

The individual members of the Inquiry Panel has each made their own declaration. However they are agreed that the following statement is common to them all.

“I do not believe I have any conflicts of interest that would prevent me from looking at the evidence dispassionately and fairly. However I will declare any conflicts should they arise in the future and willingly withdraw from any necessary hearings”

David Bell

I have spent my life in and around newspapers and believe passionately in them and the enormous importance of a free press. I believe that the remit of the Inquiry is broad enough to be able to focus effectively on relations between politicians, the press and the police.

I am, or have been, connected to a number of organisations which have direct or indirect links with the media and communications industries and want to offer some background and context.

I was founder Chair of the Media Standards Trust which was set up in 2006 to foster high standards in British journalism and has, among other things, done several major pieces of work on the effectiveness of press regulation in the UK and on the provenance of news on the internet. It is a registered charity funded almost entirely by Foundations from both sides of the Atlantic. The Trust has also been one of the members of the Hacked Off campaign.

I stepped down as Chair of the Media Standards Trust on my appointment to the Inquiry and have been succeeded by Roger Graef who has been a member since the start.

I have a number of roles connected to media organisations. I am paid in my non-executive role on the Economist, the other work is unpaid. I have never asked for and have no influence over any editorial material they may produce. These organisations include:

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism
Institute of War and Peace Reporting Europe
The Economist

I am Chairman of Common Purpose, a registered charity which operates in the UK and some ten other countries and runs leadership and other courses which mix people from the public, private and NGO sectors. Common Purpose has had several dealings in the past few years with the office of the Information Commissioner in connection with comments that have been made repeatedly about it on the web without, in Common Purpose’s view, any foundation at all.

I am Chair of Crisis and one of the trustees is Jane Furniss who runs the Independent Police Complaints Commission. I am a member of Liberty whose Chief Executive is also on the panel. I have never been to a meeting nor voted in any Liberty election.

I do not belong to any political party, but in the past have given some money at election time to the Liberal Democrats.

I have family connections with the media too. My son is an editor who works for BBC Radio 4 News and my son in law is the Britain Editor of the Economist magazine.