

*"The Seven Principles of Public Life" (commonly referred to as "Nolan Principles") downloaded from the website of the Committee on Standards in Public Life of the United Kingdom, and information about the Committee extracted from the Committee's annual report 2006*

## **The Seven Principles of Public Life**

The Committee has set out '**Seven Principles of Public Life**' which it believes should apply to all in the public service. These are:

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

# APPENDIX 1

## ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

### *Terms of reference*

The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established, under the chairmanship of the Rt Hon Lord Nolan, by the then Prime Minister, the Rt Hon John Major, 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”.*

The term “public life” includes: Ministers, civil servants and advisers; Members of Parliament and UK Members of the European Parliament; members and senior officers of all NDPBs and of NHS bodies; non-ministerial office-holders; members and other senior officers of other bodies discharging publicly-funded functions; and elected members and senior officers of local authorities.

On 12 November 1997 the Prime Minister announced additional terms of reference:

*“To review issues in relation to the funding of political parties, and to make recommendations as to any changes in present arrangements.”*

The current Chairman is Sir Alistair Graham.

Other members of the Committee are Lloyd Clarke QPM, Rita Donaghy CBE, Professor Dame Hazel Genn DBE, Dame Patricia Hodgson DBE, Baroness Maddock, The Rt Hon Alun Michael JP MP, The Rt Hon Baroness Shephard DL, Dr Elizabeth Vallance JP, Dr Brian Woods-Scawen DL. The Committee is supported by a small secretariat of five civil servants.

### *Status*

The Committee is an independent advisory Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB). Its members are appointed by the Prime Minister for renewable periods of up to three years. Seven of its members, including the Chair, are appointed by the Prime Minister through open competition and under the rules of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Three of the members are appointed by nomination from each of the three main political parties. The Committee is not founded in statute and has no legal powers, either to compel witnesses to provide evidence or to enforce its recommendations. In particular it has no powers to investigate individual allegations of misconduct.

### *Method of working*

Since its creation the Committee has produced eleven major studies. It established its method of working early on:

- publishing a consultation paper setting out the issues and questions it believes are of specific importance;
- where appropriate commissioning research to support evidence-based inquiry;
- inviting written submissions based on the issues and questions paper;
- holding informal meetings with practitioners and experts;
- organising formal hearings open to the public and media, at which the issues are explored in detail;
- publishing a report containing conclusions; and
- making recommendations supported by a complete record of written and oral evidence and any associated papers.