

Both we and the wider community expect recipients of honours to be, and to remain good citizens and role models. In receiving this honour, you should be aware that your status can be reconsidered, and your honour withdrawn (or 'forfeited') for a variety of reasons. By way of example, reasons for forfeiture might include a finding that you are guilty of a criminal offence, behaviour which results in censure by a regulatory or a professional body, or any other behaviour that is deemed to bring the honours system into disrepute. A decision to forfeit your honour can be based on both events that pre-date the award (for example, a past criminal conviction, even if spent), or conduct that occurs after the award is made. Any decision to forfeit an award is publicised in the London Gazette. If you have any queries about this, or would like to discuss on a confidential basis, please contact the Secretariat

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9. **Written representations from recipients:** Similarly, fairness is increased by offering recipients the opportunity to present their version of the events or interpretation of their behaviour. Since the 2012 reforms, the Secretariat has routinely asked the Forfeiture Committee if it wished to seek representations in any case in which neither of the hard triggers applied. Most cases do involve a hard trigger and the Secretariat has therefore written in only a handful of less clear-cut cases. To date, in only two of these cases has forfeiture actually been recommended as a result, but that is largely because the other cases remain so complex or high-profile that the case files remain open. At its September meeting, the Forfeiture Committee discussed whether all recipients should be given the opportunity to give written representations and concluded that it was a relevant consideration primarily in cases which did not involve a hard trigger.

That recipients should also be given a fair warning period that their honour is to be rescinded by HM Queen (which task is carried out by the Central Chancery). That suggests increasing the notice period to perhaps a month before publication is due.

10. **Clearer and better articulated information:** The Forfeiture Committee and the Main Honours Committee have both affirmed that they consider the overall criterion of disrepute, underpinned by two hard triggers, the right approach to forfeiture consideration. the more information which we can give to help recipients and the public to understand what (in)actions and behaviour may be in scope. Supporting examples might include:

- Adverse legal and regulatory judgements falling short of a conviction or disbarment;
- Matters unrelated to the reason that the honour was awarded but which raise questions of public trust (for example, serious non-compliance with an organisation's policies such as fair recruitment practices, financial compliance, unresolved or deliberate conflicts of interest etc);
- Matters directly relating to the reason that an honour was given (for example, offences committed whilst undertaking a particular role or service), to which additional weight might be given as a result.

11. Historically, the forfeiture process has not been publicised or well-understood. The Secretariat believes the time has come to be more transparent about forfeiture processes