**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**

**TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH MEETING**

**THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER 2015 AT 10:00AM**

**ROOM G11, 1 HORSE GUARDS ROAD,** **LONDON, SW1A 2HQ**

**MINUTES**

Present: Lord Bew, Chairman

Richard Thomas CBE

Patricia Moberly

Sheila Drew Smith OBE

Dame Angela Watkinson DBE MP

Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP

Monisha Shah

Secretariat: Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary

 Paul Croney, Secretariat Co-ordinator

Maggie O’Boyle, Press Officer

Observer: Dee Goddard, University of Kent Intern

Apologies: Lord Alderdice

1. **Registers**

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

1. **Minutes and matters arising**

The Committee approved the minutes of the last meeting held on 19 November 2015.

1. **Policing Report**

The Committee discussed the Home Office’s and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners’ responses to the Committee’s report: *Tone from the Top, leadership, ethics and accountability in policing.*

The Committee would reflect further on follow up action and how best to reply.

1. **Ethics for regulators review**

Richard Thomas reported good progress on the review. The seminar for regulators held on 24 November 2015 had been particularly positive with a strong turnout, lively group discussions, with a range of diverse organisations, all welcoming the review.

Discussions with regulators have been open and useful, raising interesting issues. Graham Russell, Chief Executive of the Better Regulation Delivery Office, had been particularly helpful and had provided interesting material for the review.

The Committee welcomed the draft skeleton of the final report. The need to include commentary on the relationship between regulators and their sponsors, and perhaps also on the Regulatory Code, was noted.

1. **Public Appointments: Review of OCPA**

It was noted the final report (unseen by the Committee) had been approved by the Minister for the Cabinet Office. The next step was for the the MCO to write to ministers for comments before submission to the Prime Minister.

It was noted that press lines would need to be ready immediately on publication of the report.

1. **Ethical Standards for Providers of Public Services: Follow up report**

The Committee congratulated Sheila Drew Smith and Maggie O’Boyle for the article published in the Financial Times on the report of ethical standards for providers of public services. Follow up action to the report would be discussed at a future meeting.

1. **Replacement for ESRC research student**

The Committee approved the Research Advisory Board’s (RAB) proposal to allocate a PHd student from the University of Nottingham to work with the RAB as part of the ESRC collaborative studentship programme. This would be to replace Isabel Taylor whose term would come to an end in September 2016. The Secretariat would seek Cabinet Office budget approval.

1. **Survey questions**

The Committee approved RAB’s draft British Electoral Survey questions regarding donations and political funding.

1. **Meeting with MCO**

The Committee noted that Lord Bew had had a positive meeting with Matt Hancock, Minister for the Cabinet Office, to discuss the work of the Committee.

**10. Standards Check**

 The Committee noted the Standards Check.

**11. Forward Agenda**

 The Committee noted the forward agenda. The Committee’s next main focus of work would be discussed at a future meeting.

**12. AOB**

 The Chair reported that Lord Tyler had tabled an amendment to the second reading of the Trade Union Bill: to move, as an amendment to the above motion, leave out "Committee of the Whole House" and insert "Select Committee in respect of clauses 10 and 11, in the light of the failure to take steps to implement the recommendations of the Committee on Standards in Public Life in their report Political party finance: ending the big donor culture".

It was agreed that Lord Bew should speak in the debate but simply to confirm that time had moved on, further research was probably needed, and that the recommendations in the 2011 report should be seen as a package and not “cherry-picked”.

The Committee noted that the Government was due to publish on 17 December, overdue transparency data on hospitality and gifts received. The Secretariat would monitor future publications, due quarterly.

 The Committee noted the Communications Update.

Sheila Drew Smith reported that her independent review of the governance arrangements of the Independent Police Complaints Commission, commissioned by the Home Secretary, would be published on 17 December 2015.

**Date of next meeting**: Thursday 21 January 2016

**CSPL Secretariat**

**December 2015**