



House of Commons
Digital, Culture, Media and
Sport Committee

Appointment of the Chair of the Charity Commission

Third Report of Session 2017–19

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

*Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed
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Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee

The Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and its associated bodies.

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Publication

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website at www.parliament.uk/dcmscom and in print by Order of the House.

Evidence relating to this report is published on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Chloe Challender (Clerk), Joe Watt (Second Clerk), Josephine Willows (Senior Committee Specialist), Andy Boyd (Senior Committee Assistant), Keely Bishop (Committee Assistant), Grace Gamba (Sandwich Student), Lucy Dargahi (Media Officer) and Janet Coull Trisic (Media Officer).

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Introduction

1. On 26 January 2018 the Government informed this Committee that its preferred candidate for the role of Chair of the Charity Commission was Baroness Stowell of Beeston.¹
2. The post of Chair of the Charity Commission is one of those listed as subject to the agreed pre-appointment hearing process.² We held a pre-appointment hearing for Baroness Stowell on 20 February 2018. We thank her for her evidence, which is published on our website.
3. The Committee wrote to the appointing Secretary of State, Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP, on 20 February, saying that it could not support the nomination of Baroness Stowell. We set out four key reasons for this decision, relating to the recruitment process, and to the candidate's: experience; neutrality; and performance at the hearing. This letter is published, alongside other correspondence, in Appendix 1.
4. Mr Hancock's response was issued immediately upon receipt of our letter on the evening of 20 February. We were surprised and disappointed that Mr Hancock chose to make this initial response so hastily, and via a statement to the Press Association, rather than to us directly.
5. When we did receive a direct communication—a letter from the Secretary of State, received the next day, 21 February—we were again disappointed to find that our points were dismissed without any meaningful engagement on matters of substance.³ We wrote again to Mr Hancock on 22 February, requesting fuller and more specific answers, and asking a further four questions about the recruitment process.⁴ We received a letter in response on 23 February. The correspondence is included in Appendix 1.

Our Report

6. In this Report, we elaborate further on the points in our letters to the Secretary of State. We retain strong reservations about both the candidate's suitability for the role, and the process used to determine her selection as the Government's preferred candidate. ***We request a response to this Report from the Secretary of State within a fortnight of this report's publication. This is far shorter than the usual eight-week timescale for Government responses to select committee reports, but we are confident that the Department will share our sense of urgency about addressing the concerns we have set out.***

1 ['Preferred Candidate Selected for Charity Commission Chair'](#), Joint press release, DCMS and Charity Commission, 26 January 2018. Further details about the recruitment process are included in Chapter 2.

2 Refer to CPA website for list <https://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/>

3 This response is also published in Appendix 1.

4 Letter from Damian Collins MP to RT Hon Matt Hancock MP, 22 February 2018

1 The appointment

Baroness Stowell: background and suitability

7. Baroness Stowell has a long history of public service, having held distinguished positions in Government, the civil service and the BBC. She was Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal between July 2014 and July 2016, and was a Government Minister in the House of Lords between September 2011 and July 2014. Lady Stowell continues to work as a peer but has said she will sit as a crossbencher should she take on the role. She has also served as an independent consultant, and recently became a trustee of two charities.⁵ Further biographical information is included in Appendix 3.

8. At the hearing, we asked Baroness Stowell questions about her previous career, including her political background and her suitability for the role. She talked about previous roles she had undertaken within the BBC and in Whitehall.

9. While the Committee valued the opportunity to hear more from Baroness Stowell about her background, we were nevertheless left with fundamental concerns about her suitability for the post. Our first key concern was Baroness Stowell's lack of experience in either the regulatory or the charity sectors.⁶

Experience

10. On the former, Lady Stowell claimed to have “a lot of regulatory experience” from her time at the BBC.⁷ However, having assessed the information provided to us about her career (see Appendix 3), we could not identify a single role during her time at the BBC—Head of Corporate Affairs; Head of Communications; Deputy Secretary of the Corporation—that included any significant regulatory work. The internal organisational context of the BBC is not self-evidently relevant to the experience needed to lead a national regulator responsible for the oversight of 168,000 charities and nearly £75 billion of charitable funds.⁸

11. We were forced to conclude that Lady Stowell's experience in the charity sector is, to put it bluntly, negligible. Her only exposure to the sector comes from her role as trustee, a role which she has held for no more than eight months. Highlighting this stark absence of relevant experience, Andrew Hind, former chief executive of the Charity Commission, told us that “her fit with the published person specification is poor.”⁹

12. We asked Baroness Stowell why she had only got involved in the charity sector in the last nine months.¹⁰ She replied that “once you are a member of Government there are restrictions on what role you can play.”¹¹ When we contested this she said: “It is, actually, in the Ministerial Code.”¹²

5 Baroness Stowell became trustee of Crimestoppers in July 2017, and of the Transformation Trust in January 2018.

6 Letter from Damian Collins MP to Rt Hon Matt Hancock, 20 February 2018

7 Q23

8 Charity Commission, Annual Report 2016-17, p.2

9 [Written evidence from Andrew Hind](#)

10 Q26

11 Q26

12 Q26

13. We checked the Ministerial Code. It states that there is “normally no objection to a Minister associating him or herself with a charity,” albeit with a number of caveats including that they do not undertake fundraising activity and that they consult the Permanent Secretary.¹³

14. In her evidence to us the candidate accepted that she had “limited experience” in the charity sector.¹⁴ But Lady Stowell made no convincing attempt to offer any replacement for this experience, such as transferable skills from other sectors. She spoke in vague terms about a “plan”, and how she wanted “the charity sector to be out front and centre before the public and private sector showing the way.”¹⁵ However, she consistently failed to articulate what this plan was, how she intended to implement it, or how it related to the wider responsibilities of the Chair of the Charity Commission. She listed the roles she had held at the BBC, in the civil service and in the House of Lords, but did not elaborate on the skills she had gained, or give examples of actions she had taken to achieve proven impact.¹⁶

15. As we highlighted in our letter of 20 February, according to the Government’s Code on Public Appointments, individuals selected by Ministers for public appointments must possess the “skills, experience and qualities [...] to meet the needs of the public body or statutory office in question.”¹⁷ Baroness Stowell has failed to meet the most fundamental of requirements for this role. **Baroness Stowell does not have experience in the charity or regulatory sectors, and she failed to provide any convincing explanation to us in its absence of how she met the skills and experience criteria of the Government’s Code on Public Appointments. Baroness Stowell may well turn out to have the necessary skills—she has simply found no way to demonstrate them so far, and failed to convince us that lack of experience was compensated for by clarity of vision and a clear sense of how she was going to transfer the skills and experience she has gained to a novel area of employment. To be a convincing candidate for the role she needs to be able to demonstrate more relevant experience. *The Government must explain on what basis and on what evidence it believes Baroness Stowell’s limited to non-existent experience in any comparable role is sufficient to carry out the role of Chair of the Charity Commission., It must also provide evidence that no other appointable candidates could be identified who had greater relevant experience in either the regulatory or charitable sectors.***

Performance

16. Lady Stowell’s vagueness regarding the relevance and applicability of her experience was representative of a general tendency in the hearing to answer our questions imprecise claims and a failure to make persuasive connections between her skills and experience and her plans for tackling the challenges she would face at the Charity Commission. Cabinet

13 Section 7.13 of the Ministerial Code states: “Ministers should not therefore normally accept invitations to act as patrons of, or otherwise offer support to, pressure groups, or organisations dependent in whole or in part on Government funding. There is normally less objection to a Minister associating him or herself with a charity, subject to the points above, but Ministers should take care to ensure that in participating in any fund-raising activity, they do not place, or appear to place, themselves under an obligation as Ministers to those to whom appeals are directed and for this reason they should not approach individuals or companies personally for this purpose. In all such cases, the Minister should consult their Permanent Secretary and where appropriate the independent adviser on Ministers’ interests.”

14 Q69

15 Q70

16 For example, Q19

17 Cabinet Office, [Governance Code on Public Appointments](#) (December 2016), Section 2.1

Office Guidance on Pre-Appointment Scrutiny stipulates that “The candidate will need to be able to withstand parliamentary and public scrutiny should they take up post and the Committee may wish to test this.”¹⁸

17. We asked fair questions that gave the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate the relevance and applicability of her knowledge, skills and experience. For example, several Members made proactive efforts to tease out relevant examples of her interest in, and vision for, the sector, and were disappointed to receive answers that were often lacking in detail or relevance.¹⁹ **Our judgment is that Baroness Stowell did not demonstrate evidence of meeting the Government’s own criterion of being able to withstand public and parliamentary scrutiny. We cannot approve this appointment without being persuaded that Baroness Stowell can provide clear, relevant examples of evidence against the criteria in the job specification. *The Secretary of State should consult the assessment panel once again and provide evidence to assure us that Baroness Stowell was the strongest candidate against all the required criteria, in particular her ability to withstand fierce public scrutiny.***

Neutrality

18. The job specification includes among its criteria: “personal integrity and resilience, demonstrable independence and other attitudes consistent with the expectations of senior public office in a high-profile role.”²⁰

19. In testing against this criterion, it is self-evident that our concern originates from Baroness Stowell’s career in high-ranking Government office. Lady Stowell was a longstanding Government Minister less than two years ago. A political career should not be and is not in itself a bar to appointments which require the holders to divest themselves of any partiality or favouritism, but clearly this is an area in which public perception is likely to be sceptical of claims to impartiality, and the candidate must have the ability to dispel that perception quickly and completely. One of the roles of the Charity Commission as a regulator is to determine whether a charity has breached the law on political purpose. The Commission’s MP Factsheet states:

Charities are free to participate in public debates and to use their voice to try to influence decisions which will support the work of the charity. However, there are particular legal requirements about political activity by charities.

Charity law defines political activity as any activity that aims to promote or oppose a change in the law or Government policy. Charities can undertake political activity in support of their charitable aims, but it’s not acceptable for a charity to pursue its aims solely through political activities. This is because charities can never have a political purpose – so an organisation which exists purely to campaign for a change in the law is not a charity. Whether or not charities choose to undertake political activity, they must never support or oppose a particular political party or endorse a particular political candidate.²¹

18 Cabinet Office, [Cabinet Office Guidance: Pre-appointment scrutiny of public appointments by House of Commons select committees](#) (November 2013), point 12

19 Letter from Damian Collins MP to Rt Hon Matt Hancock, 20 February 2018

20 See Appendix 2.

21 Charity Commission, [MP Factsheet no.6](#)

20. As ACEVO reminded us, concerns about political affiliation have been raised by the voluntary sector in respect of the last three appointments of Chairs of the Charity Commission.²²

21. When we asked Baroness Stowell about how she would demonstrate her political impartiality (in the light of her ministerial and party political career), although she indicated her intention to resign the Conservative whip in the House of Lords, she otherwise failed to provide a convincing response. Lady Stowell cited her decade in the civil service but we found her answer incoherent and unpersuasive, an impression which was not helped by her description of “working for John Major”.²³ She then sought to use the example of being the Leader of the House of Lords as proof of independence—of being “a broker, if you like, between the House back into Government and vice versa [...] [having] the confidence of all sides of the House [...] [so] they have to believe that you are independent in the way in which you represent their interests.”²⁴ While we have the greatest respect for the culture of the House of Lords, we found the use of a role in which the key outcome required is the delivery of the Government’s legislative programme to be an odd choice to fall back on.

22. During the evidence session, Baroness Stowell also revealed that she had not simply stumbled into a political role: in 2010 she had sought nomination as a Conservative party candidate at the general election. This was the first time this information had been supplied to the Committee.²⁵

23. Baroness Stowell’s answer about in relation to her role as trustee at Crimestoppers also concerned us. She told us: “That appointment came to be made because I do know Michael Ashcroft and he is the Chair and founder of Crimestoppers, as you know. Lord Ashcroft was aware that, because I was no longer in the Government, I had more time on my hands than I had had previously”.²⁶ In response we asked whether it was an advertised post with a recruitment process, and she said “No”.²⁷

24. As the umbrella organisation for voluntary organisations, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, NCVO, told us in written evidence, “perceived independence—being seen to be independent—is just as important as actual independence. Charities cannot afford for their regulator to be anything other than beyond all suspicion.”²⁸ ACEVO, the other major charities umbrella, told us: “We are not suggesting that people with political backgrounds can never hold office, but emphasising that the political neutrality of this particular role is critical to the credibility and independence of the Charity Commission.”²⁹

25. Andrew Hind, former CEO of the Charity Commission, told us:

The need for the charity regulator to be independent from both Government and party politics is surely self-evident. Its judgement and quasi-judicial decisions must be perceived to be unbiased by people of all parties and none [...] This is a public appointment which should be conducted in compliance

22 [Written evidence from ACEVO and other charities](#)

23 Q19

24 Q19

25 Qq10-14

26 Q15

27 Q17

28 Letter from NCVO published on the Committee’s website.

29 [Written evidence from ACEVO and other charities](#)

with the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments and under the principles of merit, fairness and openness. Why then is the Government's preferred candidate to be the next Chair of the Charity Commission a former Conservative Leader of the House of Lords [with little direct experience of either charities or regulation?]³⁰

26. Andrew Purkis, an expert on the charity sector, wrote the following about Baroness Stowell's candidacy in a blog:

We are now asked to welcome someone with a far more conspicuous and unambiguous party political background than any other Charity Commission Chair in history. Each time Baroness Stowell sits down as Chair of Charity Commission, a very large elephant will sit down beside her.³¹

27. **The job specification for this role stipulates "demonstrable independence." Baroness Stowell was unable to give us concrete examples of where she has demonstrated independence or neutrality. Her prominent political career is a source of concern for key voices within the charity sector. *The Government must think again about whether Baroness Stowell has met the criterion of 'demonstrable independence' within the job specification for this role. The choice of someone who has only recently left high political office makes this concern acute and critical. It inevitably presents such a person with an enormous challenge to demonstrate their impartiality. That makes the choice of Baroness Stowell for this role all the more curious: she must have been far in front of any other candidate who did not carry this particular risk. The Government should disclose to us (in confidence if that is necessary) whether any of the other appointable candidates had been publicly affiliated with any particular political party.***

28. **We had concerns about the relevance of Baroness Stowell's previous employment experience to the regulatory role of the Charity Commission. She failed in the answers she gave to persuade us that her previous experience was relevant to the role for which she has been put forward, or that she had the capacity to bring that experience to bear on an unfamiliar role effectively.**

29. **We attempted to establish evidence of Baroness Stowell's commitment to the charity sector. She failed in the answers she gave us to provide any.**

30. **We sought to elicit Baroness Stowell's vision for the future direction of the Charity Commission, what her early priorities would be and how she would make things happen. She failed in the answers that she gave to persuade us that she had any vision, or any action plan.**

31. **We sought to explore with Baroness Stowell how she would set about dispelling the obvious suspicion of partiality arising from her distinguished party-political career. She failed in the answers she gave us to do this.**

32. **On the basis of the evidence that we have, we cannot endorse Baroness Stowell's proposed appointment as Chair of the Charity Commission.**

30 [Written evidence from Andrew Hind](#)

31 <https://andrewpurkis.wordpress.com/2018/02/22/the-stowell-candidacy-and-the-public-interest/>

2 The recruitment process

33. We also have several concerns about the recruitment process. This chapter will briefly address these.

34. First, we are keen to understand whether Baroness Stowell was the Government's first choice, or whether another candidate had been chosen beforehand but did not take up the role. Second, we are concerned that this appointment has all the signs of an 'insider' appointment drawn from a limited pool of candidates with a pre-determined outcome in mind.

The announcement of the candidate

35. Shortlisted candidates were interviewed on 10 November 2017. We were told by the Department that following the interview the panel were unanimous in finding three candidates appointable. These three appointable candidates met the Minister for Sport and Civil Society on 27 November "before a formal decision was taken by the Secretary of State".³²

36. We do not know when or how the final decision by the Secretary of State was taken, or what role the report of the panel's detailed deliberations played in the final choice. We were simply told in the 'background information' submitted by the Department that "Baroness Stowell was announced as Ministers' preferred candidate for the Chair of the Charity Commission following a fair, open and transparent recruitment exercise".

37. However, the length of time between the final stage of the recruitment process and the announcement of Baroness Stowell as the Government's preferred candidate was inexplicably long. A date (12 December 2017) for the pre-appointment hearing had been long-agreed with the Department, but was postponed at the last minute.³³ The Committee Clerk was subsequently told in a phone-call on 5 December that the announcement of the preferred candidate was imminent. However, the following day this was retracted, and the hearing was postponed until the New Year.³⁴ The unexplained oddities of the timings around the dates when Ministers were consulted suggests to us that this was not a straightforward case of the first-choice candidate being identified and proposed.

38. Andrew Hind wrote in the publication *Civil Society* that, according to sources close to the process, Baroness Stowell was not the favoured candidate of the independent assessment panel chaired by DCMS. ACEVO and other charities quoted this in their submission, stating: "There was another preferred candidate who is reported to be highly experienced and politically neutral. However, this person was not selected for the role by number 10."³⁵

32 Background information submitted by DCMS, Appendix 2.

33 In September the Department suggested a date in w/c 27 November 2017 for the hearing. To fit with the Committee's programme, a date of 12 December was agreed mutually. On 2 and 14 November the date of 12 December was reconfirmed in separate emails by DCMS. On 23 November the Department said that the date of 12 December "may slip". But on 29 November a further email stated that the hearing was still scheduled for 12 December. (Emails between DCMS Parliamentary Clerk and Acting Clerk, DCMS Committee, 21 September to 29 November 2017.)

34 The then Secretary of State, Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, wrote to the Committee on 6 December informing us that the process "is taking slightly longer than we anticipated."

35 [Written evidence from ACEVO and other charities](#)

39. Andrew Hind further told us that “at least one other candidate in the Public Appointments process, with outstanding experience of both charities and regulation, has been overlooked. Perhaps it is because that individual has no political connections?”³⁶

40. While we have been told that two other candidates were deemed appointable, we have also not been given their names by the Department. We understand that for reasons of personal privacy giving out this information is difficult. Instead we asked the Secretary of State (amongst other questions): i) whether any other candidate was recommended prior to Baroness Stowell and ii) whether any candidates with regulatory and/or charities experience were interviewed, and if so, why was the preferred candidate was chosen ahead of them?³⁷

41. The Secretary of State’s response, received on 23 February, did not seek to provide answers to these questions.

42. **The fact that there was a lastminute delay in the announcement of the candidate leads us to think that a candidate (other than Baroness Stowell) was put forward, and then—for some reason—was unable to take up the post of Chair. In their written evidence to us, charities allege that Baroness Stowell was not the favoured candidate of the independent assessment panel, and that there was another preferred candidate “reported to be highly experienced and politically neutral,” but this person was not selected for the role by Ministers. We cannot assess the veracity of these claims, but we are keen to understand more about the process so we can draw our own (better-informed) conclusions and perhaps help dispel suspicion - which is, after all, one of the key purposes of pre-appointment hearings. *The Department must explain why, a week after appointable candidates met the Minister (27 November), we were told (5 December) that an announcement was “imminent”, only to be told a day later that the process “was taking longer than expected” and the hearing of 12 December needed to be postponed. The Department must confirm whether or not the allegations in charities’ written evidence that Baroness Stowell was not the favoured candidate of the independent assessment panel are accurate. Further, we await the answer to the question in our letter of 22 February: whether any candidates with regulatory and/or charities experience were interviewed, and, if so, why the preferred candidate was chosen ahead of them?***

Pool of candidates

43. We have informed the Department previously of our concerns about the pool from which candidates for public roles of the kind we scrutinise appear to be drawn. In a letter sent to the Secretary of State on 19 December, we highlighted our thinking about this narrow group of establishment figures. In response, Mr Hancock sent a letter setting out some new approaches being taken by DCMS regarding advertising, outreach and diversity. This is useful, but we wait to see whether these approaches produce results.

44. We put our concerns about the narrow recruitment pool to Baroness Stowell. She told us that she was “a veteran outsider”.³⁸ We put it to her that being Leader of the House of Lords, Head of Corporate Affairs at the BBC, and Deputy Head of Staff to the Leader of the Conservative Party did not look like the CV of an “outsider.” She said that by “outsider” she

36 [Written evidence from Andrew Hind](#)

37 Letter to Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP, 22 February 2018

38 Q3

meant that she had been a newcomer to the industries she worked in (for example she told us that when she joined the BBC she had “little previous experience in the broadcasting industry”) but that she went on to forge successful careers in these organisations.³⁹

45. We were also discouraged following Baroness Stowell’s answer to a question about how she came across the role of trustee of the Transformation Trust, which she took up in January 2018.⁴⁰ She said that it “was not advertised” but that she had heard about it “through a mutual friend of the person who is the chief executive of that charity”.⁴¹

46. The narrow pool of establishment figures from which some public appointments appear to be drawn does not inspire confidence that we are getting the best people for the job, or that the Government is genuinely committed to presenting a public face more representative of modern British society. *If we, and more importantly the charity sector as a whole, are to be persuaded that these concerns are groundless the Secretary of State must give us further information about the two appointable candidates (without their identities being disclosed) including the nature of their previous employment, and for how long they have worked in these sectors.*

47. We sought evidence from the Department that the process by which Baroness Stowell emerged as the preferred candidate for the Chair of the Charity Commission was fair, open and inclusive. The evidence has either not been provided or is unpersuasive. We do not have confidence therefore that Baroness Stowell is the best person who can be found to take on this crucial role.

39 Q42

40 Qq 31-2

41 Q32

3 Conclusion

Wider reflections on the role

48. The Secretary of State's immediate response to our initial post-hearing letter made us concerned about the Government's regard for Parliament's legitimate, well-established role in pre-appointment scrutiny. Cabinet Office guidance states "On receipt of the committee's report, Ministers will consider the report before deciding whether to proceed with the appointment". The letter we sent to the Secretary of State immediately following the hearing with Baroness Stowell represented the considered view of all Members of the Committee who participated in the exercise, who had worked hard to follow established procedures to scrutinise a public appointment of substantial significance, especially at this time of crisis for the charity sector.

49. The Secretary of State's quick response to our initial letter showed scant regard for both due process, and for Parliament's role in public appointments. The Commission is accountable to Parliament, not the Government of the day. There is an established role for select committees in the public appointment process, for good reasons. Ministers should, therefore, listen to their advice, rather than proceed regardless on as if committees' careful work had never happened.

50. A Select Committee's role in the appointment process is advisory but historically the influence of committees has been strong. Select Committee advisory decisions have only rarely been set aside by appointing Ministers (three times out of nine negative committee reports over the course of the 100 or so hearings held since 2005). However, the most recent of these three cases—the July 2016 appointment of the Chief Inspector of Ofsted despite the Education Committee's objection—was very similar to our own. The Government continued with the appointment regardless despite a unanimous negative Committee report. We must ensure this is not becoming a trend.

51. The way in which the 2016 Grimstone Review was implemented gave extra powers to Ministers over public appointments, effectively awarding them an override power and the freedom, if they chose, to appoint people deemed unappointable.⁴² **It is all the more crucial that Parliament can ensure that ministerial powers in the public appointment process are not misused. The Government has a duty to take Parliament's views seriously, and to respond to them in a carefully considered fashion. The Secretary of State must now show, in his response to this report, that he is capable of demonstrating a thoughtful, judicious and well-considered approach to the exercise of his statutory duties.**

52. In 2011 the Liaison Committee recommended that the procedure for pre-appointment hearings should be refined to provide for a resolution of the House of Commons confirming appointments in certain cases.⁴³ The Treasury Committee is currently the only committee

42 In 2016, following a review led by Sir Gerry Grimstone, the Government established a [review](#) of the public appointments process, recommending that a number of changes be made to the system. Changes to the role of the Commissioner were recommended, with many of the Commissioner's formal powers within the public appointments process removed (for example removing the power to appoint independent assessors to an interview panel). In "exceptional occasions" ministers may decide "that a full appointments process is not appropriate or necessary" (although various safeguards are applied to this power).

43 LC, 'Select Committees and Pre-Appointment reports' (2011)

with such an arrangement.⁴⁴ Following an agreement confirmed in a letter between the then Chair, Andrew Tyrie, and the then Chancellor, George Osborne, should the Committee recommend that the appointment (in this case of the chief executive of the Financial Conduct Authority) be put as a motion to the whole House, the Government will make time for the motion and respect the decision of the House.⁴⁵

53. We think the time may have arrived at which it would be of benefit to both the Government and the House if arrangements for responding to pre-appointment hearings were put on a surer and clearer footing. We intend to consult with other interested committees with a view to bringing forward a new Standing Order which, in the event of a negative finding by a committee in relation to a proposed public appointment, would trigger an automatic ninety-minute debate on the floor of the House where Ministers would have the opportunity to set out their arguments for disagreeing with a Committee and the House as a whole would have the opportunity for coming to a decision on whose arguments it found more persuasive. We are sure the Government would welcome the opportunity to reassure the public that all major public appointments are made on the basis of an unimpeachably fair and open process, and that the candidates would be strengthened in their ability to deliver what was being asked of them (often a very challenging task) by the knowledge that they had been endorsed by the House of Commons.

44 Other Select Committees possess other forms of veto power over public appointments made by the Government. Some of these powers exist in legislation; for example, under Section 1, Chapter 44 of the National Audit Act 1983, the Prime Minister cannot table a motion for the appointment of the Comptroller and Auditor General without the agreement of the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. Other types of veto power are simply de facto conventions between the Government and the House. In 2011, for example, the Government announced that it would accept the Justice Committee's conclusion on whether or not the candidate for Information Commissioner should be appointed (the DCMS Committee is now responsible for the ICO, and this power effectively remains).

45 <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/treasury/Correspondence/chancellor-chairman-FCA-chief-exec-appointment-190416.pdf>

Appendix One: Correspondence following the hearing

Letter from the Chair of the Committee to the Secretary of State re the Appointment of the Chair of the Charity Commission, dated 20 February 2018

Dear Secretary of State,

Appointment of the Chair of the Charity Commission

The Committee held a pre-appointment hearing with the Government's preferred candidate for the Chair of the Charity Commission, Baroness Stowell, this morning. I am sorry to report that we cannot support the Government's nomination.

This is the first time that this Committee has not supported the Government's candidate, and it is not a decision that we have taken lightly. The Committee was unanimous in its view that, for four reasons, Baroness Stowell should not be appointed:

- (i) Experience: Baroness Stowell has little more than 6 months of negligible charity sector experience, and a complete lack of experience of working for a regulatory body. According to the Government's Code on Public Appointments, individuals selected by Ministers for public appointments must possess the "skills, experiences and qualities [...] to meet the needs of the public body or statutory office in question." In addition to this, Baroness Stowell was unable to demonstrate to the Committee any real insight, knowledge or vision for the charities sector.
- (ii) Neutrality: the candidate was a longstanding Government Minister less than two years ago. The fact that Baroness Stowell had a political career is not itself a bar, and the candidate has publicly committed to giving up the Conservative Whip upon appointment. However, her political past is a source of concern for the Committee and those within the charity sector. As the umbrella body for voluntary organisations, NCVO, told us in written evidence, "perceived independence – being seen to be independent – is just as important as actual independence. Charities cannot afford for their regulator to be anything other than beyond all suspicion."
- (iii) The recruitment process: our concerns here are twofold:
 - a. The process has lacked transparency and has been protracted. A hearing was set up at your Department's behest for 12 December 2017. The Committee clerk was told in a phone-call on 5 December that the announcement of the preferred candidate was imminent. However, the then Secretary of State, Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, wrote to the Committee on 6 December informing us that the process "is taking slightly longer than we anticipated." No further communication took place until mid-January. While we have been told that two other candidates were deemed appointable, we have not been

given their names (despite Committee staff seeking this information.) **We would like to request this information again: ie. the names of the other appointable candidates, and why Baroness Stowell was chosen over them?**

- b. On 19 December, the Committee wrote to you explaining that we thought it regrettable that candidates for public roles of the kind we scrutinise apparently continue to be drawn from a narrow group of establishment figures. Baroness Stowell claimed to be a “veteran outsider” and yet she has been Leader of the House of Lords, Head of Corporate Affairs at the BBC, and Deputy Chief of Staff to the Leader of the Conservative Party. This does not strike us as the CV of an “outsider.”
- (iv) Performance: Cabinet Office Guidance on Pre-Appointment Scrutiny stipulates that “The candidate will need to be able to withstand parliamentary and public scrutiny should they take up post and the Committee may wish to test this.” On this occasion, it is our judgment that Baroness Stowell was unable to withstand scrutiny. Members asked fair questions that gave the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate her knowledge, skills and experience. Indeed, several Members made proactive efforts to tease out relevant examples of her interest in, and vision for, the sector, and were disappointed to receive answers that were often lacking in detail or relevance.

Our full report, and reasoning, will follow. I hope you will take the Committee’s considerations into account.

DAMIAN COLLINS MP, CHAIR, DCMS COMMITTEE

Response from the Secretary of State to the Chair of the Committee re the Appointment of the Chair of the Charity Commission, dated 21 February 2018

Dear Damian

Thank you for your letter of 20 February following on from Baroness Tina Stowell’s pre-appointment hearing as the preferred candidate for the Chair of the Charity Commission.

I have considered your response and the reasoning for the Committee’s recommendation very carefully but remain convinced that the best candidate has been selected for the role.

Baroness Stowell was selected as the preferred candidate following a fair, open and transparent competition - a process which is regulated by the Office for the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) and is in line with the Cabinet Office Governance Code for Public Appointments.

The advisory assessment panel included two independent members, one of whom is a respected charity sector expert. The panel assessed all candidates against the criteria as set out in the role specification. I confirm that the panel unanimously agreed the outcome that Baroness Stowell was not just the most qualified candidate, but is an exceptionally strong candidate for this role. They noted that she delivered an excellent presentation which was well structured and spanned a wide range of issues, evidencing an ability for clear strategic oversight. They were also impressed by the high degree of emotional intelligence and personal integrity that Baroness Stowell displayed.

You will be aware that this is a critical time for the Charity Commission and the charity sector as a whole. There is evidence of declining public trust in the face of recent revelations, and strong leadership from the Charity Commission is an urgent imperative. Like her predecessor, who was an exceptional Chairman, Baroness Stowell does not have strong connections to the charity sector. But there is no evidence that this is a weakness. After all this is a crucial regulatory role and a fresh perspective is very valuable. The Commission itself is packed with sector expertise.

Baroness Stowell set out a clear vision of how she plans to build upon the excellent progress made at the Commission by William Shawcross, by ensuring a robust approach as a regulator while encouraging and supporting charities to deliver their services to high standards. This firm but collaborative approach is critical to supporting charities to deliver, and ensuring that any problems, where discovered, are properly dealt with. I am confident that Baroness Stowell will build on this by working with charities to restore public trust.

Baroness Stowell is absolutely clear about the need to be seen as impartial leader and the need to demonstrate a commitment to working only in the public interest. I have every confidence that she will work tirelessly to protect and promote the great work that charities do and ensure they uphold the highest standards of integrity.

The Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP

Letter from the Chair of the Committee to the Secretary of State re the appointment for the Chair of the Charity Commission, dated 22 February 2018

Dear Secretary of State,

Thank you for your letter of 21 February stating that Baroness Stowell remains the Government's preferred candidate for the role of the Chair of the Charity Commission. We were disappointed that the concerns raised by the Committee were dismissed so swiftly.

In our letter to you regarding Baroness Stowell's proposed appointment, we set out four points of contention relating to her lack of relevant experience; perceived lack of political neutrality; the recruitment process; and performance in front of the Committee. Your letter does not address the substance of these points. We would ask that you provide a fuller response that addresses each of our point in writing to the Committee.

We would also like to note that in your statement to the press you asserted that 'Select Committee advisory decisions have often been set aside by appointing Ministers'. In fact, such action is unusual, having happened only three times out of nine negative committee reports, following over 100 pre-appointment hearings.

We would also like to put following additional questions to you, in order to help the Committee better understand the process that led to the selection of Baroness Stowell as the Government's preferred candidate to be Chair of the Charity Commission.

- (i) Can you confirm that the role of the interview panel was simply to assess which candidates were appointable, and not to indicate which one should be appointed? Can you confirm that the final decision on who should be appointed was a decision for Ministers to make?

- (ii) Did your Department recommend to 10 Downing Street the appointment of any other candidate for the role of Chair of the Charity Commission to succeed Sir William Shawcross, prior to recommending Baroness Stowell - either before or since your appointment as Secretary of State?
- (iii) Since she left the Government in 2016, has Baroness Stowell been offered or recommended for any other public appointments by the Department?
- (iv) Were any candidates with regulatory and/or charities experience interviewed? If so, why was the preferred candidate was chosen ahead of them?

We would appreciate answers to these questions by noon on Monday 26 February, following which we will issue a report setting out in further detail our reservations about the appointment.

DAMIAN COLLINS MP, CHAIR, DCMS COMMITTEE

Letter from the Secretary of State to the Chair of the Committee re the recruitment process for the role of Charity Commission Chair, dated 23 February 2018

Thank you for your letter of 22 February regarding the recruitment process for the role of Charity Commission Chair.

As I said in my previous letter, the recruitment process was conducted fully in accordance with the Governance Code for Public Appointments. Peter Riddell, the Commissioner for Public Appointments has confirmed this. The advisory assessment panel's report identified appointable candidates and their assessment of each candidate. Obviously it would be completely inappropriate for me to give further personal details. As the appointing Minister, I have the final decision of who is appointed to the role.

You may have seen that one of the advisory assessment panel's independent members, Julia Unwin, has said publicly that the process was both rigorous and fair, that Baroness Stowell was an outstanding candidate on the day, and that the panel was unanimous in this assessment.

Baroness Stowell has never claimed to possess significant experience of working in charities. This was not an essential criteria within the role description. She does, though, have significant executive and Government experience, including at the highest level. Baroness Stowell will bring a wealth of relevant expertise and experience, including regulatory experience, and will bring a fresh perspective to the role of Charity Commission Chair. That is very important, especially now.

As you know, past political activity should be no bar to a public appointment. However, I do understand that her previous position as a Conservative Peer and Cabinet Minister has prompted questions about her ability to undertake the role independently and impartially. She has publicly committed to do so, acting only in the public interest. I have every confidence that she will. Of course she will be accountable to the Committee for this once she takes up the Chair post and I expect she would welcome the parliamentary scrutiny and accountability.

Baroness Stowell was the best and right candidate for the role and I am sure will be an excellent Chair of the Charity Commission.

The Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP

Appendix Two: Details of the role and recruitment process

Centre for Public Appointments

Charity Commission - Chair

Body:	Charity Commission
Appointing Department:	Department for Culture, Media & Sport
Sectors:	Charity & Public Sector, Regulation
Location:	Most of the Chair's work will be based at the Charity Commission's London office. The successful candidate will be expected to undertake some travel in connection with the role, for which reasonable expenses will be paid (in line with the Charity Commission's policies).
Skills required:	Regulation
Number of Vacancies:	1
Remuneration:	£62,500 per annum. No pension is payable for the appointment.
Time Requirements:	2 and a half days per week

Campaign Timeline

- **Competition Launched:** 02/08/2017
- **Closed for Applications:** 22/09/2017 at 15:00
- **Panel Sift:** 12/10/2017
- **Final Interview Date:** 10/11/2017
- **Preferred Candidate Announced:** 26/01/2018
- **Announcement:** TBC

Assessment Panel

Sue Owen	Added 02/08/2017
Panel Chair	
Permanent Secretary	Departmental Official
Political Activity	–
Notes	–

Charles MacKay	Added 21/08/2017
Senior Independent Panel Member	
Political Activity	–
Notes	–
Julia Unwin	Added 02/08/2017
Chair of the Independent Inquiry into the Future of Civil Society	Other Panel Member
Political Activity	–
Notes	–
Alan Downey	Added 02/08/2017
Other Panel Member	
Political Activity	–
Notes	–

Vacancy Description

Overview

The Charity Commission is the independent registrant and regulator of charities in England and Wales. Its role is to register and regulate the charities in England and Wales, and to ensure that the public can support charities with confidence. A non-Ministerial Department, it is based across four sites, employing approximately 200 staff and in 2016/17 had a budget of £21.5 million. Its current Strategic Plan comes to an end in 2018.

The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport wishes to appoint a new Chair to the Charity Commission for England and Wales. This is a public appointment and will be conducted in compliance with the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments and under the principles of merit, fairness and openness.

The successful candidate will be required to attend a pre-appointment hearing before the Digital, Culture, Media and Sports Select Committee.

The role

The appointment is for a term of up to three years.

The role is for two and a half days per week, remunerated at £62,500 per annum. No pension is payable for the appointment.

Most of the Chair's work will be based at the Charity Commission's London office. The successful candidate will be expected to undertake some travel in connection with the role, for which reasonable expenses will be paid (in line with the Charity Commission's policies).

Job Description

The Charity Commission's Board is ultimately responsible for all that the Commission does. In order for the Commission to discharge its responsibilities appropriately and effectively, day-to-day and operational management is delegated to the Chief Executive.

The Chair of the Board is responsible for leading the board in:

- ensuring the Commission:
 - effectively fulfils its statutory objectives, general functions and duties and appropriately exercises its legal powers
 - is accountable to Parliament, the courts, and the general public
 - delivers its services within its funding agreement
- setting the Commission's strategic priorities and direction of policy over the next three years;
- supporting the Commission in securing the resources it needs to effectively and efficiently discharge its functions and duties;
- regulating independently, proportionately and impartially and acting in good faith and in the corporate interest;
- maintaining and developing strong relationships with government, Parliament, sector bodies and other major stakeholders and key influencers;
- supporting and managing the Chief Executive, including agreeing objectives and undertaking an annual appraisal;
- along with the Chief Executive, communicating the Commission's role to stakeholders including the public, charities and their users, the Government and Commission staff
- Ensuring that the Board and its members observe the highest standards of propriety and operate in accordance with the Commission's Governance Framework and the Nolan principles of standards in public life.

Person Specification

The successful candidate must be able to demonstrate the following essential criteria:

- To be an accessible and engaging ambassador for the organisation, and have the ability to influence high level stakeholders within government and Parliament, the media, the charity sector and the business world;

- The ability to make strategic decisions within a complex and shifting external landscape;
- a commitment to the charity sector's effective, independent, proportionate, and impartial regulation;
- the ability to provide a high quality service and deliver value for money for the taxpayer;
- an understanding of and interest in the charity sector, including and awareness of the multifaceted challenges it faces resulting from changing social and economic circumstances;
- the skills to lead a Board and support the leadership of a high profile organisation by providing strategic guidance and effective challenge;
- the ability to support the organisation through a period of significant change and cultural development as demonstrated by experience in either the private of charity/not for profit sector;
- the ability to apply strategic insight and constructive challenge to the Executive team's plans across wide-ranging strategy, delivery and organisational issues;
- personal integrity and resilience, demonstrable independence and other attitudes consistent with the expectations of senior public office in a high profile role.

We welcome candidates from diverse backgrounds who can apply their experience to this demanding role.

Additional Information

Further information and Queries

Each of the short-listed candidates will have an opportunity to meet Helen Stephenson, the Chief Executive.

If you would like to speak to someone about the appointment process, please contact [REDACTED] at DCMS, on [REDACTED] (email address: [REDACTED]).

To talk to someone about the Charity Commission, please contact [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

Role Specification

The Charity Commission's Board is ultimately responsible for all that the Commission does. In order for the Commission to discharge its responsibilities appropriately and effectively, day-to-day and operational management is delegated to the Chief Executive.

The Chair of the Board is responsible for leading the board in:

- ensuring the Commission:
 - effectively fulfils its statutory objectives, general functions and duties and appropriately exercises its legal powers
 - is accountable to Parliament, the courts, and the general public
 - delivers its services within its funding agreement
- setting the Commission's strategic priorities and direction of policy over the next three years;
- supporting the Commission in securing the resources it needs to effectively and efficiently discharge its functions and duties;
- regulating independently, proportionately and impartially and acting in good faith and in the corporate interest;
- maintaining and developing strong relationships with government, Parliament, sector bodies and other major stakeholders and key influencers;
- supporting and managing the Chief Executive, including agreeing objectives and undertaking an annual appraisal;
- along with the Chief Executive, communicating the Commission's role to stakeholders including the public, charities and their users, the Government and Commission staff.
- Ensuring that the Board and its members observe the highest standards of propriety and operate in accordance with the Commission's Governance Framework and the Nolan principles of standards in public life.

Key Selection Criteria

The successful candidate must be able to demonstrate the following essential criteria:

- To be an accessible and engaging ambassador for the organisation, and have the ability to influence high level stakeholders within government and Parliament, the media, the charity sector and the business world;
- The ability to make strategic decisions within a complex and shifting external landscape;
- a commitment to the charity sector's effective, independent, proportionate, and impartial regulation;

- the ability to provide a high quality service and deliver value for money for the taxpayer;
- an understanding of and interest in the charity sector, including an awareness of the multifaceted challenges it faces resulting from changing social and economic circumstances;
- the skills to lead a Board and support the leadership of a high profile organisation by providing strategic guidance and effective challenge;
- the ability to support the organisation through a period of significant change and cultural development as demonstrated by experience in either the private or charity/not for profit sector;
- the ability to apply strategic insight and constructive challenge to the Executive team's plans across wide-ranging strategy, delivery and organisational issues;
- personal integrity and resilience, demonstrable independence and other attitudes consistent with the expectations of senior public office in a high profile role.

We welcome candidates from diverse backgrounds who can apply their experiences to this demanding role.

The appointment is for a term of up to three years. The role is for two and a half days per week, remunerated at £62,500 per annum. No pension is payable for the appointment.

Most of the Chair's work will be based at the Charity Commission's London office. The successful candidate will be expected to undertake some travel in connection with the role, for which reasonable expenses will be paid (in line with the Charity Commission's policies).

Bearing in mind the Public Sector Equality Duty we sought to maximise the diversity of applicants. The vacancy was promoted through a variety of channels, many of which are targeted specifically at underrepresented groups, in addition to the role being advertised on the Public Appointments website, the Charity Commission website and on DCMS Connect.

Process

The Advisory Assessment Panel consisted of:

- **Sue Owen** - DCMS Permanent Secretary (Panel Chair)
- **Alan Downey** - Charity Commission Nominee
- **Charles Mackay** – Senior Independent Panel Member
- **Julia Unwin** - Independent Panel Member

The panel met on 12 October 2017 and considered each application (CV and cover letter), taking account of potential ability to meet the role criteria, set out above.

There was a total of 38 applications were received by the deadline. Of these 9 were from female applicants, 3 were from BAME candidates, and 5 were from candidates with a declared disability.

Of these, 6 were shortlisted for interview. The field of applicants selected for interview included 2 female candidates. There were no candidates from a declared BAME background and no candidates with a disability.

Prior to interview, shortlisted candidates underwent media testing conducted by the DCMS Head of Communications. Results of these tests were shared with the panel prior to interview.

Interviews were held on 10 November 2017 at 100 Parliament Street. Interviews lasted for 45 minutes with 15 minutes for panel discussion immediately after each interview.

During each interview, the panel chair described the structure of the interview and the public appointments decision process. Applicants were asked to deliver a presentation of five minutes, with no powerpoint or handouts, on the topic “*What are the future challenges facing the organisation and how would you approach them?*”

Interview questions covered the following broad areas:

- Julia Unwin - Chairing style and experience/managing and building the Board;
- Charles Mackay- Relationship with the Chief Executive/the relationship between non-executive/executive roles;
- Alan Downey: The scope and role of the Charity Commission/specific issues such as regulation and efficiency;
- Sue Owen- Time Commitment and Conflicts.

The panel chair concluded the interviews with questions on potential conflicts of interest and how they might be addressed. She also asked candidates about their ability to commit the required time for the roles. She offered candidates the opportunity to ask questions themselves.

This pattern, with the addition of relevant secondary questioning, was maintained throughout all the interviews.

Paragraph 3.1 of the Cabinet Office Governance Code for Public Appointments stipulates that Advisory Assessment Panels must not rank candidates unless specifically requested by the Minister. The Advisory Assessment Panel received no such request for this competition and candidates were assessed as either ‘appointable’ or ‘unappointable.’

After interview, the panel were unanimous in finding 3 candidates appointable.

The appointable candidates were invited to meet with the Minister for Sport and Civil Society before a formal decision was taken by the Secretary of State. The appointable candidates met with the Minister on 27 November 2017.

Baroness Stowell was announced as Ministers' preferred candidate for the Chair of the Charity Commission following a fair, open and transparent recruitment exercise, regulated by the Office for the Commissioner for Public Appointments in accordance with the Cabinet Office Governance Code for Public Appointments.

Though they do not rank candidates, the panel were in unanimous agreement in their panel report that Baroness Stowell was an exceptionally strong candidate. Baroness Stowell declared that she would give up the Conservative whip should she be successfully appointed to the role.

Appendix Three: Details of the preferred candidate

Tina Stowell

The Rt Hon Baroness Stowell of Beeston MBE

Recent appointments: responsibilities & achievements

Independent Consultant, Non-Executive Director, Peer: January 2017—

- Non-executive Director of ABTA Ltd, the travel industry trade body.
- Trustee of Crimestoppers, the charity which enables people anonymously to help stop crime.
- Non-executive Director of a listed company – subject to final clearances – to be announced September/October.
- Trustee of an education charity which helps state-school children develop employability skills – to be announced shortly.
- Independent strategic and communications consultant, working with business on the cause and effects of recent major political events.
- Member of the House of Lords, public speaker and occasional media commentator with a special interest in the cause of social divides and the rise of populism.

Leader of the House of Lords & Lord Privy Seal: July 2014—July 2016

- Cabinet Minister responsible for delivering the Government's legislative programme through the House of Lords; the first Conservative Leader without a majority to do so successfully.
- Led a team of more than 20 ministers from a range of professional backgrounds, including senior figures from business, banking, the law, military and the online sector. They were based in all Whitehall departments answerable to Secretaries of State for their policy briefs, and answerable to me for their activity in Parliament.
- Supported Cabinet colleagues as they prepared legislation with a combination of advice and challenge; during the passage of legislation advised them on engagement and negotiating strategies to secure support from peers on all sides of the House; and brokered agreements between Cabinet Ministers, Number 10 and the House of Lords to achieve Parliament's consent.
- Represented the Prime Minister and the Government as a whole at the dispatch box and was held to account for the Government's position on major domestic and international events such as terrorist attacks, the European Union, UK military intervention in the Middle East. As Leader, was held to account directly at the dispatch box on all issues relating to the House of Lords (procedures, disciplinary matters, appointment of new peers).

- As Leader of the House and responsible to all peers, secured important incremental reforms to enhance accountability of the House of Lords including: permanent retirement for peers (over 50 members retired during my tenure); new measures to strengthen the disciplinary and sanctions regime including a new power to expel; implementing new governance arrangements for domestic committees to increase transparency and accountability of ‘domestic’ decision-making; and as a member of the House of Lords Commission set and supervised a successful 15% reduction from the £100m pa operating budget (capital budget £30m).
- Co-chairman of the Palace of Westminster Select Committee (12 MPs and peers representing all the main political parties), which examined the case for the largest ever programme of essential works to one of the UK’s most important public buildings; its recommendations have since been endorsed by the Public Accounts Committee.
- Chairman of the three separate Boards of Trustees at Chequers, Chevening and Dorneywood (all of which operate under different Acts and are independent of government). As the first Cabinet Minister appointed chairman of all three estates concurrently, commissioned a review of governance structures to explore scope for shared services and further efficiencies.

Government Minister – House of Lords: September 2011—July 2014

- In addition to successfully leading the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 through the House of Lords (winning awards from *The Spectator* as well as Stonewall and *PinkNews*), earlier the same year successfully stewarded one of the Welfare Reform bills which delivered £2billion of essential savings to the Exchequer.
- On arrival as the Minister in the Department for Communities and Local Government responsible for the £2.8bn European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), negotiated a successful resolution to a year-long suspension by the European Union of several hundred £millions; introduced stronger controls to address weaknesses, and negotiated a simple yet more robust process for allocating future funds so they only went to projects that generated economic growth.

Independent Consultant: September 2010—September 2011

- Worked with the NSPCC’s Director of Communications & Marketing to develop a new communications strategy to promote the charity’s purpose and its work as part of its wider fundraising efforts.
- With Pagefield Communications, advised Camelot on its application to the National Lottery Commission for an extension to its National Lottery operating licence (this was approved in 2012).

BBC: Head of Corporate Affairs 2008—2010; Head of Communications 2003—2008; Deputy Secretary of the Corporation 2001—2003

- As Head of Corporate Affairs was responsible for the BBC's corporate relations with external stakeholders. After conducting comprehensive research amongst commercial decision-makers and policy-makers who controlled or influenced the BBC's remit and funding, successfully integrated the BBC's communications and corporate strategies to strengthen corporate reputation. As part of that refocussing, introduced a more targeted approach to the BBC's major corporate hospitality events which achieved better outcomes and contributed significantly to a reduction in the department's operating budget by well over 30%.
- As Head of Communications to three BBC Chairmen and Boards, led or was involved in the BBC's response to a wide range of high-profile events that required significant crisis management, including: the Hutton Inquiry; serious editorial breaches resulting in executive resignations; and handled the aftermath following resignations of two BBC Chairmen and a Director-General.
- As part of the BBC's Governance team introduced new control and performance & accountability measures such as Service Licences, Public Value Tests, impartiality reviews and stronger complaints-handling procedures.
- Responsible for overseeing the BBC's Annual Report & Accounts for several years and, as part of efforts to increase accountability throughout my nine years at the BBC, championed a more open and transparent corporation and was a driving force behind several innovations including: publication of Board minutes; full disclosure of executive pay and expenses; and a simple breakdown of each household's licence fee spend on BBC services and running costs.
- As Deputy Secretary of the BBC, was responsible for managing the business of the Board of Governors and its sub-committees (eg Audit, Editorial Complaints, Remuneration).

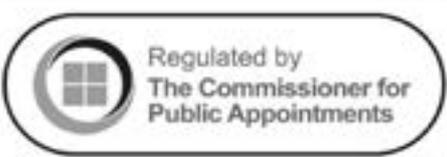
Career Summary

Organisation	Role	Dates
Tina Stowell Associates ABTA Ltd Crimestoppers	Independent Strategic Consultant Non-Executive Director Trustee	January 2017— June 2017— July 2017—
Government/House of Lords	- Cabinet Minister, Leader & Lord Privy Seal - Minister	July 2014—July 2016 Sept 2011—July 2014
Tina Stowell Associates	Independent Strategic Consultant	Sept 2010—Sept 2011
BBC	- Head of Corporate Affairs - Head of Communications - Deputy Secretary of the Corporation	Nov 2008—Sept 2010 July 2003—Nov 2008 Nov 2001—July 2003
Conservative Party	Deputy Chief of Staff to Leader of the Party (William Hague)	May 1998—Sept 2001
Short-term contracts including: Granada Media Paradine Productions Ltd	Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Executive Assistant to Sir David Frost	Feb 1996—May 1998
10 Downing Street	Assistant to the Prime Minister's Press Secretary	Nov 1991—Feb 1996
British Embassy Washington	Defence Section	Nov 1988—Nov 1991
Ministry of Defence London	RAF Regiment	Jan 1986—Nov 1988
British Rail Nottingham	Area Civil Engineers Department	July 1985—Jan 1986

Education and Personal Information

- Broxtowe College, Nottingham (1983 to 1985)
- Chilwell Comprehensive School, Nottingham (1978 to 1983)
- Ran the New York Marathon in 2006 and raised £7,000 for PhabKids
- MBE for services to the Prime Minister's Office, June 1996
- Honorary Doctorate from Nottingham University, December 2016

Appendix Four: Conflicts of interest

For official use only	
<p>DCMS - Public Appointments to Arm's Length Bodies</p> 	 <p>Department for Culture Media & Sport</p>
Declaration of conflict of interest form	

Where did you learn about this opportunity?	Cabinet Office Public Appointments Website
Your title (Mr, Ms, etc) and full name	Baroness (Tina) Stowell of Beeseton
Your preferred contact number and email	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

You are asked to provide a **CV** and a **covering letter** setting out how you meet the person specification for the role.

You should also enclose with this form your completed **Diversity Monitoring Form**.

An explanation of how this information will be used is included on the form.

Conflicts of interest

Please give details of any business or other interests or any personal connections which, if you are appointed, could be misconstrued or cause embarrassment to the public body or DCMS. These could include financial interests or share ownership, active connections with a field of expertise in which the public body works, membership of societies, activities associations or employment of a partner or friend in the particular field in which the public body operates.

Any potential conflicts of interest detailed here will not prevent you going forward to interview but may, if appropriate, be explored with you during your interview to establish how you would address the issue(s) should you be successful in your application.

For more information see the DCMS booklet "Public Appointments, Probity & conflicts of interest, A Guide for candidates", enclosed with the application pack and

also on the DCMS website.

Trustee Director Crimestoppers
 I am a member of the House of Lords and take the Conservative Party whip.

Declaration

In line with the Commissioner's principles of openness and transparency in the appointments process, some of the information provided in your application may be made public at the time of the announcement if you are appointed to serve on a public body. This applies particularly to details of other public appointments currently held, and of recent significant political activities undertaken.

Should any information provided on this form or in any supporting material be found to be false then it may constitute a criminal offence under the Fraud Act 2006 for which you may be prosecuted. Please note that the information you provide in support of this application may be shared with other government departments if you apply for another public appointment for which they are responsible.

I confirm that all the information given on this form and any supporting material is true and complete.

Name	TINA STOWELL	Date	22.9.2017
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A reminder of the Seven Principles Underpinning Public Life – the Nolan principles – appears below.

The Seven Principles Underpinning Public Life

In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles, which should underpin the actions of all who serve the public in any way. These are:

Selflessness Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or other friends.

Integrity Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate

to their office.

Openness Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Formal Minutes

Tuesday 27 February 2018

Members present:

Damian Collins, in the Chair

Paul Farrelly Chris Matheson
Ian C Lucas Giles Watling

Draft Report (*The appointment of the Chair of the Charity Commission*), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

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

Paragraphs 1 to 53 read and agreed to.

Appendices agreed to.

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

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

[Adjourned till Tuesday 6 March at 10.00 a.m]

Witness

The following witness gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Tuesday 20 February 2018

Question number

Rt Hon Baroness Stowell of Beeston MBE, Government's preferred candidate for the Chair of the Charity Commission for England and Wales

[Q1-87](#)

Published correspondence

The following correspondence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

- 1 [Letter from Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP to the Chair re Charity Commission Chair, 23 February 2018](#)
- 2 [Letter from the Chair to Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP re Charity Commission Chair, 22 February 2018](#)
- 3 [Letter from Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP to the Chair re Charity Commission Chair, 21 February 2018](#)
- 4 [Letter from the Chair to Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP re Charity Commission Chair, 20 February 2018](#)
- 5 [Letter from Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, re Charity Commission Chair appointment process, 6 December 2017](#)
- 6 [Correspondence between Rt Hon Matt Hancock and Chair re senior appointments, 25 January 2018](#)

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

PCC numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete

- 1 Andrew Hind CB, Chief Executive, Charity Commission 2004-10 ([PCC0001](#))
- 2 Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations, et al ([PCC0002](#))
- 3 National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) ([PCC0003](#))

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the [publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

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First Report	Appointment of the Chair of Ofcom	HC 508
Second Report	The potential impact of Brexit on the creative industries, tourism and the digital single market	HC 365