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THE PRIME MINISTER

13 October 2025

Dear Doug,

I am delighted to write to you on the establishment of the Ethics and Integrity Commission (EIC) and thank you for agreeing to serve as its independent chair. I attach the Commission's terms of reference, which have also been laid in Parliament today. May I also thank the independent and political members of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, all of whom will continue to serve on the EIC.

These terms of reference reform and strengthen the mandate previously held by the Committee on Standards in Public Life. The EIC will inherit CSPL's purpose to promote the highest standards in public life and to serve as custodians of the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles). In line with this purpose it will convene leaders of standards bodies in Government and Parliament to identify areas of common concern, and engage and inform the wider public on the values, rules and oversight mechanisms that govern standards in public life.

The EIC will also have an important role in relation to this Government's Hillsborough Law. This Bill will require all public bodies to establish a professional duty of candour for staff, to be set out within a wider code of ethics based on the Nolan Principles. As its first piece of work, the Commission should report on how public bodies can develop, distribute and enforce such codes so that they effect meaningful cultural change, ensuring public officials act with honesty, integrity and candour at all times. On the publication of its report, and on the Hillsborough Law receiving Royal Assent, the Commission will act as a Centre of Excellence on public sector codes of conduct, providing guidance and best practice to help all public bodies put ethics and integrity at the heart of public service delivery.

I also look forward to receiving the Commission's annual report on the overall health of standards in public life, as well as thematic reports on any areas of public life where the Commission believes standards arrangements need strengthening.

The Committee on Standards in Public Life played a vital role for 30 years in ensuring our standards systems were fit for purpose. Today, with the Committee's transition into the Ethics and Integrity Commission, I am ensuring that British public life will continue to benefit from a strong, authoritative voice on ethical standards for the next 30 years. Thank you again for your continued leadership on these matters, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

All best wishes,

Mr Doug Chalmers CB DSO OBE