

OFFICIAL

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE
TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY SIXTH MEETING
THURSDAY 16 JULY AT 10:30AM**

**GC05.1
1 HORSE GUARDS ROAD
LONDON SW1A 2HQ**

MINUTE

Present: Lord Bew, Chairman
Richard Thomas CBE
Patricia Moberly
Sheila Drew Smith OBE
Dame Angela Watkinson MP
Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP
Lord Alderdice

Secretariat: Ruth Thompson, Secretary
James Anderson, Secretariat Coordinator
Maggie O'Boyle, Press Officer

Apologies: Carolyn Fairbairn
David Prince CBE

1. Registers

The Committee reviewed and updated the register of interests, and the registers of external meetings, gifts and hospitality were approved.

2. Minutes and matters arising

The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes from the June meeting, with one member requesting an amendment to illustrate his absence at said meeting. The Chair updated the Committee on his recent evidence-giving session for the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee's inquiry into the EU Referendum Bill. The Committee were informed of a response received to the Chair's letter to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee and discussed the potential employment of a researcher to begin quantitative research into local government standards in early 2016.

3. Local policing inquiry – Update

The Members were updated on the launch event and the cost of the report into policing accountability. The Chair thanked the Committee and the Secretariat for all of their work towards the project. The Committee were updated on matters arising from the launch of the report, namely questions surrounding devolution, elected mayors and independent scrutiny. The Committee agreed to write to the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Home Office to discuss broader governance risks around devolved models. The Committee also agreed to write to all organisations to whom the policing report made recommendations, encouraging them to respond by a certain date. The Committee were informed about correspondence received from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex regarding a correction to the policing accountability report, and that the issue had been resolved.

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4. Local policing inquiry – lessons learned

The Committee discussed the lessons learned paper from the Secretariat. The Committee discussed issues such as clarity of intended audience, public engagement, the potential asymmetry of the sub-committee model and the merit of an internal best practice guidance note to be updated after each inquiry.

5. Communications update

The Secretariat updated the Committee on recent communications actions, the majority of which related to the launch of the policing accountability report. The Chair updated the Committee on his recent interview on Radio 4's Today Programme regarding IPSA's recent decision to increase MPs' salaries.

6. Ethics for regulators

The Committee discussed the outline paper and considered the potential allocation of tasks and resources, timescale and focus of the report. The Committee discussed the need for internal or external research assistance with the report. The Secretariat agreed to prepare a work plan and issues and questions paper for the September meeting.

7. Review of the Office of Commissioner for Public Appointments

The Chair informed the Committee that the Minister for the Cabinet Office had confirmed that the Review would be going ahead. The Committee discussed how best to respond to the review, considering the possibility of holding an evidence-gathering seminar in September to inform our response. The Secretariat agreed to liaise with the Review team, to ascertain the timeline of the review and their strategy in terms of stakeholder engagement and to keep the Committee updated.

8. Standards Check

The Committee were updated on recent standards issues including press coverage of MPs employing their family members and the Committee's recent participation in a Whitehall Industry Group workshop entitled "Building an ethical culture in organizations".

9. FOI request

The Members were updated on a recent FOI request relating to artwork owned by the Committee and the response that was sent.

10. AOB

The Committee were updated on the letter received from the Minister for Cabinet Office in response to their *Ethical standards for providers of public services* report. The Committee discussed the short follow-up publication and the Secretary agreed to circulate a first draft in advance of the September meeting.

Next meeting: The next Committee meeting will be held on Thursday 17 September at 10:00 am at 1 Horse Guards Road.