

PN225

20 July 2010

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE ANNOUNCES FULL  
INQUIRY INTO PARTY POLITICAL FINANCE**

The Committee on Standards in Public Life today announced that it would be holding an inquiry into party political finance.

The Committee, chaired by Sir Christopher Kelly, held an exploratory hearing earlier this month to hear views on the current state of party finance and following an assessment of the evidence provided at that hearing has decided to undertake a full inquiry into the issue.

The Committee also published today its annual report for 2009-10,

Sir Christopher Kelly said:

“The Committee has had a longstanding interest in the funding of political parties. Party funding was explicitly added to our terms of reference in 1997 and a report by our predecessors set the framework for much of the current arrangements. It is clear that while the current regime is not in crisis, concerns remain which, if not dealt with, risk further damaging public confidence in the integrity of our political system.

“A lot of necessary work has, of course, already been done by Sir Hayden Phillips before and during the inter-party talks which broke down in 2007. The impression we received during the hearing last week was that, while significant difficulties remain, there is sufficient will to reform the system to give us some hope that it ought to be possible to find a solution which is both firmly based in principle and sufficiently acceptable to the main players to be sustainable..

## *Committee on Standards in Public Life*



“The Committee believes that the acceptability of any proposals to the general public is likely to be significantly enhanced if they result from the recommendations of an independent committee and are not simply the result of a deal brokered between the political parties. The Committee’s inquiry may also look at a number of issues not covered by Sir Hayden in any detail.

“We will be publishing an issues and questions paper in the Autumn setting out in more detail the areas that the inquiry will cover and inviting evidence. We would hope, depending on the issues that arise from our evidence, to publish our report in late spring 2011.”

A transcript of the exploratory hearing on party funding and copies of the Committee’s 2009-10 annual report are available on the website [www.public-standards.org.uk](http://www.public-standards.org.uk)

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **1. Media enquiries should go to Maggie O’Boyle on 07880 740627.**

2. The Committee on Standards in Public Life is an Advisory Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by the Cabinet Office. The Chair and Members are appointed by the Prime Minister. The Committee was established in October 1994 with the following terms of reference: “To examine current concerns about standards of conduct of all holders of public office, including arrangements relating to financial and commercial activities, and make recommendations as to any changes in present arrangements which might be required to ensure the highest standards of propriety in public life. Additional terms of reference were announced on 12 November 1997: “To review issues in relation to the funding of political parties, and to make recommendations as to any changes in present arrangements.”

3. The current members of the Committee are: Sir Christopher Kelly KCB, Chairman, Lloyd Clarke QPM, Oliver Heald MP, Rt Hon Alun Michael JP MP, Sir Derek Morris MA DPhil, Dame Denise Platt DBE, David Prince CBE, Dr Elizabeth Vallance JP, Dr Brian Woods-Scawen DL CBE.

4. Additional information about the Committee and its work is available on its website at [www.public-standards.org.uk](http://www.public-standards.org.uk).

*Committee on Standards  
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