**CSPL (16) 76**

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**

**TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHTH MEETING**

**THURSDAY 20 OCTOBER 2016 AT 10:00AM**

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

**MINUTES**

Present: Lord Bew, Chair

Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP

Sheila Drew Smith OBE

Jane Ramsey

Secretariat: Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary

 Renny Mendoza, Senior Policy Advisor

Paul Croney, Governance and Communications Co-ordinator

 Maggie O’Boyle, Press Officer

Apologies: Monisha Shah

 Richard Thomas CBE

Dame Angela Watkinson DBE MP *(on leave of absence)*

 **1. Registers**

The Committee reviewed 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 20 October 2016.

*Public Standards*

The Committee noted that the Chair of the Research Advisory Board would attend the November Committee meeting for a discussion on the public’s views of standards in public life.

*Patricia Moberly*

It was noted that Guy’s Hospital were believed to be planning a memorial service for Patricia Moberly. The Committee would be kept informed.

*Committee Membership*

The Committee noted with some concern there was no further news on the member to replace Lord Alderdice (one of three appointments nominated by the political parties to the Committee). The Committee’s reduced membership meant that, for example, if only two members had to send apologies for a meeting, committee attendance would drop below reasonable numbers.

*PACAC Inquiry into ACOBA*

The Committee noted that the Chair and Sheila Drew Smith had been invited to give evidence on 25 October 2016 to the House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee Inquiry into the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments.

*Research*

The Committee noted that the Chair had met with Sir Andrew Dilnot to discuss the possibility of Nuffield College assisting the Committee with some further research on party funding.

*North Wales PCC*

The Committee noted the correspondence from Mr Jones, PCC for North Wales, about the appointment of his Deputy; and discussed the forthcoming CoPaCC transparency awards at which Richard Thomas and Monisha Shah had been invited to speak on PCCs.

*Commissioner for Public Appointments*

The Committee noted that it was understood that the Government was due to publish shortly its response to PACAC’s report on the Grimstone Review. It was noted that the new public appointments Governance Code had not yet been published.

**3. Ethics for regulators**

The Committee agreed the proposed follow up plan to *Striking the Balance*.

**4. Referendum Seminar**

The Committee discussed the forthcoming seminar to be held jointly with the Constitution Unit, UCL. The Secretariat would prepare a brief for committee members, setting out the Committee’s aims and lines to take.

**5**. **IPSA’s REVIEW OF MPs’ SCHEME OF BUSINESS COSTS AND EXPENSES AND IPSA’s PUBLICATION POLICY**

 The Committee approved the draft submission to IPSA on its review of the MPs’ Scheme of Business Costs and Expenses and IPSA’s publication policy, subject to some minor drafting amendments, and noting that political members would abstain to avoid a perceived or real conflict of interest.

**6. CSPL Code of Practice**

 The Committee approved the revised Code of Practice subject to additions on guidance about contact with the media; and guidance on decision-taking by e-mail/video conferencing. A revised draft would be circulated for approval at the next Committee meeting.

**7. PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER’S REVIEW OF CODE OF CONDUCT AND GUIDE TO THE RULES FOR MPs**

 The Committee discussed the Parliamentary Commissioner’s review of the MPs’ Code of Conduct, particularly the examples proposed to replace the current definitions of the Seven Principles. A draft submission would be considered at the November Committee meeting ahead of the deadline for submissions of 30 November 2016.

**8. Standards Check**

 The Committee noted the Standards Check. Attention was drawn to the need for the Committee to be aware of standards issues in education. There seemed to be issues of concern around the transparency of academy funding.[[1]](#footnote-0)

 It was agreed that the Secretariat would pilot a forward look ‘grid’ for members setting out forthcoming events/publications/news items of relevance.

**9. Forward Agenda**

 The Committee noted the forward agenda. It was agreed that the follow up to *Ethical Standards for Public Service Providers* should follow the same lines as that agreed for *Striking the Balance.*

**10. AOB**

 The Committee noted that the Chair was due to meet the Electoral Commission that afternoon.

 **Date of next meeting**: Thursday 17 November 2016 at 09.30.

**CSPL Secretariat**

**October 2016**

1. Jane Ramsey declared an interest. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)