

# UK Political Update: 17-21 January 2011

## Week in Review – announcements and consultations

### Labour Party win Oldham East and Saddleworth by-election

On 14 January the Labour Party candidate, Debbie Abrahams, comfortably won the Oldham East and Saddleworth by-election by a margin of 3,558 votes. The by-election was held after the election of Phil Woolas, a former Labour immigration minister, was declared void after a complaint by Elywn Watkins, the Liberal Democrat candidate for the seat. Mr Woolas was found guilty of a breach of section 106 of the Representation of the People Act 1983. This makes it an offence to make or publish "any false statement of fact in relation to the candidate's personal character or conduct" unless he believes it to be true.

### Government confirms that it will remove the Default Retirement Age

In a move that is expected to have considerable impact on businesses, the government confirmed on 13 January that it will [remove the Default Retirement Age](#) in phases between 6 April and 1 October 2011. Currently, the DRA enables employers to make staff retire at 65 regardless of their circumstances, but the government feels the rules must change as people are living longer, healthier lives.

Employment Relations Minister Edward Davey said:

*"Retirement should be a matter of choice rather than compulsion – people deserve the freedom to work for as long as they want and are able to do so. Older workers can play an incredibly important role in the workplace and it is high time we ended this outdated form of age discrimination."*

*"We are putting in place support to help business adapt to the change, but it is important to remember that about two-thirds of employers already operate without fixed retirement ages - and many of those with retirement ages already offer flexibility for workers to work longer."*

### UK Business leaders pledge to create jobs in 2011

On 1 January Britain's business leaders [pledged to create thousands of UK jobs](#) in 2011 and beyond. The pledges came as the Prime Minister held talks with major employers in Downing Street to focus on private sector job "success stories" and what more the government can do to enable employers to create employment.

#### Key Issues

Week in Review – consultations and publications

People on the Move

This Week in Parliament

If you would like to know more about the subjects covered in this publication or our services, please contact:

[Oliver Bretz](#) +44 (0)20 7006 8374

[Patricia Barratt](#) +44 (0)20 7006 8853

[Alan Mak](#) +44 (0)20 7006 2804

To email one of the above, please use [firstname.lastname@cliffordchance.com](mailto:firstname.lastname@cliffordchance.com)

Clifford Chance LLP, 10 Upper Bank Street,  
London, E14 5JJ, UK  
[www.cliffordchance.com](http://www.cliffordchance.com)

Prime Minister David Cameron said:

*"We can only get our economy back on track by creating a climate in which the private sector can grow and develop, creating jobs and opportunities for people across the country. This year the Government is determined to help deliver many thousands of new jobs and I'm delighted that the companies joining me today are part of that."*

*"Across a whole range of areas you're going to see the most pro-business, pro-growth, pro-jobs agenda ever unleashed by a government. It's time we looked forward to a positive, strong, confident Britain. By developing the right skills and jobs I am determined that the many not the few will share in the country's prosperity."*

## People on the Move

### Committee on Radioactive Waste Management

The following reappointments were announced on 6 January 2011:

- **Robert Pickard Emeritus** Professor of Neurobiology, University of Cardiff was reappointed as Chair of CoRWM;
- **William Lee** Director of Centre for Advanced Structural Ceramics, Imperial College was reappointed as Deputy Chair; and
- **David Broughton** Chartered Engineer; **Margaret Burns** Chair of Health Scotland; **Brian D Clark** Professor of Environmental Management and Planning, Aberdeen University; **Mark Dutton** Fellow of the Nuclear Institute; **Fergus Gibb** Emeritus Professor of Petrology and Geochemistry, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, University of Sheffield; **Simon Harley** Professor of Lower Crustal Processes, University of Edinburgh; **Marion Hill** independent Consultant specialising in the management of radioactive wastes and radioactively contaminated land; **Francis Livens** Professor of Radiochemistry, University of Manchester; **Leslie Netherton** Environmental Health Consultant; **John Rennilson** Chartered Town Planner; and **Lynda Warren** Emeritus Professor of Environmental Law, Aberystwyth University were reappointed members.

### Competition Appeal Tribunal

**Margot Daly** former President of the European Digital Media Association; **Joanne Stuart** Director, Attrus Limited; **Timothy Cowen** Consultant, Sidley Austin LLP; **Brian Landers** Audit Commissioner; **Dr Clive Elphick** Non Executive Director, Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation; **Stephen Harrison** retired Partner, PWC; **Bill Allan** Solicitor; **Jonathan May** formerly OFT; **Clare Potter** former Chief Legal Adviser to the Competition Commission; **Professor Stephen Wilks** Professor of Politics, University of Exeter; **Professor Gavin Reid** Professor of Economics, University of St Andrews; **Professor John Beath** Secretary-General of the Royal Economic Society; **Professor Colin Mayer Peter Moores** Dean of the Saïd Business School, University of Oxford; and **Dermot Glynn** Chairman of Europe Economics were appointed as members of the Competition Appeal Tribunal on 7 January 2011.

### Foreign Office

**Peter Bateman** Ambassador, Luxemburg was appointed, on 12 January 2011, Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Azerbaijan in place of Dr Carolyn Browne with effect from September 2011.

**Peter Jones** Director Migration, Foreign and Commonwealth Office was appointed, on 13 January 2011, British High Commissioner to the Republic of Ghana and Non-Resident Ambassador to the Togolese Republic in place of Nick Westcott CMG with effect from May 2011.

### Gas and Electricity Markets Authority

**Stuart Cook** Senior Partner, Smarter Grids and Governance, Ofgem was appointed to the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority on 12 January 2011.

**Sarah Harrison** Senior Partner Sustainable Development, Ofgem was also reappointed for a further five years.

### Highways Agency

**Alan Cook** Non-Executive Board member, Department for Transport was appointed, on 10 January 2011, as Non-Executive Chairman of the Highways Agency Board.

## Home Office: Forensic Science Regulator

**Andrew Rennison** was reappointed for a second term as Forensic Science Regulator.

## Migration Advisory Committee

**Professor David Metcalf CBE**; **Professor Jonathan Wadsworth**; **Dr Martin Ruhs**; **Dr Diane Coyle OBE**; and **Professor Rob Wilson** were reappointed members of the Migration Advisory Committee on 7 January 2011.

## National Gallery

**Lance Batchelor** Chief Executive, Tesco Telecoms; **Dexter Dalwood** Artist were appointed as Trustees of The National Gallery for four years from 10 January and 10 February 2011 respectively.

## National Heritage Memorial Fund

**Yinnon Ezra** MBE Director of Culture, Communities and Rural Affairs, Hampshire County Council; and **Alison McLean OBE** Vice-Chair of the West Midlands Rural Affairs Forum were reappointed on 10 January 2011 as Trustees of the National Heritage Memorial Fund.

## National Museum of Science and Industry

**Lord Faulkner** Labour peer; **James Smith** Chairman of Shell UK; and **Simon Linnett** Executive Vice Chairman of Investment Banking, Rothschild were appointed on 5 January 2011 as Trustees to the Board of the National Museum of Science and Industry for a period of four years.

## Parliamentary Private Secretary

**Aidan Burley** (Conservative, Cannock Chase) was appointed on 13 January 2011 Parliamentary Private Secretary to Transport Secretary **Philip Hammond**. He replaces Lee Scott, who resigned before Christmas in order to abstain on the vote on tuition fees.

## Review of Government direct communications and role of COI

**Matt Tee** Permanent Secretary for Government Communications was appointed on 13 January 2011 to lead the review of government direct communications and the role of the Central Office of Information.

A roundtable of senior leaders from government and marketing communications industry experts was also appointed to help inform Matt Tee's recommendations. The group will meet in mid January to provide their initial views and late February to provide views on the findings of the review. The invited roundtable experts include:

**Sir Martin Sorrell** KCB Chief Executive, WPP; **John Collington** Head of Procurement, Efficiency and Reform Group, Cabinet Office; **David Abraham** Chief Executive, Channel 4; **Jeremy Heywood** Permanent Secretary, No. 10; **Amanda MacKenzie** Global Marketing and Insight Director, Aviva; **Steve Hilton** Director of Strategy, No. 10; **Martha Lane-Fox** Government's Digital Champion; **Robin Wight** Chairman of Engine Group; **Stephan Shakespeare** CEO of YOUGov; and **Sir Peter Gershon** former civil servant and Non-Executive Director of HM Treasury.

## Select Committees

### *Membership - Public Administration Committee*

**Kelvin Hopkins** (Labour, Luton North) will replace Kevin Brennan (Labour, Cardiff West).

### *Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy*

**Margaret Beckett** (Labour, Derby South) was appointed Chair.

## UKIP

Former Conservative Party donor **Stuart Wheeler** joined the UK Independence Party as its Treasurer on 10 January 2011.

## UK Statistics Authority

**Moira Gibb** Chief Executive Officer of Camden Borough Council; and **Partha Dasgupta** Chair of The Pensions Advisory Service were reappointed to the UK Statistics Authority Board for a further two years on 13 January 2011.

**Professor Sir Roger Jowell** Research Professor at City University London was reappointed for 18 months.

# This Week in Parliament

## House of Commons – selected forthcoming business

### 17 January

- Localism Bill: Second Reading
- Debates on: communities and local government; and future regulation of the mortgage market

### 18 January

- Fixed Term Parliament Bill: Remaining stages
- Ten Minute Rule Bill: Succession to the Crown
- Debates on: operation of funding formula for England and devolved administrations; implications of Royal Mail privatisation for Post Office network; effects on haulage industry of EU proposals for height of trailers; and support for young carers

### 19 January

- Ten Minute Rule Bill: Consumer Protection (Postal Marketing)
- Motion to Approve: Statutory Instrument relating to proscribed organisations
- Debates on: fuel poverty; West Kent rail services; government skills strategy; government policy on employment of further education lecturers as school teachers; Educational Maintenance Allowance; and West Anglia rail line

### 20 January

- Motion relating to Future of the Horseracing
- Debates on: Culture, Media and Sport; improving life chances for disadvantaged children; air passenger duty changes and effect on Caribbean; and anti-Semitism

### 21 January

- Private Members' Bills - Second Readings:
  - Estates of Deceased Persons (Forfeiture Rule and Law of Succession) Bill
  - Sale of Tickets (Sporting and Cultural Events) Bill
  - Protection of Local Services (Planning) Bill
  - Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Bill
- Debate on: NHS counter-fraud service and relations with Crown Prosecution Service

## House of Lords – selected forthcoming business

### 17 January

- Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill: Committee of Whole House (Day 9)

- Energy Bill (Lords): Committee Stage (Day 1)
- Debates on: reducing volume and complexity of new legislation; local post offices; supporting tourism throughout the UK; and European Union external action service and closure of British embassies

### **18 January**

- Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill: Committee of Whole House (Day 10)
- Public Bodies Bill (Lords): Committee of Whole House (Day 7)
- Debates on: deficit reduction and potential proceeds from privatisation; and future of Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre, Headley Court;

### **19 January**

- Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill: Committee of Whole House (Day 11)
- Public Bodies Bill (Lords): Committee of Whole House (Day 8)
- Energy Bill (Lords): Committee Stage (Day 2)
- Debates on: government plans to reduce the rate of inflation; review of stem cell research; and impact of cuts in police funding on crime rates

### **20 January**

- Debates on: import restrictions affecting Gaza; bus and coach passenger rights and UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; UK assistance to St Lucia following Hurricane Tomas; and constitutional and parliamentary effect of the coalition government

### **21 January**

- Private Members' Bills - Second Readings:
  - Marine Navigation Aids Bill (Lords)
  - Rehabilitation of Offenders (Amendment) Bill (Lords)
  - Dog Control Bill (Lords)

## **House of Commons – forthcoming Public Bill and other General Committee meetings**

### **17 January**

- European Committee B: EU document relating to a proposal for the regulation on the citizens' initiative

## **House of Commons - forthcoming Select Committee meetings**

### **18 January**

- Treasury: competition and choice in the banking sector
- Energy and Climate Change: energy prices and electricity market reform
- Transport: issues relating to the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles
- Business, Innovation and Skills: rebalancing the economy: trade and investment

- Justice: the work of the Director of Public Prosecutions
- Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill Committee
- Public Accounts: NHS productivity in hospitals
- Public Administration: funding of voluntary sector
- Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: the draft National Policy Statement on Waste Water
- Home Affairs: extradition, and Police financing
- International Development: the future of the Commonwealth Development Agency

### **19 January**

- Science and Technology: Spending Review 2010
- Treasury Sub-Committee: administration and effectiveness of HMRC
- Environmental Audit: Green Investment Bank
- Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: the impact of Common Agricultural Policy reform on UK agriculture
- Public Accounts: accounting officer accountability

### **20 January**

- Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill Committee
- Political and Constitutional Reform: constitutional lessons from New Zealand; and prospects for codifying the relationship between central and local government
- Treasury: competition and choice in the banking sector

## **House of Lords –forthcoming Select Committee meetings**

### **18 January**

- HIV and Aids in the UK: HIV and Aids in the United Kingdom
- Science and Technology: public procurement
- Economic Affairs: auditors: market concentration and their role
- Science and Technology Sub-Committee I: behaviour change
- European Union: the EU Financial Framework from 2014

### **19 January**

- Constitution: annual session
- EU Sub-Committee D: Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment: innovation in EU agriculture
- EU Sub-Committee F: Home Affairs: the EU Internal Security Strategy
- Science and Technology Sub-Committee I: behaviour change

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