**CSPL (17) 88**

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**

**TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHTH MEETING**

**THURSDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 10:00**

**ROOM 322, 70 WHITEHALL, LONDON, SW!A 2AS**

**MINUTES**

Present: Lord Bew, Chair

Sheila Drew Smith OBE

Dr Jane Martin CBE

Jane Ramsey

Monisha Shah

Lord Stunell OBE

Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary

Ally Foat, Senior Policy Advisor

Dee Goddard, Senior Policy Advisor

Maggie O’Boyle, Press Officer

*Separate evidence session with Green Party candidate*

Aimee Challenor, Green Party Candidate for Coventry South

*For item 3*

Sharon Darcy, Peter Jinman OBE and Walter Rader OBE

Apologies: Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP

Simon Hart MP

Stuart Ramsay, Senior Policy Advisor

**Review of Intimidation of Parliamentary Candidates and MPs: Evidence provided by the Green Party**

Before the main business of the Committee, members heard from Aimee Challenor, Green Party candidate for Coventry South.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair sincerely thanked Aimee Challenor for sparing the time to talk to the Committee and to share personal experiences and views. A full transcript of this discussion has been placed on the website.

**1. REGISTERS**

The register of interests was noted. The register would be updated and published on the website.

The 6 month review of the risk register was noted. Written comments would be sent to the Secretariat separately.

**2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2017 were agreed.

**Matters arising:**

**Electoral Commission letter on conduct of referendums**

The letter sent by the Electoral Commission on behalf of those attending the meetings to discuss conduct during the EU referendum was noted.

***Striking the Balance* follow up blog**

The Committee noted and welcomed Richard Thomas’ blog following up regulators’ responses to the 2016 *Striking the Balance* report.

**UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) consultation on their revised code of practice**

The Committee approved the draft response to the UKSA’s consultation on their revised code of practice subject to including references to the principle of ‘honesty’ and to the fact that the Principles of Public Life refer to those delivering public services as well as public office holders.

**3. MEETING WITH EX-LAY MEMBERS OF HOUSE OF COMMONS STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

The Chair welcomed Sharon Darcy, Peter Jinman and Walter Rader, the ex-lay members of the Commons Standards Committee to the meeting for an informal discussion on their experiences as the first lay members of the Commons Committee.

The discussion covered a number of issues highlighted in the ex-members’ reflections report, including induction of lay members; general membership of the Committee and appointment terms; engagement; corporate memory; the desirability or otherwise of voting rights for lay members of the Commons Committee; and definition of an MP’s role.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Ms Darcy, Mr Jinman and Mr Rader for a very worthwhile and constructive discussion. The discussion would be particularly helpful in considering any further work the Committee might undertake in reviewing the wider standards system in England. The Committee was very appreciative of Ms Darcy, Mr Jinman and Mr Rader sparing the time and for travelling some distance to attend the meeting.

**REVIEW INTO THE INTIMIDATION OF PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES**

The Committee noted progress with the review including evidence heard and submitted and early drafted chapters, and agreed some clear themes and areas that the report should cover. The Secretariat would continue work on the review along the lines suggested and agreed.

**4. REVIEW OF MPs’ OUTSIDE INTERESTS**

In view of the shortage of time at today’s meeting, it was agreed to defer discussion on the review of MPs’ outside interests until later in the year.

**5. ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDERS: FOLLOW UP**

The Committee noted the full update on the follow up work to ethical standards for public service providers. In particular, the Committee noted the need for a discussion at the October meeting on the ‘Selflessness’ principle with regard to private providers of public service where the application of ‘Selflessness’ to firms driven by profit can seem less relevant. The Chair thanked Sheila Drew Smith for her work and commitment to this important follow up work to the 2014 report.

**7. METRO MAYORS’ ROUNDTABLE**

In view of the difficulty in securing a date for all 6 metro mayors to attend a roundtable discussion in London, the Committee agreed a revised plan to meet with the metro mayors. The Secretariat would follow up with the 2 mayors who had accepted the invitation and suggest visits to their offices by Jane Martin accompanied by a member of the Secretariat. Visits to the other 4 mayors may take place as part of the Local Government review work scheduled for next year.

**8. STANDARDS CHECK**

The Committee noted the Standards Check for July and August, noting that press reports about Vice-Chancellors’ pay should in future be included in the standards check.

**10. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD GRID**

The Committee noted the forward agenda and forward look of key events.

It was noted that Will Moy, Director of Full Fact, would attend the October meeting.

**11. AOB**

The Committee noted the Communications Update for July and August.

**Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (ACoBA)**

The Committee noted the request to meet with the Chair of PACAC to discuss PACAC’s report on ACoBA, to which, to-date, the Government had not responded.

**Legal Services Board meeting**

The Committee noted a request by the Legal Services Board to meet with a representative of the Committee. This was in hand.

**Select Committee on Communities and Local Government**

The Committee noted that the Select Committee on Communities and Local Government had reopened its inquiry into Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny. The Committee was content at this stage not to provide further evidence to the inquiry but would keep in touch with the Select Committee and progress of its inquiry.

**Commission for Ethical Leadership**

The Committee welcomed Jane Martin’s report that she was representing the Committee on the Commission for Ethical Leadership. This is a project to help school and college leaders think about the basis upon which they make judgements in and about schools or colleges. Jane Martin would keep the Committee updated on the Commission’s work.

**Secretariat staffing**

The Committee noted the Secretariat would be joined by a Governance and Communications Coordinator from 28 September for a period of 6 months.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 19 October 2017**

**Venue: Room 322 , 70 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2AS**

**CSPL Secretariat**

**September 2017**