

**Committee on
Standards
in Public Life**

Annual Report

2017-18

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

The Seven Principles of Public Life apply to anyone who works as a public office holder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally or locally, and all people appointed to work in the civil service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, Non Departmental Public Bodies, and in the health, education, social and care services. The Principles also apply to all those in the private sector delivering public services.

SELFLESSNESS

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

INTEGRITY

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

OBJECTIVITY

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

OPENNESS

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

HONESTY

Holders of public office should be truthful.

LEADERSHIP

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the Principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

The Seven Principles were established in the Committee's First Report in 1995; the accompanying descriptors were revised following a review in the [Fourteenth Report](#), published in January 2013.

Foreword

I am delighted to present the Committee on Standards in Public Life's Annual Report 2017-2018. This is the last Annual Report I shall present on behalf of the Committee as my five-year term of appointment comes to an end in August 2018.

The Committee sits within an increasingly complex ethical landscape with a remit extending across the whole of public life. In this Annual Report we set out our purpose and focus within that broad landscape, reaffirm our strategic objectives, and review our work during the past year.

This year, we have considered a range of important, topical issues, from MPs' outside interests to the continuing importance of ethical standards for those private companies providing public services – all the more timely given the collapse of Carillion early in 2018, one of the largest private providers of public service. We are now six months into our 12-month review of local government ethical standards. Amongst all this, we have contributed to consultations by others including on pre-appointment scrutiny of public appointments, local public accounts committees and the draft Behaviour Code for Parliament, and have worked with others to highlight and promote a wide range of standards issues.

Perhaps most notably this year, we looked at the growing problem of intimidation in public life. In July 2017, the Prime Minister invited the Committee to review this area, with a particular focus on the 2017 General Election, and to report back by the end of the year. The Committee agreed to undertake and prioritise this work in view of the impact of intimidation on our democracy, and its potential impact on those willing to stand for election. As the evidence base grew, the Committee felt that we were at a turning point in our political culture and that an urgent and concerted response was required. We published our report to a warm reception in December 2017 and welcomed the Government's positive response, which accepted almost all of our recommendations, in March this year.

There is always a risk that concerns relating to standards remain under the radar for a long period, and later emerge to public prominence. This is the case with the allegations of bullying and harassment at Westminster that gained public prominence in November 2017. It is critical that Parliament has fair and timely processes in which those who have made complaints, and those who are the subject of complaints, as well as the public, can have trust. We await the outcome of the various reviews commissioned by Parliament to address these serious issues.

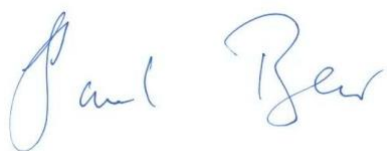
To that end, in 2018/19, the Committee intends to maintain a close watching brief on culture and behaviour in Westminster, as well as other standards issues, including lobbying, and the operation of the Business Appointment Rules. We will also be completing our review of local government ethical standards; following up the recommendations we made in our review of intimidation of public life and our recent report on ethical standards for public service providers.

Since its creation in 1994, the Committee has made recommendations for reform to promote and uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct across public life. These have shaped how organisations and individuals talk and think about ethical standards. The Seven Principles have for almost 25 years now been the widely accepted cornerstone of ethical standards for people working

across all areas of public life and are now fundamental too for those in the private sector who are providing services funded by the taxpayer. The Committee's work model continues to be one of well-argued, evidence-based reports with practical recommendations to help bolster ethical standards. We stay watchful; we identify and respond to emerging ethical risks; and we listen to the public and a wide range of organisations about their concerns. Approaching our 25th year, the Committee remains uniquely placed to consider emerging standards issues, and to take a strategic, long-term view across public life as a whole.

The last five years have convinced me that the Seven Principles remain as relevant today as they were a quarter of a century ago. They have been adapted to different organisations and different needs. They may have their detractors – it is true that levels of public trust do not always respond precisely to high standards, and that transparency in itself, whilst still essential, is perhaps not the cure-all originally envisaged. Notwithstanding this, the Principles clearly articulate the public's expectations of those that serve them. The enduring importance of the Principle of Leadership is testament to that.

Finally, I would like to extend my warmest thanks to both current and former Committee members with whom I have had the greatest pleasure and honour of working. Members of this Committee do not always have the easiest task – they are expected to monitor standards across the widest of ethical landscapes, report on complex and sensitive issues and be alert to public opinion, while at the same time understanding the complexities of Parliament and all other areas of public life. My colleagues past and present have done this with professionalism, good humour, clarity of thought and sensitivity to the many complex issues they have had to address. I wish them well with the challenges ahead.



Lord Bew

Chair



Year in Review

July/August 2017

Following the Prime Minister's request in July, we start gathering evidence for our review of Intimidation of Public Life.

September 2017

Simon Hart MP is appointed to the Committee.

We hold public hearings and a roundtable on Intimidation of Public Life.



October 2017

We meet with MPs, Parliamentary candidates and social media companies to discuss the problem of intimidation in public life.

Intimidation in Public Life



November 2017

Lord Bew speaks about the Committee's work at the Public Chairs Forum.

Lord Bew is invited to attend a meeting of Parliament's Independent Complaints and Grievance Policy Working Group on bullying and harassment.

December 2017

We publish the widely anticipated report *Intimidation in Public Life*.



January 2018

We launch phase one of our review into local government ethical standards, with a public consultation lasting three months.



February 2018

The Committee holds meetings with stakeholders as part of its reviews into local government ethical standards and MPs' outside interests.

Sheila Drew Smith OBE's term of appointment comes to an end.

March 2018

Professor Dame Shirley Pearce DBE joins the Committee.

The Committee holds a roundtable in London as part of its review of MPs' Outside Interests.



April 2018

We submit evidence to PACAC's consultation on pre-appointment scrutiny of public appointments.

We hold roundtables in Birmingham and London on our local government ethical standards review.

May 2018

We publish *The Continuing Importance of Ethical Standards for Public Service Providers*.

The Continuing Importance of Ethical Standards for Public Service Providers



June 2018

We finalise our report on MPs' Outside Interests ready for publication.

We start phase 2 of our review of local government ethical standards.

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1.1. Strategic Plan

Our strategic purpose and focus

The Committee was established in 1994 with a clear purpose: to examine areas of concern about the standards of conduct of public office holders, advise the Prime Minister accordingly, and to promote the highest standards of conduct across public life.

- 1.1 Our vision remains to reinforce clear expectations across public life of high ethical standards. Our remit extends to all those holding public office, and those providing public services. As a standing committee we have a constant presence, which enables us to monitor progress on different issues (including our own recommendations) over time. It also enables us to respond in a timely way when concerns arise.
- 1.2 The maintenance of high standards in public life is important for the good functioning of society as a whole, helps maintain public trust in institutions, and is important for democracy. High standards of conduct underpin public confidence in every aspect of public life, from the delivery of health and social care services to education, policing and legislation.
- 1.3 The Committee is uniquely placed to consider the 'ethics landscape' as a whole, and works to serve the public by striving to ensure the Nolan Principles are understood and embedded across public life.
- 1.4 It is a wide landscape, so we are committed to working with others to ensure this vision is met. We will identify particular areas of concern and consider those issues in more depth.

Our strategic objectives

- 1.5 The Committee will:
 - **Identify areas of concern** in terms of conduct and behaviours before they develop into activities which could lead to a breach of public trust
 - Undertake balanced, comprehensive reviews, based on robust and effective research. We will use the research gathered in these reviews to develop **evidence-based, practical recommendations** to help maintain or improve ethical standards across the public sector;
 - We will make **informed contributions to public debates** about ethical standards, including submissions to public consultations and on-going reviews by Parliamentary committees;
 - We will be alert, **proactively identifying and responding** to emerging ethical risks and engaging with a wide range of

During 2018/19, the Committee will keep a particular watching brief on developments in Westminster with regard to alleged bullying and harassment of staff. We are anxious that the Commons Commission Inquiry and the Leader's working group on an Independent Complaints and Grievance Policy will produce a timely, fair process that reflects best practice.

partners to develop the ethical standards agenda.

- 1.6 We are committed to ensuring that we continue to be an effective, efficient organisation delivering value for money.

Measuring our effectiveness

- 1.7 As an advisory body with no statutory powers to enforce our recommendations, it is not always easy to measure our impact directly. Our effectiveness depends on our ability to build powerful arguments using research, and evidence which convinces others to take forward our recommendations for change. We also always try to add a timescale to our recommendations to help us when we follow up our reports.
- 1.8 The following indicators help to gauge our performance. We will refine and elaborate on these during the life of this strategic plan in the light of experience:
 - Delivering **well-researched, balanced reports** which identify ways to improve and maintain ethical standards in the public sector, together with other proactive outputs as specific issues arise;
 - Making practical **recommendations** with a timescale and clarity of ownership which are evidence-based and persuasive;
 - Maintaining our own **openness and accountability** to the public (including our website, public consultations and research surveys); and
 - Working with key **stakeholders and partners** through seminars and meetings.

Setting priorities and work balance

- 1.9 We anticipate that the majority of our time will be spent on our proactive work i.e. our substantive reviews, research and follow-up which enable us to make a contribution from our unique vantage point.
- 1.10 We will also continue to make submissions to Select Committee inquiries and other consultations so that we can collaborate with others on important issues. We will use resources effectively to ensure that time spent responding to inquiries and consultations initiated by others do not impact on priority work.
- 1.11 As we did in 2017 with our review of intimidation in public life, should any immediate and pressing issues arise, we would rearrange our priorities as necessary.
- 1.12 The Committee aims to make valid, evidence-based contributions to inform and stimulate public debate; this relies on consultation with other bodies, experts and research organisations. We will continue to bring together key stakeholders for thoughtful and engaging seminars.
- 1.13 We will ensure that our reports and contributions draw together reliable evidence with regard to the seven Principles of Public Life.
- 1.14 We will continue to seek to maintain relevance and communicate with the public appropriately; we understand social media and technological changes have shifted the

relationship between the public and public office holders. We will aim to respond quickly to new issues as they arise, whilst still making measured and evidence-based contributions to any debate.

Selection of reviews

- 1.15 The choice and scope of our reviews is informed by our assessment of the importance of the issue, the scope for the Committee to make a distinctive and authoritative contribution, and potential impact.
- 1.16 In each inquiry we set out to make recommendations or identify areas of best practice that will encourage the highest standards of propriety in public life. We will continue our practice of following-up our recommendations to monitor our impact.

Evidence gathering

- 1.17 The Committee will use appropriate methods to gather evidence, depending on the subject in hand. These may include:
- One-to-one **meetings with stakeholders and experts** in the field;
 - **Roundtables, public hearings, seminars** and workshops;
 - **Public consultations;**
 - Independent **surveys** initiated by the Committee, and submitting questions to panel surveys;
 - Attending **external events;**
 - Desk-based **research;**
 - Commissioning **academic research;** and
 - Consulting with the Committee's **Research Advisory Board.**

Taking opportunities for our voice to be heard

- 1.18 In addition to reviews and monitoring standards issues, we will take the lead and ensure our voice is heard promoting high ethical standards, including by:
- Advising the **Prime Minister, Ministers** and others on key issues;
 - Contributing to relevant **Select Committees' Inquiries** in both Houses;
 - Ensuring our reports are shared with the **appropriate audiences;**
 - Participating in **conferences, seminars and workshops;**
 - **Writing articles and delivering speeches** to communicate our key messages;
 - **Media interviews;** and
 - Communicating with the public and partners through our **website, blogs and social media presence.**

Monitoring wider standards issues

1.19 The Committee is not complacent, ethical issues do not go away. In order to fulfil our remit to consider ethical standards across the public sector we will:

- Maintain a **watching brief** to identify emerging or persistent ethical standards issues, and be quick to highlight their significance to those best placed to respond;
- Work with partners to undertake quantitative and qualitative **research** into public perceptions of ethical standards; and
- Respond to **consultations**, key policy announcements and legislation where these impact on ethical standards and we have an informed contribution to make.

A key area for the Committee's watching brief, will be around monitoring responses to the recommendations in our Intimidation in Public Life report.

Communications

We are fully committed to openness in our activities. We will ensure that we communicate our work effectively, to make it visible to everyone with an interest in ethical standards.

1.20 We will ensure that our website provides an effective means of communicating our views and activities, by publishing our reports, blogs and press releases, as well as full corporate transparency data including:

- A record of our external meetings;
- Committee meeting agendas and minutes;
- Quantitative data and evidence received; and
- The Committee's register of interests.

1.21 We will make full use of Twitter and our blog.

Using our resources to best effect

1.22 The Committee will continue to exercise efficiency, including in the following ways:

- **Research:** For research into public attitudes to ethical standards, our Research Advisory Board will seek opportunities to undertake efficient and economical survey work.
- **Interactions with stakeholders:** We will continue to think creatively about how to ensure we are accessible in an efficient, cost-effective way, for example by issuing online consultation papers and surveys, holding roundtables and conducting interviews locally.
- **Administrative processes:** All services (including travel, accommodation, IT and human resources) are obtained wherever possible via the Cabinet Office, our sponsor department, so as to benefit from economies of scale.

2. Overview of Activities 2017-18

2.1 During 2017/18, the Committee delivered against its [forward plan](#), and went further by undertaking and delivering a six-month review into intimidation in public life.

Intimidation in Public Life

2.2 In July 2017, the Prime Minister invited the Committee to undertake a review of intimidation in public life, with particular reference to the experience of Parliamentary candidates at the 2017 General Election.

2.3 The Committee agreed to review the issue in the light of the threat of intimidation to the vibrancy, diversity and integrity of public life.

2.4 As part of the review, the Committee held:

- a public consultation and received 88 submissions as well as inviting every Peer and MP to contribute to the review;
- a roundtable discussion with former candidates, academics, think tanks, and stakeholders;
- a public hearing with political parties, a private hearing with police and security services, and published interviews with social media companies;
- 18 meetings with stakeholder organisations; and
- 11 meetings with Parliamentarians and former Parliamentary candidates across the political spectrum.

2.5 The report was published on 13 December 2017. The Committee concluded that a significant number of Parliamentary candidates had experienced intimidation at the 2017 General Election, and that intimidation was already affecting other public office-holders and having a wider effect on public life. We looked specifically at the role of social media; political parties; law, policing and prosecution; and the wider responsibility of those in public life.

2.6 We made 33 recommendations to government, social media companies, political parties, press organisations, MPs, candidates and other public office-holders – a wide-ranging audience. The Government [responded](#) formally to the report on 7 March 2018 committing to action on most of the recommendations made to government.

MPs' Outside Interests

2.7 In spring 2017, there was intense media interest in the issue of MPs' outside interests triggered by the former Chancellor of the Exchequer's outside interests (the former Chancellor was at that time still an MP). This, together with discussion of the Committee's [2009](#) recommendation that MPs should not be prohibited from paid employment provided it remained within reasonable limits and was transparent, led to the Committee deciding in March 2017 to undertake a review into MPs' outside interests.¹

¹ MPs; expenses and allowances: Supporting Parliament, safeguarding the taxpayer November 2009 Cm 7724

- 2.8 We decided to see the extent to which the compromise we recommended in 2009 had been put into operation, and if there was a need to explore further and elaborate what is meant by ‘reasonable limits’.
- 2.9 We ran a public consultation from 30 March to 13 September 2017. We paused the review when the 2017 General Election was called and again when the Committee reviewed, as an unexpected priority, intimidation in public life.
- 2.10 We resumed the review in January 2018 and took evidence from a wide range of individuals and organisations:
- Received 98 submissions to our public consultation;
 - 25 meetings with key individuals and organisations;
 - Held a roundtable with representatives from think tanks, academia and Parliament;
 - Conducted our own research with the public – two focus groups and a survey of public opinion in collaboration with Professor Rosie Campbell (Birkbeck, University of London) and Professor Phil Cowley (Queen Mary, University of London), fielded by YouGov.
- 2.11 The Committee recognises that MPs need the flexibility to perform their roles in the way they choose and that Parliament needs to attract a wide range of people from different backgrounds and professions. But the public needs assurance that processes are in place to mitigate the potential for undue influence on our political system. We therefore recommended a package of important reforms directed towards Parliament and Government, and in particular the [Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards](#) and the [Commons Committee on Standards](#). These are the bodies responsible for reviewing the Code of Conduct for MPs.
- 2.12 The recommendations are intended to ensure that MPs’ outside interests remain within reasonable limits and that any outside roles, whether or not they are paid, do not prevent MPs from undertaking the range of duties expected of them in their primary role as an MP. We also recommended greater transparency – the need for a more accessible, searchable and usable Register of Members’ Financial Interests; and that the rules of lobbying should be made clearer.
- 2.13 *MPs’ Outside Interests*, the report, was published on 3 July 2018.

The Continuing Importance of Ethical Standards for Public Service Providers

- 2.14 Our remit was expanded in 2013 to include those private companies providing public services. We met this new responsibility with our 2014 report and 2015 guidance on *Ethical Standards for Public Service Providers*.
- 2.15 With the increase in public expenditure on outsourcing since 2014, the Committee decided in 2017 to return to the issue to see what, if any progress, had been made in the intervening three years. In preparing our follow-up report, we heard again from many of the organisations we met in 2014. Overall, we held 14 meetings with organisations on both the

commissioning and service provider sides of contracts and also with those organisations well placed to assess progress on ethical service delivery.

- 2.16 We held a roundtable with 18 participants in March 2017 and undertook a wide literature study of material written since our research in 2013/14.
- 2.17 The failure of Carillion early in 2018, one of the largest providers of public services to both central and local government, and the public outcry around this failure, serves to highlight the fundamental importance of companies and governments paying attention to ethical standards of those who provide services funded by the taxpayer.
- 2.18 Our follow-up [report](#) on this issue, published on 10 May 2018, considered the developments in best practice and the wider environment in which public service delivery is evolving and actions taken in respect of the our 2014 report. We made 12 new recommendations; and reflected on the potential ethical tensions that are present and on the horizon.² We remain concerned over the lack of internal governance and leadership of these areas in departments with significant public service contracts and made a number of recommendations to departmental boards and Permanent Secretaries; the Government Chief Commercial Officer; professional bodies; and public service providers themselves on how they might better reinforce ethical standards in outsourcing.

Local Government Ethical Standards

- 2.19 The Committee has a long-standing interest in standards in local government.
- 2.20 The Committee's third [report](#) of 1997 was on local government. Many of the institutional changes that have taken place in local government standards in the last two decades have been in response to the Committee's recommendations. In our 2013 report [Standards Matter](#), we said that we intended to monitor the slimmed down arrangements following the Localism Act of 2011.
- 2.21 In our 2017/18 [forward plan](#) we committed to reviewing local government ethical standards. We launched our review on 29 January 2018 with a three month long public consultation. The consultation closed on 18 May 2018 and we received 316 submissions.
- 2.22 The review is considering the structures, processes, and practices for local government standards in England, including codes of conduct, sanctions, investigatory processes, the roles of Monitoring Officers, Clerks, and Independent Persons. High standards of conduct in local government are essential to safeguarding local democracy and maintaining public trust.
- 2.23 In April 2018, we held two roundtables: one with Monitoring Officers, Clerks and Independent Persons in Birmingham; and one in London with academics, think tanks and experts in the field.
- 2.24 We completed phase one of the review in June 2018 and will continue working on the review for the rest of the year. We will add to our evidence collection by talking directly to

² The Continuing Importance of Ethical Standards for Public Service Providers, May 2018

councillors with a planned programme of visits to a selected range of local councils. We aim to publish the report by December 2018.

Watching Brief

Westminster Parliament harassment

- 2.25 Worrying reports of a culture of bullying and harassment in Parliament surfaced in the media in late 2017. The Committee welcomed the quick establishment of the Independent Complaints and Grievance (ICGP) Working Group in response to those allegations about inappropriate behaviour and a culture of bullying and sexual harassment in Westminster. The Chair of the Committee attended one of their early meetings at the Group's invitation. We also welcomed the Group's report of 8 February 2018 that recommended new policies and independent advice and investigation services should be developed; and that further work be undertaken on training and cultural change and the development of a new Behaviour Code.
- 2.26 The Committee undertook to maintain an active watching brief of this issue which falls squarely in our remit of monitoring and maintaining high ethical standards. The Committee is concerned that processes put in place in response to the allegations do deliver a fair and accountable and trustworthy process for all those involved.
- 2.27 Further allegations appeared in the media in March 2018 about the bullying of House of Commons staff. In response to those allegations, the House of Commons Commission set up an Independent Inquiry headed by Dame Laura Cox QC. The Commission's non-executive members developed the terms of reference and appointed an independent person to lead the inquiry, Dame Laura Cox QC.
- 2.28 As part of its watching brief, the Committee met with the Leader of the House in July 2018 for an update on progress on the ICGP Steering Group's work streams and to understand better how the relationship between the work of that group and that of the Inquiry. The Committee also contributed to the [ICGP Steering Group's consultation](#) on the draft Behaviour Code.

Party Funding

- 2.29 The Committee maintained its watching brief on party funding. The Chair spoke in the House of Lords on 27 February 2018 supporting the Transparency of Donations and Loans etc. (Northern Ireland Political Parties) Order 2018.³ The Committee had called for transparency in political party donations in Northern Ireland in its 1998 and 2011 reports and in a statement in 2014.⁴

Conduct of Referendums

- 2.30 The Committee has retained an interest in the conduct of referendums.

³ [Hansard 27 February 2018](#)

⁴ [The Funding of Political Parties in the United Kingdom, 1998 Cm 4057 -I](#); [Political Party Finance: ending the big donor culture, 2011 Cm 8208](#); [Appearance before the Northern Ireland Assembly 28 May 2014](#).

- 2.31 The Committee attended meetings in the early part of 2017 hosted by the Electoral Commission where we met other organisations with an interest in this area to discuss how referendums might be conducted in a way that builds public trust. We were co-signatories to the [Electoral Commission's letter](#) to the Minister for the Constitution of 8 September 2017 informing the Minister of the conclusions of those discussions.
- 2.32 We have stayed in touch with the Constitution Unit's work in this area and made a submission to their [Independent Commission on Referendums](#) that was established to review the role of referendums in British democracy and consider how the rules and practice could be improved.
- 2.33 The Committee's submission outlined the Committee's past positions on the operation of referendums and suggested three areas for consideration: (a) joint working on referendums – how the existing bodies already in place could work together in future; (b) the impact of disinformation and fake news on the conduct of referendums, with particular reference to the 'imprint'⁵ for campaign material (a matter we also raised in our *Intimidation in Public Life* report); and (c) campaign financing – how the current funding regime may shape any future referendum campaigns.
- 2.34 The Commission's report was published shortly before publication of this Annual Report. We welcome this in depth piece of work by the Independent Commission and look forward to reading the report in full.

Public Appointments

- 2.35 The Committee retains a close interest in the fair, open and merit-based processes in public appointments. We invited Peter Riddell, the [Commissioner for Public Appointments](#) to attend our February 2018 meeting to update the Committee on how the government's new Governance Code, introduced after the [Grimstone](#) Review, was working in practice. The Committee discussed with the Commissioner the particular themes of transparency, diversity, pre-appointment checks and panel membership.
- 2.36 The Committee [contributed](#) to the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Select Committee's consultation on pre-appointment scrutiny. The Committee long-standing view is that the process must be based on the overriding principle of appointment on merit.
- 2.37 The Committee accepts the ultimate right of Ministers to confirm an appointment, be that against a Select Committee recommendation on occasion. In those circumstances however, we recommended that Ministers should be properly accountable to Parliament and explain to the Select Committee the reasons for their decision and respond to any specific questions and objections that the Select Committee may have raised. Importantly too, there should be clear understanding on both sides of how the process works. Ministers and Select Committees may

⁵ Whenever election material is produced, it must contain certain details ('imprint') to show who is responsible for the production of the material. We agree with the Electoral Commission that the imprints currently required for print material promoting a political party should also be extended to online material, including social media.

disagree on the outcome of individual cases, but they should not disagree in relation to the process.

- 2.38 The Committee reiterated its recommendation from [*Striking the Balance, Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life in Regulation*](#), that each government department should publish a list of the appointments which are subject to pre-appointment scrutiny hearings and their justification. The Committee was also concerned about any impact on diversity. Measures to promote diversity in public appointments are needed mainly at the beginning of the appointments process and any extension of pre-appointment scrutiny should not impact negatively on the diversity of those applying to public appointment roles.

3. Representation, Speeches and Communication 2017-18

- 3.1 The Committee continues to maintain an international profile in the field of standards promotion by exemplifying an effective principles-based approach to standards in public life. Many other countries wish to learn from our experience and the Committee continues to host international delegations, visiting civil servants from outside the UK, scholars and students to explain how the standards framework operates in the UK. The Committee will also continue to contribute to the research base on ethical standards, trust and compliance, both by working with national and international institutions and scholars, and by conducting in-house research.
- 3.2 Over the course of the year, the Committee's Chair, members and Secretariat have spoken at a number of events on standards issues, promoting the work of the Committee and the importance of the Seven Principles of Public Life, and providing other examples of best practice, including:
- 19/09/17 Secretariat presentation to a delegation from Kosovo
 - 31/10/17 Dr Jane Martin addressed the National Association of Local Councils Annual Conference
 - 20/11/17 Lord Bew addressed the Public Chairs Forum
 - 20/12/17 Lord Bew addressed a delegation from Armenia
 - 23/01/18 Lord Bew addressed a Royal United Services Institute conference on the theme of Personal Security of Individuals in Public Life
 - 28/02/18 Dr Jane Martin addressed the Association of School and College School Leaders on Ethical Leadership
 - 21/03/18 Lord Bew and Jane Ramsey speak at Constitution Unit seminar on intimidation in public life
 - 23/05/18 Lord Bew discussed the theme of restoring public trust, a clash between public and private values, at a seminar hosted by the Institute of Business Ethics.
 - 25/06/18 Dr Jane Martin spoke to the Lawyers in Local Government Monitoring Officers' Conference
 - 27/06/18 Lord Bew addressed an IPSA Board Meeting.
 - 04/07/18 Lord Bew addressed a University of Warwick (London) conference on the Construction of Public Office and the Pursuit of Integrity.
- 3.3 The Committee has also been proactive in promoting the Seven Principles of Public Life through responses to a number of consultations, including:
- [September 2017](#): UK Statistics Authority consultation on their Code of Practice
 - [February 2018](#): IPSA consultation on their 2018/22 strategy

- [February 2018](#): Centre for Public Scrutiny consultation on local accounts committees.
 - [May 2018](#): Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, *Inquiry into Pre-appointment Scrutiny*
 - [May 2018](#): Independent Complaints and Grievance Steering Group, Consultation on a draft Behaviour Code.
 - [June 2018](#): Lords Communications Committee, Internet regulation
- 3.4 The Secretariat regularly receives and responds to public queries and correspondence on standards issues, including requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Online Communications

- 3.5 We will continue to ensure that we communicate our work effectively, making it visible everyone. Our [website](#), [blogsite](#) and use of [Twitter](#) are key ways in which we engage with stakeholders and members of the public.
- 3.6 Between 26 June 2017 and 19 June 2018, the Committee's [website](#) received 100,942 visitors, and a total of 237,656 page views. The [Seven Principles of Public Life](#) cover page received 74,764 page views and 54,529 unique page views. The [Seven Principles document](#) page received 68,512 views and 60,636 unique page views.
- 3.7 We will contribute to relevant policy debates where we can add an informed and distinctive voice, and we will engage in constructive dialogue with key stakeholders including ethical regulators.

4. Current Work Plan and Watching Brief 2018-19

4.1 The Committee's **current work plan** includes:

- Continuing its review of **local government ethical standards**;
- Following up our report *Intimidation in Public Life*;
- Following up our report on the *Continuing Importance of Ethical Standards for Public Service Providers*;
- Maintaining its watching brief over **Parliament's response to allegations of a culture of bullying and sexual harassment in Parliament**. We will be following and considering the outcomes of the ICGP Steering Group's work streams and the findings of Dame Laura Cox's Independent Inquiry into the alleged bullying of House of Commons staff.

Watching brief going forward

4.2 We are committed to keeping abreast of standards issues before and while they are emerging, and we will respond as appropriate when they do arise. We are open to new ideas and suggestions on areas within the Committee's remit that we may consider in the future. At the time of publication, we are particularly interested in the following issues.

Lobbying and the Business Appointment Rules

4.3 Our report on MPs' outside interests raised issues of concern around the lobbying of MPs. Lobbying continues to be a matter of public concern, as do the rules surrounding the post-employment of public office-holders. The Committee will continue to keep an active watching brief on these issues.

Party Funding

4.4 The Committee has been actively involved in debates on the funding of political parties, and will continue to remain engaged on this issue throughout 2017-18. We continue to emphasise the importance of pursuing a package of commonly agreed small reforms, and the desirability of the political parties coming together to reach some agreement on this.

Academies

4.5 Following our research on public service providers, we are increasingly aware of the issues surrounding conflicts of interests and good governance in academies.

National Health Service

4.6 Standards issues in terms of commissioning and good governance in the NHS are also on our watching brief agenda.

5. Annex A: About the Committee

Our remit

The Committee on Standards in Public Life monitors, reports and makes recommendations on issues relating to standards in public life.

5.1 The Committee has always had a broad and wide-ranging remit. On 25 October 1994, the then Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. John Major, announced the establishment of the Committee on Standards in Public Life with the following terms of reference:

To examine current concerns about standards of conduct of all holders of public office, including arrangements relating to financial and commercial activities, and make recommendations as to any changes in present arrangements which might be required to ensure the highest standards of propriety in public life’.

’For these purposes, public office should include: Ministers, civil servants and advisers; Members of Parliament and UK Members of the European Parliament; Members and senior officers of all non-departmental public bodies and of national health service bodies; non-ministerial office holders; members and other senior officers of other bodies discharging publicly-funded functions; and elected members and senior officers of local authorities.’⁶

5.2 On 12 November 1997, the Committee’s terms of reference were extended by the then Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair:

To review issues in relation to the funding of political parties, and to make recommendations as to any changes in present arrangements.’⁷

5.3 On 5 February 2013, the Minister for the Cabinet Office clarified the Committee’s terms of reference in two respects:

...in future the Committee should not inquire into matters relating to the devolved legislatures and governments except with the agreement of those bodies.

...the Committee’s remit to examine ‘standards of conduct of all holders of public office’ [encompasses] all those involved in the delivery of public services, not solely those appointed or elected to public office.’⁸

5.4 Our remit does not extend to individual complaints and we have no powers to investigate individual allegations of misconduct. That is the role of the relevant regulator.

⁶ Hansard (HC) 25 October 1994, col 758

⁷ Hansard (HC) 12 November 1997, col 899

⁸ Hansard (HC) 5 February 2013, col 7WS

Our status

- 5.5 The Committee is an independent, advisory non-departmental public body (NDPB) established in 1994. The Committee is not founded in statute and has no legal powers to compel witnesses to provide evidence, or to enforce its recommendations.
- 5.6 Our Secretariat and budget are provided by the Cabinet Office.

Our independence

- 5.7 To fulfil our remit effectively, it is important that we remain robustly independent of the Government that appoints us. By convention, the Committee notifies the Prime Minister before starting an inquiry, and can be asked by the Prime Minister to review a specific subject. The decision on whether to proceed, however, is our own.

Our reports

- 5.8 Depending on the subject and nature of the review, Committee reports can take different forms; they may be in the form of a Command Paper laid before Parliament (such as *Intimidation in Public Life*); or they may be a report that is not laid before Parliament and published by the Committee (such as *MPs' Outside Interests*). The reports may be short or long, or in the form of guidance published on our website.
- 5.9 The Committee will convene seminars, roundtables, public meetings and other forms of evidence gathering on issues as appropriate.

6. Annex B: Our Membership

Our members

- 6.1 The majority of members, including the Chair, are independent and appointed following an open competition regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA). Three political members are nominated by the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat political parties.
- 6.2 Political members are appointed for a three-year term, with the possibility of reappointment. The four independent members are appointed for a five-year non-renewable term. The Chair is also appointed for a single non-renewable five-year term.
- 6.3 The Prime Minister formally appoints all Committee members.
- 6.4 The Chair is appointed on the basis that they will on average spend two to three days a month on Committee business. Our members are expected to commit around two days a month, for which they are remunerated on the basis of a daily fee (political members do not receive fees). Both the Chair and other members necessarily commit more days as appropriate when the Committee is engaged in an inquiry.
- 6.5 Independent members are appraised annually.

Chair: Lord Bew

Appointed: 1 September 2013

Term ends: 31 August 2018



Paul Bew joined Queen's University Belfast in 1979 and was made Professor of Irish Politics in 1991. He acted as historical adviser to the Bloody Sunday Inquiry between 1998 and 2001 and was appointed as a non-party-political peer by the independent House of Lords Appointments Commission in February 2007 in recognition of his contribution to the Good Friday Agreement. In 2007 he served on the Local London Authority Bill Select Committee and in 2011 served on the Joint Committee on the Defamation Bill, which addressed key issues of academic freedom. He chaired the independent review of Key Stage 2 (SATs) provision in England which reported in 2011 and was accepted by the Government. He also served on the Joint Committee on Parliamentary Privilege which produced its report in July 2013. Lord Bew is a Visiting Professor at King's College London. Among Lord Bew's many publications is the Ireland volume of the Oxford History of Modern Europe.

Members during the period July 2017- June 2018

Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP

Appointed: 1 November 2010

Reappointed: 1 November 2013, 1 November 2016



Term ends: 31 October 2019

Margaret Beckett has been Labour MP for Derby South since 1983. She was Secretary of State for Trade and Industry 1997-1998, President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons 1998-2001, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs 2001-2006, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 2006-2007, and Minister for Housing and Planning 2008-2009. She has also been Chair of the Intelligence and Security Committee. Margaret is Chair of the Joint Committee on National Security Strategy and a member of the Labour National Executive Committee.

Sheila Drew Smith OBE⁹

Appointed: 17 May 2012

Term ended: 1 February 2018



Sheila Drew Smith is an economist by background. She is the Chair of the National Approved Letting Scheme and a committee member for Safe Agents. She is also undertakes consultancy and selection work in the public and private sectors and is currently an adviser on safeguarding to the Secretary of State for the Department for International Development. She has experience as a former board member of a range of regulatory and other public bodies, including the Housing Corporation and its successor organisation, the Audit Commission, the Infrastructure Planning Commission and was awarded an OBE for services to Ordnance Survey. Prior to this she was a consultancy partner in the predecessor firms of PricewaterhouseCoopers working in the UK and internationally. Her earlier career was in the civil service.

⁹ Sheila Drew Smith was exceptionally reappointed by the Prime Minister in May 2017 for a period of nine months due to the need for continuity in Committee membership, and to complete the follow-up work to ethical standards for public service providers.

Simon Hart MP

Appointed: 6 September 2017

Term ends: 5 September 2020

Simon Hart is the Conservative Member of Parliament for Carmarthen West & South Pembrokeshire, and was first elected in May 2010.



Since being elected to Parliament, Simon has been a member of the Political and Constitutional Reform Select Committee, the Welsh Affairs Select Committee and the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee. He has also been a member/Chair of several APPGs including Tourism in Wales, Learning outside the Classroom, Marine

Energy & Tidal Lagoons, EU/US Trade, and others. Additionally, Simon is a member of the House of Commons Department of Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee and is the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Panama, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. Prior to being elected Simon was Chief Executive of the Countryside Alliance, and remains Chairman of the organisation.

Dr Jane Martin CBE

Appointed: 1 January 2017

Term ends: 31 December 2021



Prior to taking up her role on the Committee, Dr Jane Martin was the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and Chair of the Commission for Local Administration in England. She is also a lay member of the Board of the Office for Legal Complaints (the Legal Ombudsman).

Jane has extensive knowledge and experience of public service regulation. She has worked with local authorities across England as a consultant for the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government, and was the first Executive Director of the Centre for Public Scrutiny. Prior to joining the LGO, Jane was Deputy Chief Executive at the Local Better Regulation Office and a Non-Executive Director of Coventry Primary Care Trust.

Professor Dame Shirley Pearce DBE

Appointed: 13 March 2018

Term ends: 12 March 2023



Shirley has held senior executive and non-executive roles in higher education, health and policing. She is currently Chair of Governors of the London School of Economics and Political Science, a member of the Higher Education Quality Assurance Panel for the Ministry of Education in Singapore and a Trustee for the Royal Anniversary Trust. Shirley is also a member of the Advisory Board of HCA UK.

In 2013 Shirley was appointed by the Home Secretary as the inaugural Chair of the College of Policing (the first professional body for policing) where she oversaw the introduction of the first Code of Ethics for policing based on the Nolan Principles. She was also a Board member of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Healthcare Commission and Health Education England.

Shirley was Vice Chancellor of Loughborough University from 2006 – 2012, where she delivered a new strategy for the University which saw a significant increase in turnover, closer working with industry partners and research success in the Research Excellence Framework alongside a top-rated student experience. Earlier in her academic career she held appointments at University College London (UCL) and the University of East Anglia (UEA) where she established a new medical school with an innovative curriculum and a focus on primary care and inter-professional learning.

In 2005, Shirley was awarded a CBE for services to education in the National Health Service and in 2014 was appointed DBE for services to Higher Education.

Jane Ramsey

Appointed: 1 September 2016

Term ends: 31 August 2021



Jane is currently Chair of Young Epilepsy and Chair of the Children and Young People Steering Group for Transforming Care, NHS England.

Jane was previously Chair of Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. She joined the Trust in November 2012 from University College London Hospitals (UCLH) where she was Vice Chair. She has previously served on the Council of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, the Department of Health Audit and Risk Committee, chaired a local Housing Association and has been Head of Law for two London boroughs. She also served on the

Independent Commission into regeneration and wealth creation in non-Metropolitan areas established by the Local Government Association.

Monisha Shah

Appointed: 1 December 2015

Term ends: 30 November 2020



Monisha is a media professional with a specific interest in the creative industries and higher education. Among her contributions to public life, she is Chair of Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance, Trustee of the Donmar Warehouse and of the Art Fund. She is also a serving member on the Board of Office for Students, member of the Ofcom Content Board and lay member of the Queen's Counsel appointments panel. In her previous roles, Monisha has served as Trustee of Tate, National Gallery, Foundling Museum and ArtUK. She has also served on several panels as an independent member including on the challenge group for the Triennial reviews of the British Council and the British Film Institute. From 2000-2010, Monisha worked at BBC Worldwide as Director of Emerging Markets in Europe, Middle East, India and Africa, and represented the BBC on subsidiary and joint venture boards. She holds a post-graduate degree from SOAS and an executive MBA from the London Business School. In 2009, she was elected Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum.

Rt Hon Lord Stunell OBE

Appointed: 1 December 2016

Term ends: 30 November 2019



The Rt Hon Lord Stunell OBE is a Liberal Democrat Life Peer and joined the House of Lords in October 2015. Lord Stunell previously sat in the House of Commons as MP for Hazel Grove from 1997 to 2015. He was Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government from 2010 to 2012 in the coalition government. Lord Stunell has extensive experience within the Liberal Democrat party, including as Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (2006 to 2007), Shadow Secretary of State for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2006 to 2006) and Liberal Democrat Commons Chief Whip (2001 to 2006). He served as a local government councillor for 25 years from 1979.

Members' attendance (1 July 2017 – 31 June 2018)

6.6 The table below shows the total number of meetings that each member of the Committee could have attended, and the number actually attended, between 1 July 2017 and 31 June 2018.

Name	Possible meetings	Meetings attended
Lord Bew	12	12
Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP	12	9
Sheila Drew Smith OBE	8	6
Simon Hart MP	11	8
Dr Jane Martin CBE	12	10
Professor Dame Shirley Pearce	3	2
Jane Ramsey	12	12
Monisha Shah	12	9
Rt Hon Lord Stunell OBE	12	12

6.7 In addition to monthly Committee meetings, members attend a variety of other meetings and briefings in relation to the business of the Committee.

Remuneration

6.8 Independent Committee members may claim £240 for each day they work on Committee business. The Chair is paid on the basis of a non-pensionable salary of £500 per day, with the expectation that they should commit an average of 2–3 days a month, although this can increase significantly during Committee reviews. All independent members are reimbursed for expenses necessarily incurred.

6.9 For the period 1 July 2017 to 31 June 2018, Committee members, other than the Chair, claimed a total of £39,804.75 in fees and expenses. The Chair claimed £45,429.03 in fees and expenses.

Research Advisory Board

6.10 The Committee's work is supported by a Research Advisory Board. The current Board members are:

- **Professor Mark Philp** (Chair), Professor, Director of the European History Research Centre and Director of Research, Department of History, University of Warwick;
- **Professor Cees van der Eijk**, Professor of Social Science Research Methods and Director of Social Sciences Methods and Data Institute, University of Nottingham;

- **Jean Martin**, Formerly Office for National Statistics and University of Oxford; and
- **Dr Wendy Sykes**, Director of Independent Social Research Ltd and Member of the Social Research Association’s implementation group on commissioning social research.

6.11 The Committee also part-funds Esmeralda Bon, a PhD student at the University of Nottingham, through an ESRC CASE scholarship.

Secretariat

6.12 The Committee is assisted by a Secretariat consisting of Lesley Bainsfair (Secretary to the Committee); Ally Foat (Senior Policy Advisor); Dee Goddard (Senior Policy Advisor); Stuart Ramsay (Senior Policy Advisor); and Amy Austin (Office Manager). Maggie O’Boyle provides press and communications support.

7. Annex C: Data Protection

7.1 The Committee is meeting its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which came into effect on Friday 25 May 2018. We have published a [personal information policy](#) on our website setting out how personal data that we hold is acquired, processed, stored, transferred and deleted.

7.2 Any queries about the privacy notice should be addressed to the Committee Secretary at 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ, tel: 020 7271 2948, email: public@public-standards.gov.uk.

8. Annex D: Financial Information

Expenditure	2016-2017 (£)	2017-2018 (£)
Staff costs and fees	197,766	268,343.66 ¹⁰
Other running costs	69,602	60,130.39
Total net expenditure	267,368	328,474.05

8.1 As an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), the Committee receives its delegated budget from the Cabinet Office. Day-to-day responsibility for financial controls and budgetary mechanisms are delegated to the Secretary of the Committee including responsibility for certain levels of authorisation and methods of control. Creation of all new posts and the use of external resources are subject to the approval of the Cabinet Office Approvals Board.

¹⁰ The increase in staff costs is due to filling staff posts that were vacant in 2017/17.

- 8.2 The Secretary and the rest of the Secretariat are permanent civil servants employed by the Cabinet Office or on secondment from other departments.
- 8.3 Whilst the core Secretariat has been reduced to five members of staff (4.6 full-time equivalent employees), the Secretary can and has used the budget to buy-in additional time limited resource to service specific reviews. This level of resource necessarily constrains the choices the Committee makes in relation to its work programme and, together with the time taken to secure approvals, may affect its ability to respond quickly and comprehensively to standards issues as they emerge.
- 8.4 The Secretary to the Committee is responsible for setting out the outputs and outcomes which the Committee plans to deliver with the resources for which they have delegated authority, and for reporting regularly on resource usage and success in delivering those plans. The Secretary is also responsible for maintaining a robust system of internal control over the resources for which they have delegated authority, and for providing the accounting officer with assurances that those controls are effective.
- 8.5 For the financial year 2017-18, the Committee's budget was £313,756.00, with a final outturn of £328,474.05. The overspend of £14,718.05 was due to the additional, unexpected review of the Intimidation in Public Life and filling staff vacancies. These figures are subject to audit by the National Audit Office.

9. Annex E: Reports and Publications

9.1 The Committee has published the following reports:

- [MPs' Outside Interests](#) (July 2018)
- [The Continuing Importance of Ethical Standards for Public Service Providers](#) (May 2018)
- [Intimidation in Public Life – A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life](#) (Cm 9543) (December 2017)
- [Striking the Balance - Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life in Regulation](#) (Cm 9327) (September 2016)
- [Ethical Standards for Public Service Providers: Guidance](#) (December 2015)
- [Tone from the top - leadership ethics and accountability in policing](#) (Cm 9057) (June 2015)
- [Ethics in Practice: Promoting Ethical Standards in Public Life](#) (July 2014)
- [Ethical standards for providers of public services](#) (June 2014)
- [Strengthening transparency around lobbying](#) (November 2013)
- [Standards matter: A review of best practice in promoting good behaviour in public life](#) (Cm 8519) (January 2013)
- [Political Party Finance - Ending the big donor culture](#) (Cm 8208) (November 2011)

- [MPs' Expenses and Allowances: Supporting Parliament, Safeguarding the Taxpayer](#) (Cm7724) (November 2009)
 - [Review of the Electoral Commission](#) (Cm7006) (January 2007)
 - [Getting the Balance Right: Implementing Standards of Conduct in Public Life](#) (Cm6407) (January 2005)
 - [Defining the Boundaries within the Executive: Ministers, Special Advisers and the permanent Civil Service](#) (Cm 5775) (April 2003)
 - [Standards of Conduct in the House of Commons](#) (Cm 5663) (November 2002)
 - [The First Seven Reports - A Review of Progress - a stock-take of the action taken on each of the 308 recommendations made in the Committee's seven reports since 1994](#) (September 2001)
 - [Reinforcing Standards](#), This Report reviewed the implementation of the recommendations contained in the First Report.
 - [Standards of Conduct in the House of Lords](#) (Cm 4903) (November 2000)
 - [Reinforcing Standards](#) (Cm 4557) (January 2000)
 - [The Funding of Political Parties in the United Kingdom](#) (Cm 4057) (October 1998)
 - [Review of Standards of Conduct in Executive Non-Departmental Public Bodies \(NDPBs\), NHS Trusts and Local Public Spending Bodies](#) (November 1997)
 - [Standards of Conduct in Local Government in England, Scotland and Wales](#) (Cm 3702) (July 1997)
 - [Local Public Spending Bodies](#) (Second Report (Cm 3270) (June 1996)
 - [Standards in Public Life](#) (First Report (Cm 2850)) (May 1995)
- 9.2 Between 2004 and 2012 the Committee also undertook biennial surveys of public attitudes towards conduct in public life. Findings were published in 2004, 2006, 2008, 2011 and 2013.

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