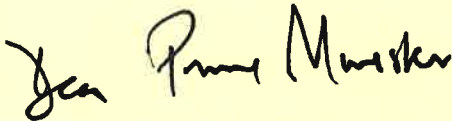


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Committee on  
Standards in  
Public Life



### MPs' Outside Interests

2 July 2018

I am delighted to present the Committee on Standards in Public Life's report, *MPs' Outside Interests*, which will be published tomorrow.

We last considered this issue in 2009, at the request of the then Prime Minister. At that time, we recommended that MPs should be able to continue with outside employment, as long as any outside interests were within reasonable limits and there was transparency. However, these recommendations have not been fully acted upon by government and Parliament. Nine years on, this report provides an opportunity for Parliament to act to address this issue, and to prevent further erosion of public trust.

We recommend a package of important reforms to ensure that MPs' outside interests remain within reasonable limits. We recommend a revision to the Code of Conduct for MPs, so that any outside roles, whether or not they are paid, do not prevent MPs from undertaking the range of duties expected of them in their primary role as an MP.

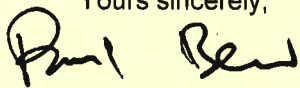
Parliament needs to enable transparency with the public about the registration and declaration of interests. The Register of Members' Financial Interests must be more accessible, searchable and usable. The Cabinet Office should issue guidance to Parliamentary candidates on the registration of outside interests, so voters know whether candidates intend to carry on any of their existing jobs if they are elected. The rules on lobbying need to be clearer - MPs should not be able to act as paid political consultants.

My first report as Chair of this Committee recommended strengthening transparency around lobbying; my final report demonstrates that this continues to be an issue of public concern. As I complete my 5-year term, it is clear that Lord Nolan's Principles remain the cornerstone of ethical standards in public life.

I look forward to the Government's response.

I have copied this letter to Chloe Smith MP, Minister for the Constitution.

Yours sincerely,



Lord Bew  
Chair