

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”

George Jones

I have been a newspaper journalist most of my working life and have reported parliament and politics for more than 40 years. This has brought me into contact with politicians of all parties but on a strictly professional footing. I am not a member of any political party and I believe I can approach the inquiry on a totally impartial basis.

I have been to Chequers twice as a guest of Sir John Major when he was Prime Minister. I have attended numerous receptions at No 10 Downing Street and the Treasury for political correspondents hosted by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. I retired from the Westminster lobby shortly after the 2010 general election so I have not received any hospitality from David Cameron as Prime Minister.

After the Barclay brothers took over The Daily Telegraph my services as political editor were dispensed with by the then editor, Will Lewis (now a senior executive at News International, who may be one of the potential witnesses) along with many other senior editorial staff. After that I worked for the Press Association news agency for two years.

My brother Nicholas Jones, a former BBC industrial and political correspondent, is a well known expert on political spin doctoring, the way politicians interact with the media and seek to influence press and broadcast coverage, and the way newspapers, TV and radio report politics. He has written several books on the subject.