



House of Commons
Public Administration Select
Committee

Work of the Committee in 2007–08

Fourth Report of Session 2008–09



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Report, together with formal minutes

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The Public Administration Select Committee

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

Dr Tony Wright MP (*Labour, Cannock Chase*) (*Chairman*)
Mr David Burrowes MP (*Conservative, Enfield Southgate*)
Paul Flynn MP (*Labour, Newport West*)
David Heyes MP (*Labour, Ashton under Lyne*)
Kelvin Hopkins MP (*Labour, Luton North*)
Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger MP (*Conservative, Bridgewater*)
Julie Morgan MP (*Labour, Cardiff North*)
Mr Gordon Prentice MP (*Labour, Pendle*)
Paul Rowen MP (*Liberal Democrats, Rochdale*)
Mr Charles Walker MP (*Conservative, Broxbourne*)
Jenny Willott MP (*Liberal Democrats, Cardiff Central*)

Powers

The powers of the Committee are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 146. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk

Publications

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 Steven Mark (Clerk), Laura Dance (Second Clerk), Pauline Ngan (Committee Specialist), Louise Glen (Senior Committee Assistant), Lori Verwaerde (Committee Assistant) and Miguel Boo (Committee Support Assistant).

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1 Introduction

1. This report reviews the activities of the Public Administration Select Committee in the Session 2007–08. The Committee’s inquiries have reflected the broad scope of our standing order:

to examine the reports of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration and of 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.¹

This standing order was belatedly amended in the course of the session to reflect the fact that responsibility for scrutinising the reports of the Health Service Commissioners for Scotland and Wales and the Parliamentary Ombudsman for Northern Ireland had transferred to the Scottish Parliament, National Assembly for Wales and Northern Ireland Assembly.

2. We are charged in effect with examining the consistency and coherence of government policy and practice across the entire field of public administration. Few other Committees are in a similar position, able to survey the range of departments and agencies which govern the country and draw conclusions on major constitutional and administrative questions. However, we also engage with discrete areas of government where particular problems have arisen. In particular, we are guided by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the Ombudsman) to areas where she feels there is a need for parliamentary scrutiny and possibly for a challenge to the executive. We continue to find our relationship with the Ombudsman to be mutually beneficial.

3. We are not a departmental Committee. We do, however, scrutinise the work of the Cabinet Office, as the Government department with particular responsibility for civil service issues (especially as there is no relevant departmental Committee). We also examine the work of its associated public bodies, of which there are around a dozen.

4. In this session we began to scrutinise the work of the UK Statistics Authority, an independent Non-Ministerial Department which reports directly to Parliament. We played a role in the development of a new system of ‘pre-appointment hearings’ for key ministerial public appointments, and conducted our first such hearing. We also saw progress in relation to our interest in putting the civil service and other prerogative matters on a statutory footing, with the publication of the draft Constitutional Renewal Bill, and our scrutiny of relevant parts of this draft bill.

The last Report on the work of this Committee looked at our work in 2007. This year, we, as all committees, will make our Report by session rather than by calendar year. As a result, the last two months of 2007 are covered in both last year’s annual report and this year’s sessional report.

1 Standing Orders of the House of Commons, S.O. No 146

2 The Committee's activity in relation to the 'Core Tasks'

5. On 14 May 2002 the House, by Resolution, invited the Liaison Committee to establish common objectives for select committees. The Liaison Committee subsequently issued a list of indicative core tasks, and has asked departmental select committees to reflect these in their annual reports. Although our remit is wider than a single department, we have found it helpful to consider our work against them. The table below shows the relationship of our inquiries and evidence sessions to these core tasks. A detailed commentary is then set out in the paragraphs which follow. Where the pieces of work by the Committee fulfil more than one of the core tasks, we discuss the work in the section to which it is most directly relevant.

	Government and EU policy proposals	Examination of emerging policies and of deficiencies	Draft bills	Decisions and documents	Work and expenditure of the Cabinet Office and associated Public bodies	Major appointments	Implementation of legislation and major policy initiatives	Informing debates in the House	Evidence from Ministers
Good Government		x							
Lobbying	x	x							x
Equitable Life		x		x	x			x	
Public Services: Putting People First	x	x		x			x		
The Work of the Cabinet Office				x	x				
The Work of the Ombudsman				x	x				
Charity Commission Annual Report					x		x		
Charities and Public Benefit	x				x		x		

	Government and EU policy proposals	Examination of emerging policies and of deficiencies	Draft bills	Decisions and documents	Work and expenditure of the Cabinet Office and associated Public bodies	Major appointments	Implementation of legislation and major policy initiatives	Informing debates in the House	Evidence from Ministers
Political Campaigning by Charities	x	x			x		x		
Parliament and pre-Appointment Hearings	x	x			x				
Selection of a new Chair of HOLAC					x	x			
Committee on Standards in Public Life					x	x			
Investigating the Conduct of Ministers		x				x			
Official Statistics					x		x		
Constitutional Renewal Draft Bill and White Paper	x		x						x
Data Handling Procedures in Government		x		x					x
Parliamentary Commissions of Inquiry		x							
Machinery of Government Changes		x							
Political memoirs	x	x							
Propriety and Peerages		x			x				

To examine policy proposals from the UK Government and the European Commission in Green Papers, White Papers, draft Guidance etc, and to inquire further where the Committee considers it appropriate.

6. A major enterprise of the last session was concluded in this one, with the publication in July 2008 of our report into *Public Services and the Third Sector*. The third sector is a term that encompasses charities, the voluntary sector, not for profit organisations and non-government organisations (NGOs). There had been little or no previous select committee scrutiny of this area. Our inquiry was prompted by the announcement in December 2006 of Government proposals for **commissioning public services from the third sector**,² and drew on a 2007 review into the same subject.³ We considered whether it was appropriate for government to promote the delivery of public services by charities and voluntary organisations, whether it is possible to generalise about the enormously diverse range of organisations which make up the third sector, and whether the commissioning processes would get the best outcomes for public service users. We believe this is the first time that a Select Committee has examined the work of the third sector.

To identify and examine areas of emerging policy, or where existing policy is deficient, and make proposals.

7. Our inquiry into *Public Services: Putting People First*, which we launched in November 2006 to examine the Government's interest in **user-focused public services**, proved such a fertile subject that it yielded three distinct Reports, examining how public services handle and learn from complaints⁴, how public services could be improved by involving the people that use them in their design and delivery⁵ and how to guarantee that people receive minimum levels of public service provision and service quality.⁶

8. Two factors led us to examine existing policy relating to **lobbying**, and whether the regulatory framework could be improved: an increased negative public perception of certain kinds of lobbying activity, and the fact that the issue had not been examined by a Parliamentary committee since the 1991 report from the Select Committee on Members' interests. By the end of this session, we had concluded our programme of evidence.

9. We have returned repeatedly this session to the question of whether the Prime Minister should continue to exercise near-absolute power to reorganise the Civil Service departments. Building on our initial Report⁷, we published two follow up reports this session⁸, as part of a dialogue with government on the impacts of **the way in which the**

2 Cabinet Office, *Partnership in Public Services: an action plan for third sector involvement*, December 2006

3 HM Treasury and Cabinet Office, *The future role of the third sector in social and economic regeneration: final report*, Cm 7189, July 2007

4 Fifth Report of Session 2007-08, *When Citizens Complain*, HC 409

5 Sixth Report of Session 2007-08, *User Involvement in Public Services*, HC410

6 Twelfth Report of Session 2007-08, *From Citizen's Charter to Public Service Guarantees*, HC411

7 Seventh Report of Session 2006-07, *Machinery of Government Changes*, HC672

8 First Report of Session 2007-08, *Machinery of Government Changes: A follow-up Report*, HC160 and

Eighth Report of Session 2007-08 *Machinery of Government Changes: Further Report*, HC514

machinery of government is changed, and the importance of Parliamentary oversight of the process. Dissatisfied with the Government's view that it is currently not feasible to give Parliament a say in major machinery of government changes, we pursued the matter through our scrutiny of the draft Constitutional Renewal bill, where we reiterated our recommendation that the draft Bill should include measures to change fundamentally the way that Government is structured, by giving statutory functions to Government Departments, rather than to interchangeable Secretaries of State.

10. In contrast, we returned to the subject of **political memoirs** not to challenge a lack of consequence, but from concern that since our initial inquiry in 2006⁹ the Government had moved from too liberal a regime to one which was unduly restrictive, without the balance of an independent appeals process, as recommended in our original Report.¹⁰ We therefore considered two additional questions—whether it was right that the Government should have the final say on what information could be included in memoirs by civil servants; and whether revisions made by the Foreign Office to its rules had unduly limited former diplomats' ability to contribute to public debate. *Mandarins Unpeeled* was published in August 2008. We await with interest the Government's delayed response to this Report, and will continue to monitor the publication of memoirs and the delivery of public commentary and to observe the effects on trust and frankness between the public, politicians and officials.

11. The publication of *Propriety and Peerages* took place in December 2007, and the context and report were discussed in detail in our last annual report.¹¹ Propriety in relation to House of Lords appointments remains a topic of public interest, and one we continue to monitor.

To conduct scrutiny of any published draft bill within the Committee's responsibilities.

12. The **draft Constitutional Renewal Bill** was presented to Parliament in March 2008, containing proposals in a number of areas in which we have previously made our own legislative proposals.¹² A Joint Committee of both Houses was established to consider the draft Bill, and our inquiry was conducted to a challenging timetable to enable that Committee to take account of our views. We looked at matters relating to our previous interests, namely the clauses putting the Civil Service onto a statutory footing, and the wider question of how the Government was pursuing its commitment to look at codifying the Royal Prerogative powers. While we broadly welcomed the Government's proposals, we made a number of recommendations intended to strengthen protection of the core Civil Service values of integrity, honesty and objectivity "against the kind of government that might seek to undermine them, in an environment where the understandings that

9 Fifth Report of Session 2005-06, *Whitehall Confidential? The Publication of Political Memoirs*, HC 689

10 As above, para 106.

11 Fourth Report of Session 2007-08, *The Work of the Committee in 2007*, HC 236

12 Fourth Report of Session 2003-04, *Taming the Prerogative: Strengthening Ministerial Accountability to Parliament*, HC 422, p 31

exist now between civil servants, Ministers and the Civil Service Commissioners had broken down”.¹³

13. In addition to our scrutiny, the Justice Committee published a report on the role of the Attorney General¹⁴ and the House of Lords Constitution Committee submitted a memorandum to the Joint Committee on the Draft Bill. The Joint Committee inevitably came to its own conclusions.¹⁵ It seems wasteful and disappointing that, despite our long-standing interest in the subject matter of the Bill, we were not represented on the Committee specifically charged with the scrutiny of the Bill.

To examine specific output from the department expressed in documents or other decisions.

14. Following the publication of the Parliamentary Ombudsman’s second report into **the collapse of Equitable Life**, which reversed the conclusion of her first report that no maladministration had occurred, we began an inquiry to examine her findings of regulatory failings and ten counts of maladministration, and to reflect on her recommendation to create a compensation scheme. We looked not only at the case of Equitable Life, but also at the wider questions of regulation and redress emerging from the Ombudsman’s report. We will continue this inquiry into the next session.

15. Following high profile incidents of **data loss**, internal reports on these incidents, and the reactive issuing of mandatory standards for data handling, we took evidence from the Minister for the Cabinet Office and the Cabinet Secretary on the efficacy and application of government systems in this area of administration.

To examine the expenditure plans and out-turn of the department, its agencies and principal NDPBs; To examine the department’s Public Service Agreements, the associated targets and the statistical measurements employed, and report if appropriate.

16. We conduct annual scrutiny of the accounts, expenditure and performance of the Cabinet Office through correspondence on specific details of the Estimates and the Annual Report, followed by an evidence session with Sir Gus O’Donnell, the Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Home Civil Service, who is the accounting officer for the department. The session enables us to discuss not only financial operations, but also performance against Public Service Agreements and associated targets, and to raise wider issues of concern relating to the civil service and government. We are glad to note that the improved quality and clarity of financial reporting which we praised in 2007 has been maintained this year. In addition, we have taken evidence from the Ombudsman on her office’s progress against its targets and from the UK Statistics Authority and the Charity Commission on their expenditure and resources.

13 Tenth Report of Session of Session 2007-08, *Constitutional Renewal: Draft Bill and White Paper*, HC499

14 Justice Committee, *Draft Constitutional Renewal Bill (Provisions relating to the Attorney General)*, 24 June 2008, HC 698

15 Joint Committee on the Draft Constitutional Renewal Bill, HC 551-1 and HL 166-1 2007-08

17. We have continued to benefit from significant support from the Scrutiny Unit of the House of Commons in our analyses of expenditure and administration issues and would like once again to express our gratitude for their expertise and assistance.

To monitor the work of the department's Executive Agencies, NDPBs, regulators and other associated public bodies.

18. We have spent some time this session looking at the work of the Charity Commission, and how it is interpreting its duties under the Charities Act 2006. We heard evidence relating to guidance from the Charity Commission¹⁶ on what it is proper and improper for charities to do in relation to political campaigning.

19. The Charities Act 2006 introduced a requirement that all charities should be able to show that they provide a public benefit, and gave to the Charity Commission the task of developing guidance on the nature of public benefit, to which trustees must have regard in running their charity. We have previously expressed concern that this is an essentially political task¹⁷, and have pursued this topic this session, examining how the Charity Commission is going about its task of defining and communicating what constitutes a public benefit, and the potential effects on the charitable sector and on its delivery of services.

To scrutinise major appointments made by the department.

20. We have a longstanding interest in the principle of parliamentary involvement in major public appointments. In response to the proposals on “streamlining public appointments” contained in the Governance of Britain Green Paper, our Report on *Parliament and Pre-Appointment Hearings* revisited a matter first raised by our predecessor Committee in 2003,¹⁸ and attempted to clarify the purpose and process for increasing parliamentary scrutiny over key public appointments. In its Response to our Report, the Government recognised that Government and Parliament will need to work closely together to ensure that pre-appointment hearings by committees are a success. We intend to monitor the handling and effects of these hearings and to be ready to make further recommendations as appropriate.

21. We also undertook our first formal pre-appointment hearing during the session with Lord Jay of Ewelme, who appeared before us prior to his appointment as Chair of the House of Lords Appointments Commission (HOLAC). We took the opportunity to test his suitability for the post as well as hear his initial views on the future direction of HOLAC.

22. Following his appointment as the Chair of Committee on Standards in Public Life, we held an evidence session with Sir Christopher Kelly to question him on his plans and priorities for his new post. We also held an introductory hearing with the newly appointed Independent Adviser on Ministerial Interests, Sir Philip Mawer, following which we

16 Charity Commission, *CC9-Speaking Out-Guidance on Campaigning and Political Activity by Charities*, Version-March 2008

17 Fourth Report of Session 2007-08, *Work of the Committee in 2007*, HC 236, para 37.

18 Fourth Report of Session 2002-03, *Government By Appointment: Opening Up The Patronage State*, HC 165-I, paras 103–110

produced a short Report setting out the additional steps which we felt needed to be taken “to give credibility to the investigation of alleged breaches of the Ministerial Code”.¹⁹

To examine the implementation of legislation and major policy initiatives.

23. Over the past decade, we and our predecessors have looked at the many and various factors which have an impact on effective policy implementation. From assorted angles, our inquiries have ranged across the effects of policy and law-making processes, the frequent introduction of various policy initiatives and the relationships and interactions between the different links in the policy delivery chain from the centre of government out to the citizen.

24. Feeling it time to take stock of what we had learned from our previous investigations, in the summer of 2008 we launched our inquiry into Good Government, considering such high level questions as what good government looks like, and how to achieve it, and aiming to form a comprehensive survey of the conditions necessary for policy success. We have begun to take evidence from those with experience of trying to improve how government works and we hope to publish our conclusions early in 2009.

To produce reports which are suitable for debate in the House, including Westminster Hall, or debating committees.

25. Although published in the previous session, our Report on *Politics and Administration: Ministers and Civil Servants*, was the subject of debate in Westminster Hall on 30 October 2008. The Report had examined questions of responsibility and accountability, the governing relationship between ministers and civil servants and the extent to which the British civil service had become politicised, and the debate allowed us to revisit these issues in the light of subsequent events.

26. As mentioned in our Report for 2007, there was also a debate on the floor of the House in December 2007 on our Report on *Ethics and Standards*, concerning the regulation of conduct in public life.²⁰

19 Seventh Report of Session 2007-08, *Investigating the Conduct of Ministers*, HC 381, para 34

20 HC Deb, 5 December 2007, col 891

The Committee at work

Working Methods

27. We continue to rely principally on oral evidence, and written evidence submitted in response to the announcement of a new inquiry. Once again, all of our evidence sessions were held in public. We are grateful to all those who have given evidence and otherwise assisted us in our inquiries.

28. We have benefited greatly from the expertise of the **National Audit Office** (NAO), in relation to two inquiries in particular. The NAO's submission of a memorandum and specially commissioned research has greatly enriched our inquiry into *Good Government*. The attachment of a member of NAO staff to the Committee was a source of significant support and invaluable expertise throughout the inquiry into *Public Services and the Third Sector*, the first undertaken by us since assuming responsibility for scrutinising third sector policy. We received valuable and useful briefing from the NAO on the Cabinet Office Annual Report. Tim Burr, the Comptroller and Auditor General, responsible for the National Audit Office, was also among those who gave evidence to our Good Government inquiry.²¹

29. Evidence taken at Westminster is complemented by information gathered in the course of **visits**, which can play a crucial role in our consideration of policy options. Our visit to Brussels in June 2008 gave us the opportunity to learn from professional lobbyists, campaigners, MEPs and the European Commission about lobbying in Brussels and the Commission's Transparency Initiative. The visit provided insights which have informed our subsequent work on lobbying. This was the only visit we undertook this session.

30. The broad scope of our remit means that we are constantly alert for areas of **mutual interest with other committees** and concerned to make any overlap productive. In considering the draft Constitutional Renewal Bill, we were aware of the interest of the Justice Committee and the Home Affairs Committee in informing the work of the Joint Committee charged formally with its pre-legislative scrutiny, and our respective areas of attention. This session also saw the transfer of official statistics from the Treasury Select Committee's remit to ours. Defending the integrity and independence of the UK statistics system is a significant matter, and we welcome our new role in relation to this. We are indebted to the Treasury Select Committee not only for the thoroughness of its previous inquiries into the subject, but also for its generosity in sharing its expertise.²²

Relationship with Departments

31. As our inquiries can range widely across government, we cannot sustain direct relationships with everybody we may scrutinise. We therefore rely heavily on the Cabinet Office and particularly on the Propriety and Ethics team to manage our interactions across the public sector. As always, we are grateful for the continued support they have provided

21 HC 983-iv

22 HC 965-i

to us. We also established a relationship in 2008 with the new UK Statistics Authority, and look forward to close co-operation in the future.

32. We continue to have concerns about the length of time taken for Government to respond to our reports. Whilst welcoming its assurances of endeavours to do better, we note that the problem has nevertheless persisted this session, with all but one response failing to appear within the two month target time, and four taking longer than six months to arrive. In the case of *Politics and Administration: Ministers and Civil Servants*, the response was delivered after 18 months, with no explanation for the delay. Two of the responses received in 2007–08 were to Reports we had published two sessions previously.

33. The quality of Government responses to Committee reports is an indication of how seriously departments take the work of Parliament. In our experience, this quality is variable. While the response to *Public Services and the Third Sector: Rhetoric and Reality* was notable for its sincere attempt to address the issues raised, the response to *From Citizen's Charter to Public Service Guarantees: Entitlements to Public Service* failed to address the central contention of the report, and we have therefore requested clarification of the Government's position.

Future Programme

34. A proportion of our work is inspired by those concerns brought before us by the Parliamentary Ombudsman, by Government announcements, and by current affairs and this will continue to be the case.

35. Several strands of work will continue from this session to the next. The Constitutional Renewal Bill promises to address several issues of longstanding significance for us, and we will be continuing to call for progress. We intend to conclude our Good Government inquiry. Beyond this, we are keen to increase our familiarity with our new areas of responsibility, and look forward to holding further sessions on statistics and the work of the third sector. We are aware that we are nearing the end of a Parliament and we do not expect to begin any lengthy new inquiries. We hope rather to focus on specific issues where we believe that parliamentary attention would be productive. We have recently decided to undertake work in areas which include how Whitehall handles leaks and whistleblowing, external appointments to the civil service, and levels of remuneration and reward for senior public sector posts.

Annex – Sessional Return

Public Administration

For website access click on www.parliament.uk/pasc

The Committee was nominated by the House of Commons on 13 July 2005.

Members	Meetings attended
Wright, Dr Tony (Chairman)	34 out of 38
Burrowes, Mr David	6 out of 38
Flynn, Paul	30 out of 38
Heyes, David	27 out of 38
Hopkins, Kelvin	35 out of 38
Liddell-Grainger, Mr Ian	24 out of 38
Morgan, Julie	29 out of 38
Prentice, Mr Gordon	37 out of 38
Rowen, Paul	23 out of 38
Walker, Mr Charles	32 out of 38
Willott, Jenny	10 out of 38

Overall Attendance: 68.7 %

Total number of meetings: 38

Of which:

Number of meetings at which oral evidence was taken	34
Number of times oral evidence was taken partly or wholly in private	0
Number of wholly private meetings	4
Number of concurrent meetings with other committees	0

Other activities

Informal meetings	0
Conferences/Seminars hosted	0

Staff

Details of the permanent staff of the Committee during the Session can be found in the Committee's publications.

Specialist Advisers during the Session

Prof Justin Fisher, Pauline Ngan and Christopher Sallon QC.

Witnesses

Oral Evidence was given during the Session by the following categories of witnesses:

Number of appearances by:

Other Minister	8
Members of the House of Commons	14
Members of the House of Lords	7
Number of appearances by officials from, or representatives of:	
Cabinet Office	3
Number of appearances by officials from or representatives of public bodies and non-Ministerial departments comprising	
Advisory Committee on Business Appointments	1
Audit Commission	1
Charity Commission	2
Committee on Standards in Public Life	1
National Audit Office	1

Office of the Civil Service Commissioners	1
Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments	1
UK Statistics Authority	1
Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman	3
Appearances by other witnesses	58

Overseas Visits

None.

Visits to European Institutions

Date	Destination	Members	Staff	Purpose	Cost
3-4.6.08	Brussels	Flynn, Heyes, Hopkins, Liddell-Grainger, Prentice	2	Lobbying	£4,401.73

UK Visits

None.

Reports and Oral and Written Evidence

Title	HC No. (2007-08)	Date of publication	Government reply
First Report: Machinery of Government Changes: A follow-up Report	160	17.12.07	Received 25.4.08: published with Eighth Report Session 2007-08
Second Report: Propriety and Peerages	153	18.12.07	Cm 7374, published 16.5.08
Third Report: Parliament and public appointments: Pre-appointment hearings by select committees	152	16.1.08	Received 25.4.08: published as Sixth Special Report Session 2007-08
Fourth Report: Work of the Committee in 2007	236	24.1.08	Received 20.4.08: published as Fifth Special Report Session 2007-08
Fifth Report: When Citizens Complain	409	24.3.08	Received 15.7.08: published as Seventh Special Report Session 2007-08
Sixth Report: User Involvement in Public Services	410	7.5.08	Received 15.7.08: published as Eighth Special Report Session 2007-08
Seventh Report: Investigating the conduct of ministers	381	12.5.08	Received 21.10.08: published as Ninth Special Report Session 2007-08
Eighth Report: Machinery of Government: Further Report	514	14.5.08	Awaited
Ninth Report: Parliamentary Commissions of Inquiry	473	30.5.08	Received 6.10.08: published as Eleventh Special Report Session 2007-08

Title	HC No. (2007-08)	Date of publication	Government reply
Tenth Report: Constitutional Renewal: Draft Bill and White Paper	499	4.6.08	Awaited
Eleventh Report: Public Services and the Third Sector: Rhetoric and Reality Vol I	112-I	9.7.08	Received 24.11.08: published as Thirteenth Special Report Session 2007-08
Twelfth Report: From Citizen's Charter to Public Service Guarantees: Entitlements to Public Services	411	22.7.08	Received 28.11.08: published as Twelfth Special Report Session 2007-08
Thirteenth Report: Selection of a new Chair of the House of Lords Appointments Commission	985	23.7.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence: Selection of a new Chair of the House of Lords Appointments Commission	985-i	28.8.08	Not applicable
Fourteenth Report: Mandarins Unpeeled: Memoirs and Commentary by Former Ministers and Civil Servants	664	5.8.08	Awaited
First Special Report: Ethics and Standards: The Regulation of Conduct in Public Life: Government Response to the Fourth Report of the Committee of Session 2006-07	88	21.11.07	Not applicable
Second Special Report: Skills for Government: Government Response to the Committee's Ninth Report of Session 2006-07	89	21.11.07	Not applicable
Third Special Report: Machinery of Government Changes: Government Response to the Committee's Seventh Report of Session 2006-07	90	21.11.07	Not applicable
Fourth Special Report: Whitehall Confidential: The Publication of Political Memoirs: Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2005-06	91	21.11.07	Not applicable
Fifth Special Report: Work of the Committee in 2007: Government Response to the Committee's Fourth Report of Session 2007-08	458	1.4.08	Not applicable
Sixth Special Report: Parliament and public appointments: Pre-appointment hearings by select committees: Government Response to the Committee's Third Report of Session 2007-08	515	2.5.08	Not applicable
Seventh Special Report: When Citizens Complain: Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2007-08	997	23.7.08	Not applicable

Title	HC No. (2007-08)	Date of publication	Government reply
Eighth Special Report: User Involvement in Public Services: Government Response to the Committee's Sixth Report of Session 2007-08	998	23.7.08	Not applicable
Ninth Special Report: Investigating the conduct of ministers: Government Response to the Seventh Report from the Committee of Session 2007-08	1056	14.10.08	Not applicable
Tenth Special Report: Politics and Administration: Ministers and Civil Servants: Government Response to the Third Report from the Committee of Session 2006-07	1057	14.10.08	Not applicable
Eleventh Special Report: Parliamentary Commissions of Inquiry: Government Response to the Ninth Report from the Committee of Session 2007-08	1060	14.10.08	Not applicable
Twelfth Special Report: From Citizen's Charter to Public Service Guarantees: Entitlements to Public Services: Government Response to the Committee's Twelfth Report of Session 2007-08	1147	17.11.08	Not applicable
Oral and Written Evidence: The Work of the Cabinet Office	92-i	25.1.08	Not applicable
Oral and Written Evidence: Public Services and the Third Sector: Rhetoric and Reality Vol II	112-II	9.7.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence: Committee on Standards in Public Life	218-i	13.3.08	Not applicable
Oral and Written Evidence: Debt of Honour	223	28.1.08	Not applicable
Oral and Written Evidence: Public Services: Putting People First	408	23.4.08	Not applicable
Oral and Written Evidence: The Better Government Initiative	431-i	16.6.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence: Political Campaigning by Charities	451-i	10.6.08	Not applicable
Oral and Written Evidence: Official Statistics	965-i	28.8.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence: Data Handling Procedures in Government	984-i	28.8.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Lobbying	137-i	4.1.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Lobbying	137-ii	23.4.08	Not applicable

Title	HC No. (2007-08)	Date of publication	Government reply
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Lobbying	137-iii	26.3.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Lobbying	137-iv	21.2.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Lobbying	137-iv	23.4.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Lobbying	137-v	23.4.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Lobbying	137-vi	20.6.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Lobbying	137-vii	20.6.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Lobbying	137-viii	21.7.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Charities and Public Benefit	663-i	2.7.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Charities and Public Benefit	663-ii	22.8.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Charities and Public Benefit	663-iii	22.8.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Charities and Public Benefit	663-iv	4.11.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Good Government	983-i	20.8.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Good Government	983-ii	18.11.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Good Government	983-iii	19.11.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Equitable Life	1143-i	27.11.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Equitable Life	1143-ii	14.11.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Charity Commission Annual Report	1156-i	4.11.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Good Government	983-iv	2.12.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Equitable Life	1143-iii	19.11.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Oral Evidence published on the Internet: The Work of the Ombudsman	1144-i	5.11.08	Not applicable

Title	HC No. (2007-08)	Date of publication	Government reply
Uncorrected Oral Evidence published on the Internet: Official Statistics	1146-i	26.11.08	Not applicable

Government replies to Reports for Session 2005-06

Reply to the Committee's Fourth Report: Propriety and Honours, published on 16.5.08 as Cm 7374.
 Reply to the Committee's Fifth Report: Whitehall Confidential: The Publication of Political Memoirs, received 14.11.07 and published as the Committee's Fourth Special Report of Session 2007-08.

Government replies to Reports for Session 2006-07

Reply to the Committee's Third Report: Politics and Administration: Ministers and Civil Servants, received 14.10.08 and published as the Committee's Tenth Special Report Session 2007-08.
 Reply to the Committee's Fourth Report: Ethics and Standards: The Regulation of Conduct in Public Life, received 21.11.07 and published as the Committee's First Special Report Session 2007-08.
 Reply to the Committee's Seventh Report: Machinery of Government Changes, received 21.11.07 and published as the Committee's Third Special Report Session 2007-08.
 Reply to the Committee's Ninth Report: Skills for Government, received 21.11.07 and published as the Committee's Second Special Report Session 2007-08.

Formal Minutes

The Formal Minutes of the Committee were published electronically after each meeting of the Committee. They are available on the Committee's website at <http://www.parliament.uk/pasc>.

Divisions

None.

Debates

Committee reports were debated on 1 occasion in the House of Commons and on 1 occasion in Westminster Hall. Further details can be found in the Committee's Sessional Report.

Number of oral evidence sessions for each inquiry during the Session

Inquiry	Number of oral evidence sessions
Better Government	1
Charities and Public Benefit	4
Charity Commission Annual Report	1
Committee on Standards in Public Life	1
Data Handling Procedures in Government	1
Draft Constitutional Renewal Bill	2
Equitable Life	3
Good Government	4
Lobbying	8

Inquiry	Number of oral evidence sessions
Official Statistics	2
Parliament and public appointments: Pre-appointment hearings by select committees	1
Parliamentary Commissions of Inquiry	1
Political Campaigning by Charities	1
Prime Minister's Independent Adviser on Ministerial Interests	1
Selection of a new Chair of the House of Lords Appointments Commission	1
The Work of the Ombudsman 2007–08	1
Third Sector Commissioning	2
Work of the Cabinet Office	1
Total	36

Formal Minutes

Tuesday 16 December 2008

Members present:

Paul Flynn
David Heyes
Kelvin Hopkins

Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger
Mr Gordon Prentice
Mr Charles Walker

In the absence of the Chairman, and notwithstanding the Order of 12 March, Paul Flynn was called to the Chair.

Draft Report (Work of the Committee in 2007-08), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

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

Paragraphs 1 to 35 read and agreed to.

Annex agreed to.

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

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

[Adjourned till Thursday 15 January at 9.45 am]

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 2008-09

First Report	Lobbying: Access and Influence in Whitehall	HC 36
Second Report	Equitable Life	HC 41
Third Report	Ethics and Standards: Further Report	HC 43

Session 2007-08

First Report	Machinery of Government Changes: A follow-up Report	HC 160 (<i>HC 514</i>)
Second Report	Propriety and Peerages	HC 153 (<i>Cm 7374</i>)
Third Report	Parliament and public appointments: Pre-appointment hearings by select committees	HC 152 (<i>HC 515</i>)
Fourth Report	Work of the Committee in 2007	HC 236 (<i>HC 458</i>)
Fifth Report	When Citizens Complain	HC 409 (<i>HC 997</i>)
Sixth Report	User Involvement in Public Services	HC 410 (<i>HC 998</i>)
Seventh Report	Investigating the Conduct of Ministers	HC 381 (<i>HC 1056</i>)
Eighth Report	Machinery of Government Changes: Further Report	HC 514
Ninth Report	Parliamentary Commissions of Inquiry	HC 473 (<i>HC 1060</i>)
Tenth Report	Constitutional Renewal: Draft Bill and White Paper	HC 499
Eleventh Report	Public Services and the Third Sector: Rhetoric and Reality	HC 112 (<i>HC 1209</i>)
Twelfth Report	From Citizen's Charter to Public Service Guarantees: Entitlement to Public Services	HC 411 (<i>HC 1147</i>)
Thirteenth Report	Selection of a new Chair of the House of Lords Appointments Commission	HC 985
Fourteenth Report	Mandarins Unpeeled: Memoirs and Commentary by Former Ministers and Civil Servants	HC 664

Session 2006-07

First Report	The Work of the Committee in 2005-06	HC 258
Second Report	Governing the Future	HC 123 (<i>Cm 7154</i>)
Third Report	Politics and Administration: Ministers and Civil Servants	HC 122 (<i>HC 1057 Session 2007-08</i>)
Fourth Report	Ethics and Standards: The Regulation of Conduct in Public Life	HC 121 (<i>HC 88 Session 2007-08</i>)
Fifth Report	Pensions Bill: Government Undertakings relating to the Financial Assistance Scheme	HC 523 (<i>HC 922</i>)
Sixth Report	The Business Appointment Rules	HC 651 (<i>HC 1087</i>)
Seventh Report	Machinery of Government Changes	HC 672 (<i>HC 90 Session 2007-08</i>)

Eighth Report	The Pensions Bill and the FAS: An Update, Including the Government Response to the Fifth Report of Session 2006–07	HC 922 (<i>HC 1048</i>)
Ninth Report	Skills for Government	HC 93 (<i>HC 89</i>)
First Special Report	The Governance of Britain	HC 901
Session 2005–06		
First Report	A Debt of Honour	HC 735 (<i>Cm 1020</i>)
Second Report	Tax Credits: putting things right	HC 577 (<i>HC 1076</i>)
Third Report	Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill	HC 1033 (<i>HC 1205</i>)
Fourth Report	Propriety and Honours: Interim Findings	HC 1119 (<i>Cm 7374</i>)
Fifth Report	Whitehall Confidential? The Publication of Political Memoirs	HC 689 (<i>HC 91, Session 2007–08</i>)