

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22 October 2014

Present

Sir Hugh Stevenson (Chair)
Mark Addison
Baroness Browning
Sir Colin Budd
Lord German
Mary Jo Jacobi
Baroness Liddell
Lord Walker of Aldringham

Secretariat

Ekpe Attah
Bill Brooke
Deborah De Beukelaer
Maggie O'Boyle
Baljit Rayit
Clare Salters

Apologies for absence

1. None.

Minutes of the last meeting

2. The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 25 June 2014, were approved subject to clarifying that the Committee appreciated that – under the Government's proposed revisions to the Rules – only the most senior special advisors would be required to request advice from the Committee as a matter of course.

Chairman's update

3. The Cabinet Office had advertised for a new Chairman and up to three new independent members of the Committee. The Chairman thanked Sir Colin Budd and Lord Walker for agreeing to the extension of their terms until the end of December 2014.

ACOBA Annual Report 2013/14

4. Members were invited to comment on the draft annual report for 2013/14, which was to be published by the end of October. After discussion, it was agreed that the Secretariat would circulate an amended version of the report's covering letter (to the Prime Minister) to the Committee for final approval.

Update on business appointments applications

5. Since the start of the financial year, the trend of more applications coming from fewer individuals had continued. The majority of applications had been from the MoD and FCO.

ACOBA's Budget in 2015/16

6. The Committee noted that, in line with other Cabinet Office-sponsored NDPBs, it would be required to find an 8% cut in its budget for the financial year 2015-16.

Notwithstanding the need to find the necessary savings, the Committee agreed that it would need to retain sufficient resources to be able to cover any increase in applications after the General Election. The Secretariat should alert the Committee early if it considered there was a risk to the Committee discharging its duties effectively.

Communications

7. The Press Officer updated the Committee on recent press coverage.

Any other business

8. The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 10th December at 2.30pm at 1 Horse Guards Road.

Committee Secretariat
October 2014