House of Commons
Health Committee

Appointment of the Chair of the Food Standards Agency

Third Report of Session 2015–16
House of Commons
Health Committee

Appointment of the Chair of the Food Standards Agency

Third Report of Session 2015–16

Report, with Appendices, together with formal minutes relating to the report

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 5 January 2016
The Health Committee

The Health Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department of Health and its associated bodies.

Current membership

Dr Sarah Wollaston MP (Conservative, Totnes) (Chair)
Rt Hon Ben Bradshaw MP (Labour, Exeter)
Julie Cooper MP (Labour, Burnley)
Dr James Davies MP (Conservative, Vale of Clwyd)
Andrea Jenkyns MP (Conservative, Morley and Outwood)
Andrew Percy MP (Conservative, Brigg and Goole)
Emma Reynolds MP (Labour, Wolverhampton North East)
Paula Sherriff MP (Labour, Dewsbury)
Maggie Throup MP (Conservative, Erewash)
Helen Whately MP (Conservative, Faversham and Mid Kent)
Dr Philippa Whitford MP (Scottish National Party, Central Ayrshire)

Powers

The committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publications

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website at www.parliament.uk/healthcom and by The Stationery Office by Order of the House.

Evidence relating to this report is published on the inquiry page of the Committee’s website.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Huw Yardley (Clerk), Sharon Maddix (Second Clerk), Laura Daniels (Senior Committee Specialist), Stephen Aldhouse (Committee Specialist), Daniel Moeller (Senior Committee Assistant), Victoria Carpenter (Committee Assistant), and Alex Paterson (Media Officer).

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Health Committee, House of Commons, Palace of Westminster, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 6182; the Committee’s email address is healthcom@parliament.uk.
## Contents

Appointment of the Chair of the Food Standards Agency 3

Appendix 1: Letter from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health to Chair of the Health Committee dated 8 September 2015 4

Appendix 2: Curriculum vitae—Heather Jane Hancock 5

Formal Minutes 9

Witness 10

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament 11
Appointment of the Chair of the Food Standards Agency

1. On 8 September 2015, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health, Jane Ellison MP, wrote to us on behalf of the appointing Ministers for the appointment of the Chair of the Food Standards Agency. She informed us that following the conclusion of an open recruitment campaign, the appointing Ministers had jointly agreed that Tim Bennett, the interim Chair, should remain as Chair until 31 March 2016; and that they would then like to put forward Heather Hancock as the preferred candidate to take on the role as Chair from 1 April 2016.

2. Knowing of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee’s interest in the work of the Agency, we invited our colleagues on that committee to join us in holding a pre-appointment hearing with the Ministers’ preferred candidate. The hearing took place on 5 January 2016. A transcript of the session is available on our website.

3. The hearing addressed Heather Hancock’s background and experience, her awareness and understanding of scientific issues and public health and of the food industry in the UK, and her views on the challenges facing the Food Standards Agency and its board. In accordance with the guidelines for pre-appointment hearings agreed with the Liaison Committee, we questioned her on her personal independence and relevant financial interests. We invited her to comment on the Agency’s role, responsibilities and reporting lines, particularly in view of the criticisms which had been made of its response to the incident of contamination of beef products with horse and pork meat which came to light in 2013.1 We also asked Ms Hancock to discuss how, if appointed, she would approach matters relating to the FSA’s responsibility to protect and empower consumers, its budgetary constraints and its relationship with the industry which it regulates.

4. We are grateful to our colleagues on the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee for participating in the hearing and contributing their expertise and knowledge of the Food Standards Agency’s work to the questioning. Following the hearing we consulted them on the candidate’s suitability and our conclusion has been informed by their views.

5. On the basis of the discussions during the pre-appointment hearing, we are satisfied that Heather Hancock has the professional competence and personal independence required of the Chair of the Food Standards Agency. We would nevertheless like to see her accept the need for a bolder and more proactive stance towards effecting change where she considers it necessary, for example in sorting out the cluttered and confused lines of accountability for food safety and food authenticity. As Chair, we will expect her to identify and challenge the gaps in the system.

---

1 See, for example, Review of Food Standards Agency response to the incident of contamination of beef products with horse and pork meat and DNA: An Independent Report, Professor Pat Troop, 28 June 2013.
Appendix 1: Letter from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health to Chair of the Health Committee dated 8 September 2015

Chair of Food Standards Agency

I am writing on behalf of the appointing Ministers for the appointment of the Chair of the Food Standards Agency, to inform you that following the conclusion of an open recruitment campaign, we have jointly agreed that Tim Bennett should remain as Chair until 31 March 2016.

We would then like to put forward Heather Hancock as the Government’s preferred candidate to take on the role as Chair from the 1 April 2016. In the meantime, Heather will be taking up a role as Deputy Chair until 31 March 2016.

The Committee has previously confirmed that it will hold a pre-appointment hearing for this appointment. It would be helpful if the hearing for Heather could be held in January or February 2016.

I will write again in advance of the hearing to provide an up to date full CV for the candidate and background information on the recruitment campaign.

I have copied this letter to Tim Bennett and Heather Hancock, Sir Peter Spencer (Public Appointments Assessor, who chaired the selection panel), the Rt Hon Oliver Letwin (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for Government Policy in the Cabinet Office), Mark Drakeford AM (Minister for Health and Social Services, Welsh Government) and Simon Hamilton MLA (Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Northern Ireland Executive).

Jane Ellison MP, 8 September 2015
Appendix 2: Curriculum vitae—Heather Jane Hancock

Career

Apr 2015–present Non-executive chair, Wavelength Ltd

- This is an SME specialising in leadership development, service excellence and social enterprise.


Feb 2014–present Director, Amerdale Ltd

- This is our family company, which has three elements: real estate, consultancy and retail.

May 2013–Jun 2014 Commissioned to report on bias and impartiality in the BBC’s rural affairs coverage, by the BBC Trust.


Deloitte LLP is the UK and Swiss member firm of the global organisation Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Ltd (DTTL), the biggest professional services firm globally. In the UK and Switzerland, Deloitte employs c 15,000 people with annual revenues of c£2bn.

Managing Partner from 2008 until retirement, one of 12-14 Executive Partners in the UK firm. Responsibilities included: Client Experience; Reputation management; Innovation and growth plans; Talent Strategy; Press, Public Affairs and Communications; Brand; Corporate Responsibility; Sponsorship; Online/Digital presence; Women in leadership agenda.

Global Managing Partner for Communications and Brand, Jan 2011 to Sept 2013; member of the 24 person global leadership team.

Strategy Partner, establishing and leading three new business for Deloitte: regional government, public sector strategy, and Olympic/Paralympic services. The two first each grew to revenues of >£5m pe within two years; the latter was the third biggest account for Deloitte UK 2004–2012.

Member of UK Board 2006–2008.

Key achievements

Developed Europe’s leading Innovation Suite, for collaboration with clients on accelerated solutions to their business challenges. In its first four months, this facility delivered incremental client revenue of more than three times its development costs.

Created a new approach to impact reporting, a sector first, and changed the engagement of the firm with external stakeholders in politics, regulators and beyond.
Originated and executed the firm’s £32m sponsorship of London 2012, and subsequently international Olympic relationships in the US, Canada, Germany, Austria, Singapore and Brazil. Led a 40 Partner and 450+ person delivery team providing advisory and seconded services to London 2012, a programme that delivered over 750,000 hours of client service.

Repositioned the UK firm’s brand over six years: developing named sponsorships eg Deloitte Ride Across Britain, Deloitte Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at London Business School, Deloitte Ignite (Royal Opera House), Deloitte Social Innovation Pioneers.


Led the transformation of Deloitte’s CR programme, becoming the sector leader in terms of scale and impact of the contribution, and attracting numerous external awards. This included originating the firm’s position on disability sport, including securing matched funding from Government, and the creation of the first nationwide corporate challenge focussed on disability (the Deloitte Ride Across Britain).

In a matrix organisation, I have variously carried accountability for/leadership of communities of: 3–4 Partners and c30 strategy consultants in P&L; 8 Partners and 150 professionals on Talent; 45 Partners and 550+ people on London2012; 300 professionals in our Brand, Markets and Communications team in the UK; 50 global employees and a Comms and Brand network internationally of c 250 personnel; 12 Partners on international Olympic relationships; and 43 Partners and 40 direct team members on Innovation and Brand.

July 2000–Oct 2003  Executive Director, Environment

**Yorkshire Forward**

Executive responsibility for the RDA’s intervention in: property development; sustainable development; urban and rural renaissance; Urban Regeneration Companies; transport; tourism.

Originated and delivered the Urban Renaissance concept, delivering world class masterplanners to declining or purposeless urban centres in the region. This approach won a prize at the Venice Biennale.

Led the regional economic response to foot and mouth disease, including the only economic hardship fund operated in England.

Originated and led disposal of former English Partnerships investment portfolio and aggressive new acquisitions strategy for strategic development in urban centres. Accountable for property portfolio valued at c£350m.

Joint Venture negotiations with UK Coal and Railtrack for major development sites, including through Compulsory Purchase.

Jan 1998–July 2000  Chief Executive, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
• environmental and recreation management of 1700 sq km of internationally important landscape and habitats; planning authority; tourist management

• development of new corporate strategy and accountability framework; radical restructuring of Authority and staff structure and processes

• part of the core team which established and led HRH The Prince of Wales's Rural Revival Initiative

• positioned the National Park Authority to influence and shape national thinking about the future role and management of protected areas, including private Ministerial debate, and on the right to roam debate


• led public sector consultancy team in North of England

• specialised in sport and cultural work, and economic analysis

Feb 1994–Apr 1996 The Millennium Commission

• beginning in 1994 as Acting Chief Executive and joint accounting office, and in March 1995 becoming Deputy Chief Executive

• personally established the Commission as an independent body from a standing start to fully operational in six months

• successfully negotiated the Commission’s financial memorandum establishing its operating model at arm's length from Government

Sep 1988–Feb 1994 Civil Service

Nov 1993 Head of Millennium Commission Unit, Dept of National Heritage (now DCMS) (Grade 5)

• all preparatory work for establishment and appointment of the Millennium Commission, including identification and appointment of Commissioners, and legislative elements

May 1992 Private Secretary to the Permanent Secretary, Department of National Heritage

• advised on and implemented management and organisational change to create new Government department from seven departments

Oct 1990 Private Secretary to the Home Secretary, The Home Office

• serving three Home Secretaries, promoted to Grade 7

• responsible for all terrorism and security matters, policy on Criminal Justice Bills, prison privatisation, immigration and broadcasting

• EU Ministerial negotiations on security, policing and immigration

• managed 27 staff across 5 Ministerial offices
• implemented Departmental changes following 1992 General Election


1987 Land Agent, Carter Jonas

Main appointments

Current

Chairman of Governors, Giggleswick School (Governor since 2007; Chairman since July 2013)

Chair, Development Board for St John’s College Cambridge (2009–)

Member of St John’s College Cambridge Development Committee, an internal body of the Fellows

Senior Women in Public Leadership network (House of Lords), 2005–

Appointed LVO in the 2013 New Year Honours List for services to the Royal Family

Concluded

Board member, the Global Social Progress Imperative, 2013–2014

Trustee, The Prince’s Trust 2000–2012; Chair, Audit Committee 2007–2012; Chair, The Prince’s Trust Regional Council for Yorkshire and Humber 1999–2007

President (2003-4) and Hon Secretary (1995–7), The Land Society, the alumni society for Cambridge graduates in property related professions


Chairman, BBC Rural Affairs Advisory Committee 2003–2010

Founder Trustee, Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, 1996–2003


Education


Land Society Prize: best performance in Land Economy finals

Estates Gazette Prize: national prize for best graduate surveyor
Formal Minutes

Tuesday 5 January 2016

Members present:

Dr Sarah Wollaston, in the Chair

Dr James Davies
Andrea Jenkyns
Paula Sherriff

Helen Whately
Dr Philippa Whitford

Draft Report (Appointment of the Chair of the Food Standards Agency), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

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

Paragraphs 1 to 5 read and agreed to.

Papers were appended to the Report as Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

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

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

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 12 January at 2.00pm.]
Witness

The following witness gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the Committee’s inquiry page at www.parliament.uk/healthcom.

Tuesday 5 January 2016

Heather Hancock, preferred candidate for the post of Chair of the Food Standards Agency

Question number

Q1–110
List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the Committee’s website at www.parliament.uk/healthcom.

**Session 2015–16**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Report</th>
<th>Childhood obesity—brave and bold action</th>
<th>HC 465</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Report</td>
<td>Appointment of the Chair of the Care Quality Commission</td>
<td>HC 641</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>