



House of Commons
Public Administration Select
Committee

**The Honours System:
Further Report with
the Government
Response to the
Committee's Second
Report of Session
2012–13**

Seventh Report of Session 2012–13

Embargoed advance copy not to be published before 09:00am on Friday 23 November 2012

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Seventh Report of Session 2012–13

*Report and appendix, together with formal
minutes*

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 20 November 2012*

HC 728
Published on 23 November 2012
by authority of the House of Commons
London: The Stationery Office Limited
£0.00

The Public Administration Select Committee (PASC)

The Public Administration Select Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the reports of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration and the Health Service Commissioner for England, which are laid before this House, and matters in connection therewith, and to consider matters relating to the quality and standards of administration provided by civil service departments, and other matters relating to the civil service.

Current membership

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The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at <http://www.parliament.uk/pasc>

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Emily Commander and Catherine Tyack (Clerks), Charlotte Pochin (Second Clerk), Alexandra Meakin (Committee Specialist), Paul Simpkin (Senior Committee Assistant) and Su Panchanathan (Committee Assistant).

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Public Administration Select Committee, Committee Office, First Floor, 7 Millbank, House of Commons, London SW1P 3JA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 5730; the Committee's email address is pasc@parliament.uk.

Contents

Report	<i>Page</i>
1 The Honours System: Further Report	3
Appendix 1: Government response	6
Appendix 2	13
Formal Minutes	16
List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament	17

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1 The Honours System: Further Report

1. We reported to the House on *The Honours System* in our Second Report of Session 2010–12, published on 29 August 2012 as HC 19. We received the Government Response to that Report on 29 October 2012. That Response is printed as an appendix to this Report.

2. In our Report we set out the reforms we considered necessary to increase public confidence that honours are awarded to the most deserving recipients and that the honours system is open and fair to all. We argued that it should be easier to understand why and how honours are awarded, and that there should be no political influence on this process. We recommended the introduction of an Independent Honours Commission to select recipients for awards, and an Independent Forfeiture Committee to consider cases in which honours should be revoked. We called for clear and expanded criteria for both the award and forfeiture of honours, and recommended that no honour should be awarded simply for “doing the day job”.¹

3. We are disappointed with the Government’s Response to our Report. In particular, we are worried by the Government’s statement that concerns about the award and forfeiture of honours “largely arise from misperceptions rather than reality”.² We remain of the position that “it is a serious concern that many members of the public do not view the honours system as open or fair”, as revealed by the Cabinet Office’s own polling on this matter.³ In dismissing these concerns the Government has neither addressed the basis for these concerns nor sought to justify the political influence over the honours system and the lack of transparency in the award of honours. In addition, none of our independent witnesses would accept the Government’s statement that “It is a long time since honours have been awarded to those who “just do their job””. If the Government believes that certain positions and responsibilities intrinsically merit the award of honours, it would be much more straightforward to say that.⁴

4. The Government’s Response rejected our recommendation of an Independent Honours Commission, free from political influence, and argued that reforms to the honours system “introduced in 2005 have already introduced all the benefits of independence that would be created by the establishment of a Commission, making it hard to justify the additional costs that would be involved”.⁵ We do not find this argument convincing. Since the publication of our Report, we have received numerous letters from the public expressing concerns about the honours system, reinforcing our original conclusion that the benefits from the Government’s 2005 reforms have been “marginal”.⁶

5. Our Report also expressed concerns about the establishment of the Parliamentary and Political Service Honours Committee. We were informed about its establishment by a

1 Public Administration Select Committee, Second Report of Session 2012–13, *The Honours System*, HC 19, paras 39, 68, 106, 117, 118, 119

2 Appendix 1

3 Public Administration Select Committee, *The Honours System*, para 20

4 Appendix 1, Public Administration Select Committee, *The Honours System*, para 36

5 Appendix 1

6 Public Administration Select Committee, *The Honours System*, para 68

letter from the Prime Minister in March 2012, and understood that the Committee was established to consider candidates for honours from the Members and staff of the Westminster Parliament and devolved legislatures, and “the staff of bodies which report to them, such as the National Audit Office, and the Ombudsman, and Party workers”.⁷ We expressed our concern at the rushed presidential manner in which this new Committee had been established, apparently without any evidence of a need for it. We recommended that the membership of the Committee be elected by MPs and that it should not include the Chief Whips of the three main parties.⁸

6. We reject the Government’s assertion that consultation of the Chief Whips of the three main parties regarding the Prime Minister’s intentions to establish this new Committee amounts to consultation of Parliament, and remain of the view that the membership of the Chief Whips of the three main parties on the Parliamentary and Political Service Honours Committee opens the Committee to the charge of political manipulation in the interest of party leaders. The credibility of such a consultation is not assisted by the fact that the three consultees were subsequently appointed to the Committee in question. In view of this, for the Government to argue that the election of members of the Parliamentary and Political Service Honours Committee by MPs would constitute politicisation is absurd. The Government’s unwarranted dismissal of our recommendations in respect of this new Honours Committee further undermines our confidence that the Committee should have been established at all.

7. Subsequent to the publication of our Report we were surprised by the Prime Minister’s decision to bypass the Committee he had so recently established in order to award honours to five ministers who had lost their jobs in the Government’s September 2012 reshuffle (correspondence between the Prime Minister and PASC on this matter is at appendix 2). Such a move does indeed constitute politicisation of the honours system and flies in the face of the stated position of the Government, as expressed only weeks earlier in oral evidence by Sir Bob Kerslake, the Head of the Civil Service. Without questioning the public service of those selected, by the Prime Minister, to receive honours at the end of their ministerial career, we are concerned that awarding honours in such a manner will further reduce public confidence in the honours system. Again, if the Government supports such political control of the award of honours in certain circumstances, it should be prepared to justify that.

8. Since the publication of our Report, there have been numerous calls for the forfeiture of the honours awarded to various public figures. We believe that this pressure results from the Government’s decision to ask the Honours Forfeiture Committee to consider the case of Fred Goodwin, the former Chief Executive of Royal Bank of Scotland, and the subsequent recommendation of that Committee that Mr Goodwin’s knighthood should be cancelled and annulled. Despite the Government’s insistence that Mr Goodwin was an exceptional case, it appears that media attention may have become a factor in determining whether the Honours Forfeiture Committee considers an individual’s case. We believe the acceptance of our recommendation for an independent Honours Forfeiture Committee

7 *Ibid.* para 87

8 *Ibid.* paras 84, 88

would increase transparency to the forfeiture process, and restore credibility to the honours system.

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Appendix 1: Government response

The Government is grateful to the Select Committee for its report into this important subject. It contains some important issues, and the Government has already acted on some of them. It recognises that there have been concerns about the way honours are awarded and forfeited, but believes that these largely arise from misperceptions rather than reality. It believes that some of the changes recommended by the Committee will help to address this. Its response is given below.

Recommendation 1

The existence of the honours system reflects a wish to recognise and reward the exceptional service and achievement of citizens across the UK. The system has evolved over the last 850 years and it is right that it should continue to do so, to reflect changes in society and respond to public concerns.

The Government agrees that the honours system should continue to recognise those who have given exceptional achievement and service: this is the nation's way of saying "thank you". It will doubtless continue to evolve to reflect changes in society, but also needs to remain rooted in the tradition that is part of our nation's history.

Recommendations 2, 8 and 9

Our evidence suggested that the perception that honours are linked to donations to political parties is prevalent. It is a serious concern that many members of the public do not view the honours system as open or fair.

The perception that the honours system is not open to everyone may deter people from nominating deserving candidates for honours. We welcome the outreach work carried out by the Cabinet Office to correct this view, and believe that the changes we have recommended to increase transparency in the honours system will also help to correct this public perception.

The perception that honours can be "bought" is a significant threat to the credibility of the honours system. It has even been reported that it is possible to pay a consultancy firm which claims it can "significantly increase" the chances of obtaining an honour. The brevity of the citations in the honours lists, and the lack of accompanying information to explain why an honour has been awarded, does not help to counter concerns that honours have been awarded as a result of making a donation to political parties. We recommend that longer citations be published for all honours at the level of CBE and above in the 2013 New Year Honours List and all future honours lists.

The Government shares the Committee's concern that some members of the public do not view the honours system as open or fair or believe the honours can be bought, but believes it is important to continue to honour those philanthropists who not only are financially generous but who also demonstrate sustained commitment to their chosen charitable causes. The Cabinet Office, working with other Government Departments and the Honours Selection Committees, has recently stepped up its outreach efforts and will continue to do so in order to increase the openness and transparency of the system. The

Committee's suggestion that longer citations should be published for those who achieve the highest honours is a good one, and may well help to dissipate some of these misperceptions. The Government proposes to pilot this at Knight and Dame level in the New Year's Honours List 2013.

Recommendations 3 and 4

The evidence also suggests that the devolved nations, and certain English regions, receive a higher proportion of honours than is proportionate for their population size. This highlights the success of devolved bodies in championing nominations for honours, but also raises the danger of unequal treatment of nominations, depending on where in the UK the nominee is from. The high level of influence of the devolved bodies on the honours system also increases the risk of politicisation of the honours system in these regions.

The different levels of Order of the British Empire reflect the wish to recognise sustained and exceptional achievement and service on a large and a small scale. The inconsistency about how different levels of honours are rewarded, particularly in the devolved nations, adds to a lack of understanding of the honours system. We call on the Cabinet Office to treat work at national level in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as national not regional service or achievement, when considering nominations for honours.

The Committee's analysis is not quite right: of the devolved nations, only Wales and Northern Ireland have done better than their population size would suggest in recent lists, whereas Scotland has been under-represented. It will continue its outreach efforts to those regions that are currently under-represented, especially Scotland, the north of England and the Midlands. Nonetheless, the Government believes that all nominations should be looked at entirely on merit, regardless of their regional origin. It also believes that the highest honours should continue to be reserved for the highest achievers. This is likely to confine most Knight- and Damehoods to those who have had an international or pan-UK impact, while CBEs might be more appropriate for those who have had a national impact limited to England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, though each case will continue to be assessed on its own merits.

Recommendation 5

There remains a lack of transparency about what happens to nominations once submitted, and why it takes so long to consider a nomination. The system is unclear even to the Queen's representatives in the counties, the Lords Lieutenant. The length of time taken to consider nominations, and the lack of clarity about the process and why some nominations are successful, make it harder for members of the public to understand why and how honours are awarded. These concerns are not allayed by the speed at which honours are awarded to celebrities and sports stars. Greater clarity about the chances of success when nominating an individual and how the nomination will be considered would increase public understanding and confidence that the honours system recognises the most deserving individuals in each community.

The Government recognises the Committee's concerns, but also notes that the sheer volume of public correspondence on the honours system – some 9,000 items a year –

makes it impossible to provide automatic feedback on every nomination. But feedback will continue to be provided to those who request it. Nominations will continue to be processed as quickly as possible, but the need to conduct robust checks on nominees means that any significant acceleration is unlikely to be possible without compromising the integrity of the system.

Recommendation 6

We believe that no-one should be honoured for simply “doing the day job”, no matter what that job is. In particular, honours should not be awarded to civil servants or businessmen unless it can be demonstrated that there has been service above and beyond the call of duty. Instead honours should only be awarded for exceptional service to the community or exceptional achievement above and beyond that required in employment. This would result in a far higher proportion of honours being awarded to people who devote their time to their local community, instead of politicians, civil servants, and celebrities. There should be no special privileges or quotas for groups of society or certain professions: the honours system should be fair and open to all. Sir Bob Kerslake’s insistence that there are no automatic honours for senior public servants is not reflected in the number of honours that have been awarded to civil servants and public sector workers in recent honours lists. Indeed, one such recent example of an apparently automatic honour was the knighthood received by Sir Jeremy Heywood the day before he took up the role of Cabinet Secretary; Lord O’Donnell had no less than four honours as a result of his Civil Service career.

The Government wishes to stress again that there are no longer any automatic honours for anyone, with the sole exception of High Court Judges on appointment. It is a long time since honours have been awarded to those who “just do their job”. The full citations make that clear, drawing particular attention to additional voluntary work or activities that go beyond an individual’s defined role. It is, though, right to continue to reward those whose achievements have been exceptional, whatever their field – and that might include those who make it to the very top of the Civil Service (though not many of today’s Permanent Secretaries hold Knight- or Damehoods). But in the vast majority of cases, the honours committees are looking for something extra. The balance of honours between those who are focussed on community and voluntary service and those who are in paid employment will be reconsidered as part of the Quinquennial Review of Honours this autumn.

Recommendation 7

It is distasteful and damaging for people who already command vast personal remuneration packages for doing their job, to also be honoured for simply being at the helm of large companies. This must stop. All who get honours must be judged on whether they have done things above and beyond their normal duty, shown extraordinary leadership and shown extraordinary service to the community.

The proposal to eliminate honours for those who are “simply at the helm of large companies” under-estimates their achievements. The Government believes that honours should continue to be awarded on the basis of merit, and that the scale of a nominee’s remuneration should be immaterial.

Recommendation 10

It is right that the commitment of philanthropists who donate large sums of money to charities over a sustained period of time should be recognised in the honours system, if this is accompanied with a sustained donation of time and energy. Honours should also be awarded to recognise the contribution of those who donate time but not money to their local communities.

The Government agrees: this is already current practice.

Recommendation 11

The Lords Lieutenant, the Queen’s representatives in the counties, link the monarch and the recipients of honours. Their local knowledge could be crucial in ensuring that the most deserving people in each and every community are suitably recognised in the honours system. It is disappointing that the current method of considering nominations for honours, particularly for candidates in Scotland, has not utilised this opportunity fully. We recommend that each Lord Lieutenant has the opportunity to consider and comment on all nominations for an honour within his or her lieutenancy.

The Government greatly values the role Lord-Lieutenants play in the honours system: they often have an unparalleled local knowledge of those who reside within their Lieutenancy. The Cabinet Office already consults them extensively on the merit of nominees which fall within its purview, while the Scottish Government’s Honours Secretariat has begun an outreach programme to Scottish Lord-Lieutenants; consideration is being given as to how to increase their input further. Government Departments and the Devolved Administrations will be encouraged to make more effective use of the Lord-Lieutenants, but it should be recognised that consulting Lord-Lieutenants on all nominations would almost certainly slow down the honours selection process.

Recommendation 12

The honours system should be free of political influence. We recommend the removal of the Prime Minister’s role in providing strategic direction for the honours system, and the renaming of the “Prime Minister’s List”. Instead the Government should establish an Independent Honours Commission to oversee the honours system. In 2005 the then Government rejected the recommendation of our predecessor Committee to introduce such a commission, arguing that such an overhaul of the system was not necessary, as plans to reform the membership of the honours committees would improve accountability and transparency in the system. Seven years on, such improvements have been marginal. The creation of an Independent Honours Commission would restore the character and integrity of the honours system.

The Government is not convinced that the arguments for such a body have strengthened since they were last considered in 2004. The reforms introduced in 2005 have already introduced all the benefits of independence that would be created by the establishment of a Commission, making it hard to justify the additional costs that would be involved: it is not true to say that the improvements introduced over the last seven years have been “marginal”. It also does not propose to rename the Prime Minister’s List. To do so would

be odd while the Foreign and Defence Secretaries continue to retain their own Lists and the impact would in any case be minimal: most members of the public think in terms of the New Year and Birthday Lists, not which Minister has submitted names to the Palace for approval. The Prime Minister's strategic direction will remain an important part of the process: it is worth remembering that its current emphasis is very much in line with the Committee's proposals, to honour those engaged in voluntary work. Scottish Ministers play no part in the honours process.

Recommendation 13

The reintroduction of the British Empire Medal allows for greater recognition of hundreds of people across the country who devote great time to their communities. Whilst we welcome this, the title of the honour was disliked by some witnesses, because of the connotations of the word "Empire". We recognise that the title may need to change in the future, but recognise that this is not as straightforward as it would first appear: the name of the Order of the British Empire is enshrined in statute and cannot simply be changed: the Order itself would have to be closed. This would require fresh statutes. In recognition of the existing Order's proud history and of the service and bravery of its members, we do not recommend any changes ahead of the Order's centenary in 2017.

The Government agrees with the Committee's conclusions. The Order of the British Empire has a distinguished history. The re-introduction of the British Empire Medal in particular is allowing many of those who perform outstanding voluntary service at a very local level to receive the recognition they truly deserve.

Recommendation 14

The Government acted on recommendations of our predecessor committee to open up the membership of the honours sub-committees through the public appointments system. The honours committees, however, remain composed of an establishment elite. We recommend that the Cabinet Office, or the new Honours Commission, sets out how it will broaden the range of people who take up roles as independent members of the honours committees.

The Government agrees that all vacancies on the honours selection committees should continue to be publicly advertised. It is also keen to broaden the membership, and a number of vacancies have recently been advertised. A wide range of applications is always welcome, but it will remain important that the membership should include those who have achieved distinction in their fields.

Recommendation 15

We regret that the Parliamentary and Political Service Honours Committee was established without Parliament being consulted. Acting in such a manner will only serve to reduce public confidence in the honours system.

The Government rejects this criticism. All three main parties were consulted before the Committee was created, and Parliament was informed by a Written Ministerial Statement.

Future vacancies for independent members will be publicly advertised, in line with the practice on the other honours selection committees. They will remain in the majority.

Recommendation 16

We view the membership of the Chief Whips of the three main parties on the Parliamentary and Political Service Honours Committee as inappropriate. The members of this committee should be elected by members of the House of Commons.

The Government does not believe that the role of the Chief Whips of the three main Parties is inappropriate. This is a significant step forward from the days when only the Chief Whip of the governing Party was consulted. The Government represents the minor Parties, who might be entirely unrepresented if the political members of the Political and Parliamentary Service Committee were elected. Such elections would also risk politicising the work of the Committee, a development that the Government is keen to prevent.

Recommendation 17

We recommend that there should be no set allocation of honours for the Parliamentary and Political Service Honours Committee. Instead, it should be clear that each recommendation made by the Committee is considered on its merits, in competition with the other nominations in the honours system.

The Government does not accept this recommendation. As with all the honours selection committees, the number of honours allocated to the Political and Parliamentary Service Honours Committee is a guideline, not a fixed quota – and all the committees need some form of guideline. This is demonstrated by the fact that the Committee did not use all honours allocated to it in the Birthday 2012 list. Its allocation will nonetheless be reviewed in the Quinquennial Review this autumn.

Recommendations 18, 19 and 20

The media storm around Fred Goodwin's knighthood was one of the reasons why his case was considered by the Forfeiture Committee, and why the decision was made to cancel and annul his knighthood. Mr Goodwin's actions did not meet the previously defined criteria for forfeiture and calls for his knighthood to be stripped had been rejected by the previous Government. The fact that the criteria for forfeiture were so obscure and narrow was unfortunate. There should be a clear and expanded criteria for the forfeiture of an honour, one of which should be damage to the industry or sector that the individual was originally deemed to have served so exceptionally.

The Government's review of the Forfeiture Committee has not addressed the subjective nature of the criterion for forfeiture of "bringing the honours system into disrepute". The rules on the forfeiture of honours should set out specifically what kinds of action and behaviour would be considered to bring the honours system into disrepute. The failure to make clear the circumstances in which an honour might be forfeited brings into question the credibility of the entire honours system.

We recommend that decisions on the forfeiture of honours are placed in independent hands, away from political influence. The Government should establish an independent Honours Forfeiture Committee which should:

- a) **be chaired by an independent figure, such as a retired high court judge;**
- b) **act on evidence, according to clear and expanded criteria, free of political or media influence;**
- c) **consider representations from the individual who was the subject of the case; and**
- d) **hear evidence and proceedings in public; as befits British justice. In the case of Fred Goodwin, the confidentiality of the discussions of the Forfeiture Committee merely served to protect those behind the decision and did not prevent Mr Goodwin being subjected to “trial by media”.**

The Government does not accept the assertion that Mr Goodwin’s actions did not meet the previously agreed criteria for forfeiture: the over-riding criterion has always been the one of “bringing the honours system into disrepute”, and the evidence available to the Forfeiture Committee had changed since the case was considered under the previous Government. The Government believes that this over-riding criterion is important and should be retained, but that the more specific criteria which underpin it should continue to be used and added to, drawing on the experience of the cases that come before the Committee. The Select Committee’s suggestion of adding “damage to the industry or sector that the individual was originally deemed to have served exceptionally” to these under-pinning criteria is helpful. However the Government does not favour further significant change to forfeiture policy and practice until the reforms introduced earlier this year have had a chance to bed down. These included introducing a majority of independent members; the use of additional under-pinning criteria; and a willingness to accept written representations. It does not believe that public show-trials which would serve to shame further the individuals concerned are appropriate to the dignity of the honours system.

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Appendix 2

Letter from Mr Bernard Jenkin MP, Chair, to the Prime Minister, dated 13 September 2012

Thank you for your letter of 6th September 2012 concerning that you are “minded to recommend” certain honours to HM The Queen for some of those who left the Government last week. While I have no doubt that you have acted “on careful advice”, the Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) is perplexed and disillusioned by this decision.

As you know, PASC published our report into the honours system just a few days ago. During our inquiry, I wrote to you (in May 2012) to ask you, or one of your ministers, to provide oral evidence to this inquiry. Regrettably you decided to decline this invitation. The response from your Principal Private Secretary asserted that there is “no direct ministerial responsibility for it” [the honours system] and that Sir Bob Kerslake was “best placed to give evidence” on the honours system. Sir Bob Kerslake, the Head of the Civil Service, also stressed the Government’s commitment to keeping politics out of the honours system, and sought to reassure PASC that the new Parliamentary and Political Service Committee would not be used by the Whips as a vehicle for patronage. Moreover he emphasised that honours should not be awarded for “doing the day job” and on this basis our Report recommended that honours should only be awarded for public service “above and beyond the call of duty”. There was nothing to indicate that you might circumvent this new arrangement at any point.

The award of honours to ministers who have lost their jobs in a Government reshuffle appears inconsistent with the evidence we received from the Government. If it is the policy of the Government that the Prime Minister should retain the right to award honours at his personal behest, why was this not apparent from the Government’s submissions to our inquiry? The honours you have announced may well reward “exceptional service”, but there is a danger that they will appear to the public to be political “consolation prizes” for the ministers concerned.

The PASC report makes a number of recommendations to increase public confidence in the honours system. In responding to the Report it would be helpful if the Government will also clarify how the honours for retiring ministers on the personal recommendation of the Prime Minister is consistent with Government’s policy on the de-politicisation of the honours system.

Letter from the Prime Minister to Mr Bernard Jenkin MP, Chair, dated 19 October 2012

Thank you for your letter of 13 September, regarding the Public Administration Select Committee’s (PASC) report on the Honours System. I also very much welcomed our recent meeting and having the opportunity to discuss this in person with you. I have since met with The Lord Spicer too.

As I set out in my letter to you of 6 September, I am clear that the Political and Parliamentary Honours Committee, under the Chairmanship of The Lord Spicer, will

continue to take all decisions regarding the merit and propriety of political and Parliamentary candidates proposed for Honours in Her Majesty The Queen's Birthday Honours List, and in the New Year List. Furthermore, I remain keen that the Committee considers Honours beyond Parliamentarians, also looking to recognise the service of those who have made a wider contribution to political and public life, supporting political figures, Parties and Associations at the local level.

The Committee has already recommended some outstanding nominations in this regard, and I am in no doubt that they will continue to do so. My decision to recommend a very limited number of Honours following my Ministerial changes does not in any way devalue that work. As I made clear in my previous letter, I am determined that these special cases will not affect the integrity of the wider Honours system in general, and the Political and Parliamentary Honours Committee in particular. I will, of course, address this issue further when the Government publishes its response to the recommendations laid out in the PASC's recent report on the Honours system.

Letter from the Prime Minister to Mr Bernard Jenkin MP, Chair, dated 25 October 2012

I am writing to thank you for your Committee's report on the Honours System. I attach the Government's response: you will see that we are keen to pick up a number of your recommendations, including publishing longer citations for the highest honours and making more effective use of the Lord-Lieutenants. But there are others, such as the proposal to create an independent Honours Commission, where we believe that the reforms already introduced make such a development necessary.

I wrote last week to address the concerns you had about my decision to recommend a number of Knighthoods to retiring Ministers following the recent reshuffle. I said I would address this issue further when the Government set out its response to the PASC report. I am therefore attaching a copy of my letter to Lord Spicer, which I hope clarifies the position.

Letter from the Prime Minister to the Lord Spicer dated 3 October 2012

I very much welcomed our recent meeting to clarify the process by which political and Parliamentary Honours are awarded. I acknowledge that it is unfortunate that the timings of my recent Ministerial changes – coming at a time when you were away – meant that we were not able to meet before Ministerial resignation Honours were announced.

As I set out in my letter to you on 6 September, I am clear that the Political and Parliamentary Honours Committee, under your Chairmanship, will continue to take all decisions regarding the merit and propriety of political and Parliamentary candidates proposed for Honours in Her Majesty The Queen's Birthday Honours List, and in the New Year List. Furthermore, I remain keen that the Committee considers Honours beyond Parliamentarians, also looking to recognise the service of those who have made a wider contribution to political and public life, supporting political figures, Parties and Associations at the local level.

The Committee has already recommended some outstanding nominations in this regard, and I hope you will continue to do so. My decision to recommend a very limited number

of Honours following my Ministerial changes does not in any way devalue that work. As I made clear in my previous letter, I am determined that these special cases will not affect the integrity of the wider Honours system in general, and your Committee in particular.

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Formal Minutes

Tuesday 20 November 2012

Members present:

Mr Bernard Jenkin, in the Chair

Alun Cairns
Paul Flynn
Robert Halfon

Kelvin Hopkins
Priti Patel
Lindsay Roy

Draft Report (*The Honours System: Further Report with the Government Response to the Committee's Second Report of Session 2012-13*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 8 read and agreed to.

The Government Response to the Committee's Second Report was appended to the Report.

Resolved, That the Report be the Seventh Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 27 November at 9.15 am]

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List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2012-13

First Special Report	Public Appointments: regulation, recruitment and pay: Government Response to the Committee's Fourteenth Report of Session 2010-12	HC 18
Second Special Report	Leadership of change: new arrangements for the roles of the Head of the Civil Service and the Cabinet Secretary: Further Report: Government Response to the Committee's Twenty Third Report of Session 2010-12	HC 313
Third Special Report	Strategic thinking in Government: without National Strategy, can viable Government strategy emerge? Government Response to the Committee's Twenty Fourth Report of Session 2010-12	HC 573
First Report	The Big Society: Further Report with the Government Response to the Committee's Seventeenth Report of Session 2010-12	HC 98
Second Report	The Honours System	HC 19
Third Report	Business Appointment Rules	HC 404
Fourth Report	Appointment of the Chair of the Charity Commission	HC 315-I
Fifth Report	End of term report: 2011-12	HC 316
Sixth Report	Special advisers in the thick of it	HC 134

Session 2010-12

First Report	Who does UK National Strategy?	HC 435 (HC 713)
Second Report	Government Responses to the Committee's Eighth and Ninth Reports of Session 2009-10: Goats and Tsars: Ministerial and other appointments from outside Parliament and Too Many Ministers?	HC 150
Third Report	Equitable Life	HC 485 (Cm 7960)
Fourth Report	Pre-appointment hearing for the dual post of First Civil Service Commissioner and Commissioner for Public Appointments	HC 601
Fifth Report	Smaller Government: Shrinking the Quango State	HC 537 (Cm 8044)
Sixth Report	Who Does UK National Strategy? Further Report with the Government Response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2010-11	HC 713
Seventh Report	Smaller Government: What do Ministers do?	HC 530 (HC 1540)
Eighth Report	Cabinet Manual	HC 900 (HC 1127, Cm 8213)
First Special Report	Cabinet Manual: Government Interim Response to	HC 1127

	the Committee's Eighth Report of Session 2010-12	
Ninth Report	Pre-appointment hearing for the post of Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman	HC 1220-I
Tenth Report	Remuneration of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman	HC 1350
Eleventh Report	Good Governance and Civil Service Reform: 'End of Term' report on Whitehall plans for structural reform	HC 901 (HC 1746)
Twelfth Report	Government and IT — "a recipe for rip-offs": time for a new approach	HC 715-I (HC 1724)
Thirteenth Report	Change in Government: the agenda for leadership	HC 714 (HC 1746)
Fourteenth Report	Public Appointments: regulation, recruitment and pay	HC 1389
Fifteenth Report	Smaller Government: What do Ministers do? Further Report with the Government Response to the Committee's Seventh Report of Session 2010-12	HC 1540 (HC 1746)
Sixteenth Report	Appointment of the Chair of the UK Statistics Authority	HC 910
Seventeenth Report	The Big Society	HC 902
Eighteenth Report	Change in Government: the agenda for leadership: Further Report, with the Government Responses to the Committee's Eleventh, Thirteenth and Fifteenth Reports of Session 2010-12	HC 1746
Nineteenth Report	Leadership of change: new arrangements for the roles of the Head of the Civil Service and the Cabinet Secretary	HC 1582
Twentieth Report	Government and IT—"a recipe for rip-offs": time for a new approach: Further Report, with the Government response to the Committee's Twelfth Report of Session 2010-12	HC 1724
Twenty First Report	Future oversight of administrative justice: the proposed abolition of the Administrative Justice and Tribunals Council	HC 1621
Twenty Second Report	The Prime Minister's adviser on Ministers' interests: independent or not?	HC 1761
Twenty Third Report	Leadership of change: new arrangements for the roles of the Head of the Civil Service and the Cabinet Secretary, Further Report, with the Government Response to the Committee's Nineteenth Report of Session 2010-12	HC 1914
Twenty Fourth Report	Strategic thinking in Government: without National Strategy, can viable Government strategy emerge?	HC 1625