiday plus public holidays. But MPs should be expected to work unsocial hours and travel to and from their constituencies: so longer working weeks, but parliamentary holidays.
- Inclusion of a set of ethical standards of conduct. All companies have to have these now for bribery, health and safety, treatment of co-workers ... MPs are also under the ethics for public office holders.
- Terms governing competition and the appropriate ownership of resulting revenue. If a MP or minister (or ex-MP or ex-minister) derives revenue arising from their current or previous role (rather than their previous personal skills) or the derived influence and insight, then where should this flow to? In particular, why should an MP or ex-minister, receive (all) the income from public speaking when they are patently speaking from that position? Patents I have obtained have all had to be allocated to my employers and I get none of the resulting royalties or protected income. This is a difficult issue and has wider implications than just MPs. 'Gamekeeper turned poacher' is an ethical issue that needs consideration across public life.
- Terms governing conflicts of interest and reporting thereof. Failure to declare is (or should be) a criminal act. I believe it is for Town Councillors!

An MP working to such a contract should be able to do some additional work in the limited time left available, but not one that leaves little time for their parliamentary role (i.e. breaks the terms of their contract). But there needs to be a test to determine if any of this is really part of their job as an MP or minister. If, as a business manager, I speak at a conference it is usually not paid for by the conference, but if it is my employee might expect the income. It is clear that I am speaking from my professional position. Why is the situation any different for an elected politician?

Of course, the same questions could be asked for, say, employees (and effective employees) of the BBC.

The argument is often raised that skilled people will not stand for election if they lose their (large) income as a result. If they will not, then they are not sufficiently altruistic to take on the role.

A related, but far bigger, problem is that our political system provides us with career politicians as leaders. Behaviour is driven by the need to be elected and by internal party posturing. This is worthy of a separate review. I would suggest that new MPs be given a course on facilitation and change management. Their role as MPs and ministers should be to help others improve the services they are working in (such as health or education) over relatively long time periods, rather than trying to push through 'quack remedies' that they believe may work. Much of industry has learned this lesson. Changes of policy at each change of government or, even worse, minister have done more damage to our public services than any improvement that could have been made.

Yours sincerely,

Clive Dyson

1. Introduction

- 1.1 My name is Trevor Pedley and this submission is in a personal capacity.
- 1.2 I am now retired but previously worked for 34years in the field of education as a teacher, senior leader in a school and as a Local Authority School Improvement Consultant. I am educated to Masters Degree level and am a qualified headteacher.
- 1.3 I have been interested in politics for a significant number of years but am not affiliated to any political party and have never been a political activist in any shape or form.
- 1.4 I am responding to this consultation out of a desire to contribute to improving the credibility of the role and actions of MPs as perceived by the general public, predominantly caused by the relatively recent apparent abuses and actions of particular MPs that have bought the systems of salaries and expenses into disrepute.

2. Scope of review

- 2.1 It is my belief that the scope of the review into MP's outside interests is too narrow, as was the inquiry into MPs' expenses in 2009.
- 2.2 As was recognised in the inquiry into MPs' expenses that 'It has been argued that this situation came about partly because of the unwillingness of successive governments to increase MPs' pay' (1.5 MPs' expenses and allowances. Supporting Parliament, safeguarding the taxpayer 2009) and this current review simply adds to the patchwork of reviews and inquiries rather than addressing the issues head on.
- 2.3 Fundamentally, having a complete overhaul of MPs' pay, terms and conditions is required to build public confidence and resolve this and many other concerns related to the working life of MPs. However, I suspect the political will to do this does not exist as some of the outcomes might appear to be unpalatable both in terms of the general public and the MPs themselves.
- 2.4 The general public appear to believe that MPs are 'a law unto themselves' and do not conform to the standards and expectations they have to adhere to in their workplace. They see a different set of rules being applied to MPs and a lack of accountability if a particular MP is seen to 'get away with' playing the system, as the recent furore surrounding the appointment of George Osborne as The Evening Standard Editor shows
- 2.5 The issues as far as I see them are
 - 2.5.1 MPs do not have a detailed job description, they have a loosely defined set of working principles and this makes it difficult to have any real degree of accountability on the work they carry out.

Consequently in relation into this current review it is difficult to ascertain how much time they spend on their MP role and consequently the amount of 'their own time' they can legitimately spend on secondary employment.

- 2.5.2 The lack of a detailed job description makes it difficult to determine an appropriate level of remuneration. It is my view that MPs salary is too low considering the work the general public expect of them and this is compounded by the lack of transparency in the work they do i.e. the amount of time they spend on constituency work, parliamentary work etc.. It is anomalous for an MP to receive a considerably worse package than, for example, a county councillor
- 2.5.3 There appears to be a lack of accountability once an MP is in post. The argument that the electorate have the opportunity to call them to account at the next election is both naïve and duplicitous. Few constituents have any real contact with their local MP and are certainly unaware of what they do on a day to day basis. At best they see their MPs only when an election is due or in various photo opportunities in their local area and in the media. The vast majority of people vote along party lines and voting tends to be tribal in nature and therefore an MP can stay in post regardless of their performance. This point is clearly illustrated in the recent Brexit voting where some MPs voted on the triggering of Article 50 against the way their constituents voted and against their party line but those MPs will not be held accountable as they sit in seats that are 'safe' seats for their political party.
- 2.5.4 MPs have the ability to block changes to their working practices that they do not agree with. In most people's working life job reviews are constantly being carried out and the outcomes of those reviews are generally imposed, albeit mediated through unions.
- 2.5.5 I believe that MPs should be allowed to take on additional work, especially if it is to maintain skills for employment after being an MP. However, whilst people in most types of employment are allowed to undertake additional employment, there are very strict guidelines surrounding it. In relation to MPs the expenses and allowances inquiry stated that ' we believe that it should be limited in scope' - (27 MPs' expenses and allowances) but the issue with this is the lack of definition of what 'limited' actually means. In addition the current system for approval for MPs additional work seems to be inconsistently applied as the recent case of George Osborne appears to illustrate
- 2.5.6 There is a lack of input by the general public in relation to the day to day work of MPs. It has been a recent development that politicians of all colours have been promoting the appointment of workers to company boardrooms yet it appears that little, if anything, has been done to do the same for the work of MPs

3. List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

A detailed MP job description should be developed that provides specific expectation of the minimum working hours, duties and responsibilities, an expectation of the minimum time to be spent on constituency work etc. This will bring them in line with the majority of the working population and will assist in greater accountability

Recommendation 2

A job evaluation should then be conducted and an appropriate salary package provided This should be done through a working panel that takes evidence from a range of sources

Recommendation 3

MPs should be only be allowed to serve for a specific number of terms but should be allowed to return as an MP after a break of one term. This would have a number of benefits the main one being that MPs would be able to reconnect with the 'real world' and it would dispel the notion of 'career politicians that have not idea of the ordinary person's situation'

Recommendation 4

MPs should be allowed to undertake additional work but it should be based on a clearly defined set of criteria which are applied consistently. Additional work should only be allowed if it can be unconditionally demonstrated that the MP is meeting the requirements of their job description; the work is of a nature that allows an MP to maintain their career outside of politics; that the work is not derived by a company or corporation seeking to gain an advantage by having an MP as an 'employee' or board member either directly or indirectly through that MP's access to political any other institutions and that the appointment will not create a conflict of interest

Recommendation 5

One monitoring body should be set up to monitor and appraise the work of MPs. This body should have the power to review the work of individual MPs looking at the work they have done in their constituency, that on working parties and committees, their attendance at Parliament and their voting record. It should have the power to call any MP that is not meeting the requirements of the job to account. The panel should be made up of a range of people with, for example, a currently sitting MP as well as one person from the general public. They should be fixed term appointments that are staggered to provide continuity

This would bring them in line with the majority of the working population that regularly undergoes reviews and appraisals and will improve public confidence in the work of MPs

Recommendation 6

Members of the general public should be able to raise concerns about the work and conduct of their constituency MP and, if there is sufficient evidence, the monitoring board should investigate and have sanctions that can be applied if the MP is found to be in breach of standards.

This will improve the accountability of Members of Parliament

Recommendation 7

The outcomes of the work of monitoring body, together with the data relating to MP's work, should be published in a central location accessible by the general public.

This will allow for greater transparency as constituents will be able to easily see, for example, the amount of times their MP has attended parliament, voted on issues etc..

This will improve the transparency of the whole process

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you specifically with regards to Mr Osborne's recent appointment as editor of the London evening standard, and more generally about additional paid employment taken on by MP's.

1.Factors to consider in determining 'reasonable limits'.

The principal duty of an MP is to represent all their constituency members without bias or favour. Duties in this regard should be addressed first hand, by responding to and recording correspondence, attending public surgeries and taking forward the concerns of constituents in a non-partisan manner, this would be expected to take up a considerable amount of MP's time.

MP's should be obliged to attend a certain percentage of Parliamentary debates and votes, especially concerning matters pertinent to their constituents. There should be a minimal fixed time MPs should be expected to perform their duties within the week as a matter of principal.

MP's should be encouraged to take up additional responsibility within Parliament, in cross-party committees etc. working in the interests of the Country at large.

My own view is that MP's should rather spend additional time voluntarily supporting their constituents and promoting/assisting local charities as opposed to seeking additional paid roles!

2.Outside interests/conflicts of interest

This has been highlighted very well of late. A large section of electorate will be sceptical about the validity of inflated executive pay and large share-holder dividends sometimes at the perceived expense of higher bills for the Public, for example high interest rates for borrowers and increasing utility bills.

When MPs take on highly paid roles at for example Investment Banks, this will automatically raise suspicions amongst the Public, and will create doubt that the Private Banking Sector is wielding undue influence upon MP's in their pay, in order to affect rules relating to their particular sphere of business.

If for example a sitting MP were to take on the editorship of a high volume newspaper, the obvious conflicts of interest are so clear that it is very surprising to learn there are no Parliamentary rules are in place to prevent such a scenario. This really does raise important questions about how seriously Parliament expects MP's to take their primary role and can do nothing but arouse suspicions in the Public domain. It is apparent that an MP with these dual roles, could/will seek to use each independent role to influence/advance their other role.

The most obvious conflict of interest is the MP seeking their own personal private gain while employed as an MP, this diminishes the role of MP's and raises very serious questions about whether the salary given to MP's should be greatly reduced, if the job can be done on a part/part time basis.

This against the backdrop of the vast majority of Public workers having a relative pay cut, many of whom work in roles at least as important to the Public as MP's

3. Whether there is sufficient transparency around MP's outside interests, and how openness can be promoted.

No, there is not. The most obvious solution is for there to be a requirement that MP's publish both their Tax Bills and details of additional earnings, including investments. This could possibly be extended to close family members in some capacity. It is very important for the success of our Parliamentary Democracy that MP's act in the interests of their constituents, first and foremost. There is an alarming mistrust in Politics currently, and this can only be remedied by having a fair and transparent Parliamentary Democracy, with rules laid out for the benefit not of grasping politicians, but for the Public who they are elected to represent.

4. Whether there needs to be new rules or guidance on MPs' outside interests, and how any new arrangements could be implemented.

Yes, this need is glaringly obvious. If the rules are not changed and applied this will only add to the Public tensions and potentially contribute towards a popular reaction against a skewed and unbalanced Parliamentary Democracy. If we are truly 'in it together', its about time that rhetoric in this respect is matched with concrete action, clearly some MP's will act carte blanche, ignoring the Public good for the sake of their own benefit and self promotion, there needs to be appropriate checks.

To implement new rules, simply amend existing rules to include the new ones which are of Public benefit, then have a Parliamentary debate and vote, if this fails it will at least create a Public record of individual MP's votes, which should then be vigorously placed into the Public domain, so that the Public are well informed on this issue and can take it into account when they next vote. It can then be taken to the House of Lords for further debate. If these changes are not implemented, we clearly do not live in an accountable Democracy with the Public good at its heart.

The simplistic argument against change is that Politicians are very capable people, who need to exercise their intellect and seek additional paid roles in order to hold them in office. They can always resign and take up Private work, or if sufficient rules are in-place they will potentially not apply to be an MP in the first place.

This idea that they are somehow gifted beyond comprehension is nonsense, if they have been gifted with particular talents, then lets encourage a Parliamentary Democracy which states clearly and vigorously that MP's talents are to be for the Public good, first and foremost, and scrutinise those MP's who stray from the path of Public Duty.

Sincerely, Mr Hair

SUBMISSION 86

1. My name is Martin Walker. I am a resident of Solihull in the West Midlands, and my job is [REDACTED] a licensed Private Hire operator headquartered in Birmingham, but with licenses and operations in the surrounding council areas, employing 50 full and part time staff, and contracting with 250+ owner drivers.
2. I am concerned with the impact that the online technology company Uber has had on our business, but I am more concerned at the light touch regulation that seems to be apportioned to Uber, and I'm suspicious that regulators are either 1) scared of the costs involved in litigation with this organisation or 2) themselves involved with assisting this organisation to disrupt and potentially dominate this market.
3. Recent media reports have linked George Osborne and David Cameron with being involved in internal lobbying on behalf of Uber against the regulations about to be imposed on the trade in London by then mayor Boris Johnson.
4. The media reports talk about Steve Hilton and Rachel Whetstone, married couple, Steve who worked in Downing Street in a high position and his wife Rachel who worked at Uber.
5. Rachel Whetstone has recently left Uber very shortly after these reports being made public in the media.
6. A cover up is alleged and the ICO are investigating as the same question was asked of a requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 of Downing Street and of Transport for London.
7. Downing Street reported they held no information, and subsequently Transport for London went on to release a number of emails and text messages between the parties, which had the effect of withdrawing and watering down what was proposed.
8. MP's of any stature must not be allowed to internally lobby other parts of government, devolved or otherwise, and then not allow for the information to be made public in order for the topic to be properly scrutinised.
9. Please consider my comments in the light of the significant damage that Uber is causing to the industry; the domination of the market - which should be investigated by the Competition and Markets Authority with the money that Uber are spending on behalf of investors to subsidise the market to an extent that competition is effectively demolished; and the unfair advantage gained by having the heights of government apparently signing to their tune.
10. The taxi market is worth an estimated £13 Billion per year to the UK economy and the aggressive off shore nature of this company, in the face of effective responsible ingenious UK businesses that it is seeking to replace will have damaging effects on the exchequer, as well as drivers, customers and businesses who need to get around our cities.

Dear Sir,

I am pleased to attach my perspective, as a member of the public, regarding this Review of MPs' Outside Interests. As a citizen it seems worthwhile to give my views concerning this important subject.

Theme 1. What factors should be taken into account in determining the 'reasonable limits' on MPs' outside interests?

1.1 MP's can have a somewhat precarious career, being subject to election every few years. Also, from time to time reviews by the Boundary Commission (as at present) can delete their existing seat. It therefore seems appropriate, in principle, for MP's to continue with outside paid employment and professional interests. In any event, it is helpful for MP's to have had a previous life (outside politics) before becoming an MP. The alternative, prior to becoming an MP, of moving straight from university into a parliamentary internship (or, say, working at the HQ of a political party) could be regarded as somewhat narrow.

1.2 However, having said the above, there do need to be "reasonable limits" on the outside interests of MPs'. Perhaps a way to approach this could be to place a cap on the outside income that an MP can earn while being an MP. Bearing in mind the nature of the job that an MP does, it does not seem that MP's are particularly well paid. Therefore allowing an annual outside of income of say, 4 to 5 times the MPs' salary seems reasonable to me.

Theme 2. How and whether outside interests for MPs could lead to actual or potential conflicts of interest. Does this apply differently for MPs, ministers and ex-ministers, Chairs of Select Committees and other MPs holding parliamentary roles?

2.1 First question – I expect that outside interests for MP's could lead to conflicts of interest, but that it may not always be easy to identify if that applies in individual cases

2.2 Second question – In theory, the more senior the position that an MP holds, the greater potential there could be for conflicts of interest to arise. This could be applicable to all of the examples listed in this question. However, senior MPs holding current roles may be very busy and so in practice this could leave less time for outside interests. However, ex-ministers and backbench MPs could have relatively greater time for outside interests.

Theme 3. Whether there is sufficient transparency around MPs' outside interests, and how openness can be promoted.

3.1 I do not have specialist knowledge about whether there is sufficient transparency around MPs' outside interests. However, I expect that the higher the (existing/past) profile of the MP in question the greater chance that the press may facilitate extra transparency.

Theme 4. Whether there needs to be new rules or guidance on MPs' outside interests, and how any new arrangements could be implemented.

4.1 I would support amended rules/guidance on MPs' outside interests that reflected my suggestion (made in paragraph 1.2) of a cap on an MP's annual income of say 4 to 5 times a MP's salary.

Yours faithfully

Graham Phillips

Dear Sirs,

Further to your email informing Members of Parliament of the review into MP's outside interests I would like to make the following observations:

For very many years Members of Parliament received low salaries and were expected to have outside interests. This was a circumstance that brought significant benefits to Parliament while enabling Members of Parliament to keep a foothold in "the real world".

When I first entered the House in 1983 most Members of Parliament took a significant cut in income to become Members and to some extent compensated for that loss of income through outside interests. This meant that when issues were discussed in the House there was almost invariably at least one Member who had personal experience of the topic under discussion and Parliament benefited from that wealth of knowledge. This did not present a particular problem as the Register of Members' interests carried declarations which were also reinstated and re-enforced at the start of debates and committee hearings. The demand for an increase in Parliamentary salaries and the further demands of constituents now made upon Members of Parliament's time – in the main social and pastoral rather than Parliamentary work – have meant that it has become to a significant extent impossible to undertake outside activities – remunerated or otherwise – while at the same time satisfactorily servicing particularly socially deprived constituencies.

There is no "one size fits all" solution to this as some constituencies make far fewer pastoral demands upon Members than others.

I believe that a reasonable and fair balance has to be struck between outside interests (whether remunerated or charitable) in order to enable Members to maintain a foothold in "the real world" from which we are continually being told that we are isolated in "the Westminster bubble" and servicing Parliamentary and constituents' needs.

It has always struck me, since I first entered the House, more than 30 years ago, that members of the legal profession – Solicitors and Barristers – appear to have been exempted from the restrictions placed upon others and are able to maintain law practices and incomes while serving as Members. While I would not personally wish to curtail the activities of those practicing law so long as Parliamentary and constituency work does not suffer I do believe that there needs to be a correct element of balance struck across all or any outside interests.

.....Cont/



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Finally I would like to place on record that I believe that further endeavours to curtail reasonable outside interests – and I appreciate that “reasonable” is a matter of judgement – is likely to lead to a House of Commons still further populated by those who have had no business or other work experience prior to entry and to lead to a Parliament populated by elected bureaucrats and those who enjoy such personal wealth as to not to have to worry about income from Parliament would be highly dangerous, deleterious and unsatisfactory devolution to a problem that is at best marginal.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Gale'.

Sir Roger Gale MP

25 April 2017

Dear Sir,

CSPL MPs' outside interests review

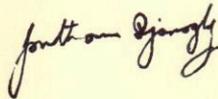
I am responding to the Committee's consultation on MPs' outside interests. My starting point is that it is preferable to have MPs who maintain vocational connections and expertise rather than moving to a cadre of professional politicians. The latter option would only confirm people's view of politicians as a class apart.

Acknowledging that current legislation removes an MP who is imprisoned for a certain time, becomes bankrupt or is mentally unstable, I do not believe that it is objectively possible to determine what constitutes "reasonable limits" on MPs' outside interests. Different individual's skillsets may require different amounts of time to be productive and some vocations will naturally attract higher levels of remuneration than others. MPs are normally answerable to their local political association and are always directly answerable to their electorates. Clearly transparency is required in order for voters to make an informed decision. I believe that the last changes to the transparency rules have adequately provided for this.

There is no problem *per se* with MPs having conflicts of interest in conducting legal outside activities, it is how those conflicts are dealt with that counts. Indeed, busy people, with multiple interests, in all walks of life will often have many conflicts. As in business the key is transparency of interests, not making secret profit from conflicts of interest and providing for non-participation where conflicts exist.

As regards former ministers, like any normal executive position, contractually binding post-employment restrictive covenants should be entered into upon taking the position. This should make the role of the outside appointments body, OACOBA, more straight forward.

Yours faithfully,



Lord Bew

MPs' outside interests: Committee on Standards in Public Life Review

1. I worked as a Senior Parliamentary Assistant in an MP's office from 2009-2015 and I understand the difficult job that MPs do. After redundancy at the last General Election I wrote about the use of 'our time' by MPs for an MA in Corruption and Governance at the University of Sussex. My short blog post on that subject can be read here: <https://scscsussex.wordpress.com/2016/10/13/is-there-a-lack-of-accountability-for-the-use-of-our-time-by-mps/>

Introduction

2. I write here in a personal capacity and am very pleased to see the CSPL act over George Osborne MP's recent and obvious unethical behaviour. I welcome Lord Bew's suggestion to ask MPs during this General Election to make ethical declarations to voters about their outside interests and if they intend to keep or take second jobs while they hold a public office. However, I do not think this goes far enough mainly because unpaid work and promises of future employment by big business (and NGOs) is an inherent problem not just paid 'second jobs' with declared income. I think the only reasonable solution here is to offer positive incentives to MPs for keeping additional digital records and sharing/publishing the regular good work that they do. This may to some extent be voluntary but the means to do it should be standardised, seen and saveable - published on www.parliament.uk. Currently what we can read or search about individual MPs in that site is quite thin, far too spread out and not very accessible to ordinary people. MP's personal or party based sites are insufficiently consistent and not compatible with our needs.

Second jobs and lobbying

3. There has been too much bad news about MPs and their second jobs. Malcolm Rifkind famously said he had plenty of time left over to do paid private consultancy while he was chair of the Intelligence and Security Committee and a serving MP for Kensington and Chelsea. George Osborne MP is a more recent example of how some MPs abuse their position in Parliament by taking high paid jobs but at the same time keeping their publicly funded offices. George Osborne is now the Editor of the Evening Standard:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/mar/24/whitehall-watchdog-to-review-mps-second-jobs--george-osborne-row>

4. Many voters have a very limited understanding of what MPs do for us in the House of Commons, for example voters simply don't understand that MPs are also lobbyists - their job is lobbying for us. Thus they must speak with other lobbyists all the time. For those of us who know more about an MP's office, we know that most of their time should be spent lobbying for the public or indeed voting in a considered way in the Commons Chamber. However, we also know that all too often MPs conduct meetings with professional lobbyists and businesses that are for personal, short and long-term gain. These are meetings that nearly always go unrecorded. So we don't always know when an MP is working for us.

5. Parliament has a system of co-regulation to monitor what MPs do in their offices. From time to time committees review the MP's Code of Conduct but the situation at present is that MPs still oversee a system that allows MPs to too easily define information about their Parliamentary work, or lack of it, as 'private' and out of scope for scrutiny or disciplinary measures. This is a failing. This problem is made worse because the government since 2010 has watered down the Freedom of Information Act. We can't quite get the answers we need while the government view is that FOI is too expensive and that it is harmful because it damages the Parliamentary privileges of MPs.

6. John Bercow MP, Leader of the House of Commons, has said holding a second job in the House of Commons is quite simply bad behaviour: "people should be in Parliament to represent their constituents and to stand up for principles and policies dear to them. People should not be in Parliament to add to their personal fortune... I have in the past suggested a lot of members of the public would expect members of parliament to do a full-time job" (Sky News, 2015)

7. Richard Brooks a former HMRC Tax Inspector and writer for Private Eye tells us that more disclosures are essential for fixing the larger problem of 'Revolving Doors', when long-term benefits accrue to MPs, Ministers and Civil Servants because of their co-operation with lobbyists. Second jobs and private consultancy inevitably shifts an MP's priorities away from their official duties towards the interests of big business.

Conclusion

8. It appears that the current system of self-regulation and co-regulation in the House of Commons is still not working. The idea that it is good for them and us if an MP holds another job such as a doctor or lawyer is actually a smokescreen. Modern democracy does benefit from MPs who have a broader contribution and wider experience of life and that is an issue, but part time work and even at times secondary responsibilities, such as with APPGs while holding office can be a real distraction from the decisions that must be taken on our behalf in a very challenging job.

9. Aarchon Fung, 2013 (p183)⁸ describes transparency in any organization as resting on principles of availability, proportionality, accessibility and action-ability. In short there are too many gaps in the information about MPs available to us as voters. Add to that, guidelines about their expected behaviour are unclear - this is not so unusual in old and large institutions like the House of Commons but studies in anti-corruption increasingly warn us that voluntary transparent declarations are essential if we want real compliance and real change. How can we improve transparency and accountability around how MPs use their time and take decisions on our behalf? There appears to be an opportunity with GE2017, recognised by Lord Bew and the CSPL to ask MPs to be more open. I would go further and ask that MPs make digital declarations about meetings and importantly how they use 'our time' in their public offices in the House of Commons - to provide a narrative that can fill in the large gaps left by the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority who have been so negative about MPs and the Parliamentary Registers which hold very limited information and are not easily searchable.

10. Many people do not know what an MP does with his or her time Monday to Friday. To this end it would be most useful to start by clearly categorising and listing the formal and informal duties an MP is expected to carry out in his or her office (something I have tried to do in my research). Good MPs will most likely want to tell everyone that story in their own way and keep a record of doing that good work. We see problems with individual behaviour and group compliance in every large institution with established cultures of secrecy. Changing individual MP's attitudes towards how they operate in the House of Commons is a large issue but by providing

⁸ Fung, A (2013) Infotopia: unleashing the democratic power of transparency. Politics and Society, No.41, pp.183-212.

MPs with a new approach, new digital resources and a better space to promote themselves, we can improve behaviours?