

PRESS NOTICE: For immediate release

Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards

Annual Report April 2014 – March 2015

The Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, Kathryn Hudson today published her annual report for 2014-15. This is her third report, covering her second full year in office.

The Report sets out the work of the Commissioner during the year, including inquiries into the conduct of individual Members, the preparation of the four registers of interests, preparatory work for the new Parliament and the implementation of a revised Code of Conduct and Guide to the rules relating to the conduct of Members.

During the year, 148 formal complaints were received, of which 17 were accepted for inquiry (two of these concerned All Party Groups). 14 inquiries were resolved including one brought forward from 2013-14. The Commissioner continued to ensure that confidential advice was available to Members and their staff, including briefings about the registration requirements. The report also acknowledges the review of the Standards Committee and the Commissioner's role which has been undertaken during the year and proposed some significant changes.

On 17 March 2015 the House found time to debate a report which proposed a further amendment to the Code of Conduct. The amended Code of Conduct and Guide to the Rules was agreed. The Commissioner welcomes that decision and has, since then, taken steps to ensure that all Members are aware of the changes.

Notes for Editors

Notes for Editors

1. The current framework for Parliamentary Standards dates from 1995, when the first Commissioner was appointed. Kathryn Hudson is the fifth Commissioner. She was appointed for five years with effect from 1 January 2013. The appointment is not renewable.
2. The Commissioner's main duties are:

- to maintain the Register of Members' Financial Interests and the other registers of interests for Members' staff, journalists and All-Party Groups;
- to provide advice confidentially on matters relating to the registration and declaration of interests;
- to advise the Committee on Standards on the interpretation of the Code of Conduct;
- to monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct and registers and to make recommendations to the Committee thereon;
- to investigate, if she thinks fit, specific matters which have come to her attention relating to the conduct of Members and to report on them to the Committee on Standards.

The Commissioner's remit does not extend to the House of Lords. Information about the House of Lords Commissioner for Standards can be found at

<http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/the-commissioner-for-standards/>

Complaints about the misuse of the scheme for parliamentary expenses since May 2010 are a matter for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. Information about their Compliance Officer is available at <http://www.parliamentarycompliance.org.uk/>

3. The Commissioner's Annual Report can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-financial-interests/parliamentary-commissioner-for-standards/publications/annual-reports/>

Memoranda on individual cases investigated by the Commissioner during the year were published as appendices to Reports of the Committee on Standards

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/standards/publications/>

Details of cases concluded via the rectification process since 2008 can be found at

<http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-financial-interests/parliamentary-commissioner-for-standards/complaints-and-investigations/allegations-the-commissioner-has-rectified/>

Details of cases not upheld without a memorandum to the Committee since 2008 can be found at

<http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-financial-interests/parliamentary-commissioner-for-standards/complaints-and-investigations/allegations-the-commissioner-has-not-upheld/>

Information about the Commissioner's current caseload can be found at

<http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-financial-interests/parliamentary-commissioner-for-standards/complaints-and-investigations/allegations-under-investigation-by-the-commissioner/>

Statistics on complaints can be found at

<http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-financial-interests/parliamentary-commissioner-for-standards/complaints-and-investigations/complaints-statistics/>

Description of the process for investigating complaints can be found at

<http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-financial-interests/parliamentary-commissioner-for-standards/complaints-and-investigations/>

The latest edition of the Register of Members' Financial Interests can be found at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmregmem/contents.htm>

4. The Commissioner's office is available for media enquiries on 020 7219 8431.