**CSPL (17) 41**

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**

**TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOURTH MEETING**

**THURSDAY 27 APRIL 2017 AT 10:00**

**ROOM G11, 1 HORSE GUARDS ROAD,** **LONDON, SW1A 2HQ**

**MINUTES**

Present: Lord Bew, Chair

Sheila Drew Smith OBE

Dr Jane Martin CBE

Jane Ramsey

Monisha Shah

Lord Stunell OBE

Dame Angela Watkinson DBE MP

Secretariat: Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary

 Dee Goddard, Senior Policy Advisor

 Maggie O’Boyle, Press Officer

Apologies: Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP

 Richard Thomas CBE

The Committee welcomed Angela Watkinson following her return from leave, but sadly noted this would be her last meeting as she had decided not to stand in the forthcoming general election. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair expressed his sincere thanks for all that Angela had done for the Committee during her period of appointment. Her support and always wise words of advice had been much valued and she would be sorely missed.

**1. REGISTERS**

The Committee notedthe registers of interests and members were invited to let the Secretariat know of any changes.

**2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the March meeting were agreed.

**Matters arising:**

**Dame Louise Casey**

The Committee noted that Dame Louise Casey had resigned from the Civil Service to return to academia and the voluntary service. The Secretariat would stay in touch with the DCLG officials on areas of mutual interest.

**Meetings with Electoral Commission to discuss referendums**

The Committee noted the update on next steps with regard to meetings hosted by the Electoral Commission on the conduct of referendums.

**Letter from the Chair of the UK Statistics Authority on use of official statistics**

The Committee also noted and welcomed the letter from the Chair of the UK Statistics Authority to the leaders of the main UK political parties emphasising the proper use of statistics both during and after the general election campaign. It was agreed to welcome and link to the letter on the Committee’s website.

**Meeting with Stephen Kinnock MP on campaign funding**

The Committee noted thatthe planned meeting with Mr Kinnock MP to discuss his concerns about political parties and expenditure limit rules, had been cancelled due to purdah and would be rearranged for after the general election.

**Secretariat staffing**

The Committee noted that**:**

* A temporary member of staff would join the Secretariat in early May for a period of 3 months.
* Interviews for the senior policy advisor vacancy in the Secretariat would take place week beginning 1 May.
* The office manager post had been advertised with a closing date of 5 May.

**3. MPs’ OUTSIDE INTERESTS**

Political members recused themselves from this discussion.

 The Committee agreed the revised timetable for the review of MPs’ outside interests which was required in view of the forthcoming General Election.

 It was agreed that the general election provided an opportunity to repeat the successful induction for MPs following the 2015 general election. The Secretariat would take this forward and report back.

 The Committee’s revised work plan for the rest of the year was agreed.

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

The Committee noted the update on the follow up work to ethical standards for public service providers. A range of meetings had now taken place showing evidence of some improvement but also of contrasting approaches. It was noted that it had been agreed to include a reference to the Committee’s earlier guidance on this work in the Cabinet Office’s draft Suppliers’ Code of Conduct. The Secretariat would take this forward.

**5. STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Committee suggested amendments to the draft strategic plan. A revised draft would be circulated for members’ comments.

**6. STANDARDS CHECK**

The Committee noted the Standards Check.

**7. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD GRID**

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

**8. AOB**

The Committee noted the Communications Update.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair reiterated his thanks to Angela Watkinson for her invaluable support of the Committee over the past five years.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 18 May 2017**

**This meeting will take place in room GC05.1, Lord Bew’s office.**

**CSPL Secretariat**

**April 2017**