

OFFICIAL

**ETHICS &  
INTEGRITY**  
Commission**MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF  
THE ETHICS AND INTEGRITY COMMISSION****14:00 - 16:00, 16 APRIL 2026****ATTENDEES**Members

1. Doug Chalmers CB DSO OBE (Chair)
2. Rt Hon Lady Arden of Heswall DBE
3. Rt Hon Ian Blackford
4. Councillor Ruth Dombey OBE
5. Ewen Fergusson
6. Professor Gillian Peele
7. Rt Hon Michael Tomlinson KC

EIC Officials

8. Stuart Sterling OBE, Chief Executive
9. Natasha Seward, Head of Reviews
10. Sarah Yarwood, Head of Public Engagement
11. Nicola Richardson, Senior Policy Adviser
12. Peter Kelleher, Head of Corporate Support
13. Joseph Rice, Policy Adviser

External Advisers

14. Professor Mark Philp, Senior Academic Adviser
15. Maggie O'Boyle, Press Officer.

**1. APOLOGIES**

None.

**2. REGISTERS**

The Chair noted that the Corporate Support Team had circulated the Register of Interests to Members prior to the Commission meeting and had invited Members to provide any updates as relevant. No updates had been received.

The Chair invited Members, and those providing external advice in the areas of media and academia, to declare any additional interests relevant to the agenda. No additional interests were declared.

### **3. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Commission meeting on 19 March 2026 were agreed.

### **4. CHAIR'S INTRODUCTORY REMARKS AND UPDATE**

The Chair set out the themes for the meeting and provided a short update on recent and forthcoming engagements.

### **5. CEO'S UPDATE**

The CEO gave a short update on staffing matters.

### **6. WORKSTREAM DISCUSSION: LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER**

The Chair and Members discussed the potential structure and thematic content of the Commission's Annual Letter to the Prime Minister.

### **7. WORKSTREAM DISCUSSION: OMBUDSMAN REVIEW**

The lead Member gave a short verbal update on workstream progress. The deadline for written submissions to the Review is 30th April 2026. Verbal evidence sessions will start on 21st May 2026. A specialist public opinion consultancy has been appointed to facilitate focus groups.

### **8. WORKSTREAM UPDATE: CODES OF CONDUCT**

The Chair and lead Member provided a joint verbal update on workstream progress, including recent discussions with the Cabinet Office. Members discussed the EIC's role and responsibilities; frequency of review; legislative effects; potential research projects; and the separation and linkages between statutory and constitutional aspects of how to provide advice to public authorities.

### **9. WORKSTREAM UPDATE: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

The lead Members provided a joint update on workstream progress, including developments with the website and the differing mediums, including digital, that are being considered to promote the Principles of Public Life.

**10. LOBBYING, BARs, FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE REVIEW**

The Chair reported that the Review is continuing at pace, with evidence sessions producing a diversity of views among stakeholders.

**11. EIC FINANCE/BUDGET**

The CEO provided an update on discussions with the Cabinet Office about the 2026/27 budget for the EIC.

**12. CURRENT STANDARDS ISSUES**

Members discussed current standards issues.

**13. AOB**

Members agreed on the date of the next meeting.