

Committee on Standards in Public Life
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

Chair@public-standards.gov.uk

Rushanara Ali MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for
Homelessness and Democracy

By email



**Committee on
Standards in
Public Life**

23 July 2025

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 17 July 2025 about the publication of, *'Restoring trust in our democracy: Our strategy for modern and secure elections'*.

We were pleased to see that a number of the recommendations in our 2021 report, *Regulating Election Finance*, have been reflected in the proposals, including tightening the the requirement to identify the true source of donations in order to reduce the risk of foreign money influencing UK elections, along with measures to make the enforcement of political finance rules more effective and proportionate.

The measures in the Strategy aimed at countering the risk to our democracy posed by the unacceptable levels of intimidation faced by candidates at our elections are also welcome, and build on recommendations we made in our 2017 report, *Intimidation in Public Life*.

We note that the government intends to designate a new Strategy and Policy Statement for the Electoral Commission. We continue to take the view that it is inappropriate for the government of the day to seek to guide the work of the independent electoral commission. This is a matter we raised with the previous government and continue to believe is an important point of principle.

Thank you for your kind offer to put us in touch with officials if we have any questions. We were very grateful to Stuart Ison and his team for the briefing they gave us ahead of the publication of the strategy.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Doug Chalmers', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Doug Chalmers CB DSO OBE
Chair, Committee on Standards in Public Life

Honesty | Objectivity | Openness | Selflessness | Integrity | Accountability | Leadership