

Committee on Standards in Public Life Terms of Reference

On 25 October 1994, the then Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. John Major, announced the establishment of the Committee on Standards in Public Life with the following terms of reference:

'To examine current concerns about standards of conduct of all holders of public office, including arrangements relating to financial and commercial activities, and make recommendations as to any changes in present arrangements which might be required to ensure the highest standards of propriety in public life.'

For these purposes, public office should include: Ministers, civil servants and advisers; Members of Parliament and UK Members of the European Parliament; Members and senior officers of all non-departmental public bodies and of national health service bodies; non-ministerial office holders; members and other senior officers of other bodies discharging publicly-funded functions; and elected members and senior officers of local authorities.'

On 12 November 1997, the Committee's terms of reference were extended by the then Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair:

'To review issues in relation to the funding of political parties, and to make recommendations as to any changes in present arrangements.'

On 5 February 2013, the Minister for the Cabinet Office clarified the Committee's terms of reference in two respects:

'...in future the Committee should not inquire into matters relating to the devolved legislatures and governments except with the agreement of those bodies.' '...the Committee's remit to examine 'standards of conduct of all holders of public office' [encompasses] all those involved in the delivery of public services, not solely those appointed or elected to public office.'

Our remit does not extend to individual complaints and we have no powers to investigate individual allegations of misconduct. That is the role of the relevant regulator.