COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE
TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY FIRST MEETING
THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 2016 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 Dee Goddard, University of Kent Intern
Observer:	Renny Mendoza, Home Office
Apologies:	Lord Alderdice Maggie O'Boyle, Press Officer

1. Registers

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

2. Minutes and matters arising

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2015, subject to noting that Monisha Shah should be added to the list of those present.

Under matters arising, members noted the latest position on the progress of the Trade Union Bill in the House of Lords. The House had agreed on 20 January 2016 to appoint a Select Committee of the House of Lords to consider the impact of clauses 10 and 11 of the Trade Union Bill in relation to the Committee on Standards in Public Life's report, *Political Party Finance: Ending the Big Donor Culture (2011)*. The Select Committee will review the necessity of urgent new legislation to balance those provisions with the other recommendations made in the Committee's report; it was likely that the Chair would be called to give evidence. The Chair took members' views - there was

concern that whilst the 2011 report's broad approach was sensible, time had moved on,more research would be needed on current figures and further work would be meaningful only if the major parties agreed to debate the issue. The Chair would report back at the next meeting.

3. Policing Report

The Committee agreed to send the draft replies to the Home Office and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners following their responses to the Committee's report: *Tone from the Top- Leadership, ethics and accountability in policing.*

It was noted that the Chair's speech on *Improving Leadership, Ethics and Accountability in Local Policing* at an Inside Government event on 8 March, would be an opportunity to promote the Committee's expectations of PCC candidates; and that the ethical checklist recommended in the *Tone from the Top* Policing report may need updating before the PCC elections on 5 May in light of the APCC's response to the report.

4. Ethics for Regulators review

Richard Thomas reported good progress on the Ethics for Regulators review. Work on the review was moving from the information gathering stage to drafting the report. It was likely that the final report would be longer and more detailed than originally anticipated. It was noted that the Director of the Better Regulation Delivery Office would attend the Committee's March meeting.

5. Public Appointments: Review of OCPA

The Chair reported it was understood the OCPA report had been submitted for final approval but no further news was forthcoming. The Secretariat would keep in touch with the OCPA review team and keep the Committee up-to-date on news of the publication date.

6. House of Commons Committee on Standards

The Committee confirmed they were content with the Committee's most recent stated position regarding the voting rights of lay members of the House of Commons Committee on Standards ie:

"we prefer lay members to have a vote... but if this raises insuperable privilege or similar issues, we would expect to see at the least the publication of any dissenting opinion".

7. Standards Check

The Committee noted the Standards Check.

8. Forward Agenda

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

9. AOB

Lord Bew attended the Law Commission Symposium on 20 January and spoke on accountability. The Committee would respond to the Questions and Issues paper by the deadline of 20 March.

Due to parliamentary recess and Committee members' unavailability, it was agreed to cancel the meeting planned for 18 February 2016.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 17 March 2016

CSPL Secretariat
January 2016