**Committee on Standards in Public Life**

**MPs’ outside interests:**

**Committee on Standards in Public Life Review**

This document provides (a) the background and scope of the review, (b) its terms of reference, and (c) submission guidelines.

**Background and Scope of the Review**

In its 2009 report on [MPs’ Expenses and Allowances](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/336903/MP_expenses_main_report.pdf), the Committee on Standards in Public Life recommended that:

*MPs should not be prohibited from paid employment such as journalism outside the House, providing any such activity remains in reasonable limits. But it should be transparent and information about it should be drawn to voters’ attention at election time.*

This recommendation aimed to strike a balance between MPs’ work as an elected Member of Parliament, and outside paid employment and professional interests. At the time the Committee considered that outside paid employment should not be banned, provided it was kept within fairly limited bounds and there was transparency about it.

The Committee has decided to conduct a short review to see the extent to which the compromise we recommended in 2009 has been put into operation, and if there is a need to explore further and to elaborate what is meant by ‘reasonable limits’.

The Committee on Standards in Public Life does not have a remit to address any individual cases, and as such will only be considering submissions on the subject of rules and guidance surrounding MPs’ outside interests more broadly.

We welcome contributions from those interested in this issue.  The review will be open until **5pm on Wednesday 13 September**.

**Terms of Reference**

The Committee invites comment on four key themes:

1. What factors should be taken into account in determining the ‘reasonable limits’ on MPs’ outside interests?
2. How and whether outside interests for MPs could lead to actual or potential conflicts of interest. Does this apply differently for MPs, ministers and ex-ministers, Chairs of Select Committees and other MPs holding parliamentary roles?
3. Whether there is sufficient transparency around MPs’ outside interests, and how openness can be promoted.
4. Whether there needs to be new rules or guidance on MPs’ outside interests, and how any new arrangements could be implemented.

**Submission Guidelines**

All submissions will be published alongside the Committee’s findings with personal information removed.

Submissions must:

* State clearly **who the submission is from**, i.e. whether from yourself in a personal capacity or sent on behalf of an organisation;
* Include a brief **introduction** about yourself/your organisation and your reason for submitting evidence;
* Be in doc, docx, rtf, txt ooxml or odt **format**, not PDF;
* Be **concise** – we recommend no more than 2,000 words in length; and
* Contain a contact **email address**.

Submissions should:

* Have numbered paragraphs;
* Include any factual information you have to offer from which the committee might be able to draw conclusions, or which could be put to other witnesses for their reactions;
* Include any recommendations for action which you would like the committee to consider; and
* Comprise a single document. If there are any annexes or appendices, these should be included in the same document.

The Committee is not obliged to accept your submission as evidence, nor to publish any or all of the submission even if it has been accepted as evidence. This may occur where a submission is very long or contains material which is inappropriate.

Submissions sent to the Committee after the deadline of **5pm on Wednesday 13 September** will not be considered.

Please email all submissions to: [**public@public-standards.gov.uk**](mailto:public@public-standards.gov.uk)

If you have any questions, please contact the Committee Secretariat by email ([public@public-standards.gov.uk](mailto:public@public-standards.gov.uk)) or phone (0207 271 2948).