**CSPL (18) 34**

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**

**TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOURTH MEETING**

**HELD AT 10.00 ON THURSDAY 15 MARCH 2018 IN**

**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION ROOM, WESTMINSTER**

**MINUTES**

Present: Lord Bew, Chair

 Dr Jane Martin CBE

Jane Ramsey

Monisha Shah

Rt Hon Lord Stunell OBE

 Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary

 Ally Foat, Senior Policy Advisor

 Dee Goddard, Senior Policy Advisor

Stuart Ramsay, Senior Policy Advisor

 Maggie O’Boyle, Press Officer

In attendance: Sheila Drew Smith OBE (for items 1 - 4)

Apologies: Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP

Simon Hart MP

**1. REGISTERS**

There were no changes to the register of interests.

**2 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2018 were agreed subject to clarifying comment on the operation of the public appointments code - the Commissioner for Public Appointments said that that the code was proceeding reasonably well but the CPA said that he was far from complacent.

**Matters arising:**

**Intimidation in Public Life**

The Committee noted the government’s full response which was received on 8 March. The response was positive and had now been published on gov.uk.

The Chair reported that he had met with the Minister for the Constitution, Chloe Smith MP, on 27 February for an introductory meeting on the work of the Committee and to discuss the Intimidation in Public Life report. It had been a positive meeting and the Minister had suggested meeting again in 3 months’ time.

**Westminster Harassment**

The Committee noted the letter from the Chair of the Commons Standards Committee of 27 February 2018 to the Leader of the House about the report of the working group on an independent complaints and grievance policy. The Leader’s reply of 8 March 2018 was tabled for members’ information.

The BBC news report of 8 March 2018, alleging bullying of House of Commons staff by MPs was discussed. The Committee were deeply concerned and agreed it was important to continue to keep a close eye on the progress and implementation of the report of the working group on an independents complaints and grievance policy, and actively demonstrate their interest. It might be helpful for the Committee to hear directly from an expert witness. The Secretariat would take this forward.

**Association of College Leaders, Ethical Leadership Commission**

Jane Martin reported a successful presentation on the work of the Committee and the application of the Nolan Principles to the Association of College Leaders on 28 February. The Leadership Commission had now produced a draft code for their schools and colleges on which they would consult with their members.

The Chair thanked Jane Martin for her work on this.

**3. FOLLOW UP TO ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDERS**

The Committee noted the latest draft report on the importance of ethical standards for public service providers.

Final drafting and editing changes to the report were discussed and some revised wording to the main text was agreed.

The Chair thanked Sheila Drew Smith for attending this meeting so as to conclude the work on the report.

**4. MPs’ OUTSIDE INTERESTS**

The Committee fully discussed the first draft of the report on MPs’ outside interests in light of the insightful roundtable discussion with academics and experts that had been held that morning as part of the evidence gathering for the report.

 The Committee considered in particular the current context, the complexity of the role of MPs, the public’s views, the role of the Committee in this arena, and the intended impact of the report.

The second draft of the report would be presented to the April Committee meeting.

**5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS REVIEW**

The Committee noted Jane Martin’s update on progress with the local government ethical standards review.

**6. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)**

The Committee noted the requirements of the GDPR which will come into force on 28 May 2018, and the implications for the Committee.

A further paper would be presented to the Committee’s May meeting.

**7. RISK REGISTER**

The Committee noted the risk register. It would be reviewed again by the Committee in 6 months’ time.

**8. STANDARDS CHECK**

 The Committee noted the standards check for February 2018.

**9. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD LOOK OF EVENTS**

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

**10. AOB**

**Communications Update**

The Committee noted the communications update for February.

**Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) Consultation on their December payroll**

The Committee noted IPSA’s consultation with MPs and staff on their December payroll date.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

**Thursday 19 April 2018 to be held in Conference Room E, 70 Whitehall.**

**CSPL Secretariat**

**March 2018**