

23 July 2015

Committee on Standards in Public Life - Annual Report and Business Plan

Lord Bew calls for parties to restart talks on party funding reform

The independent Committee on Standards in Public Life today published its Annual Report and Business Plan and called for all parties to restart talks on reforming party political finance.

Chair of the Committee, Lord (Paul) Bew said:

“This year, for the first time in its history, the Committee looked at the accountability and governance framework for local policing. Our report [*Tone from the top - leadership, ethics and accountability in policing*](#) calls for greater safeguards in the accountability arrangements in local policing in between the four yearly cycle of elections for Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). It recommends a national minimum code of conduct for PCCs and an ethical checklist that PCC candidates should be invited to sign at the 2016 election to demonstrate their personal commitment to high standards. The Committee also concluded that PCCs need more constructive challenge and active support from their local Police and Crime Panels to ensure that their decisions are tested on behalf of the public on a regular basis.

“The Committee also found in our policing inquiry recognition of the importance of individuals in leadership roles exemplifying, promoting and sustaining high standards of behaviour. It is clear after the General Election that the issue of party funding remains a matter of significant public concern centred on the confluence of money, power and influence. It cannot be resolved without the political will to do so and the Committee believes it is long overdue for the main political parties to show leadership, put aside partisan positions and re-convene discussions to reach a cross party agreement which will help restore public trust. “

The Committee's 2014-15 annual report and Business Plan for 2015-16 can be downloaded from the Committee's website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-committee-on-standards-in-public-life>

Ends

Notes to Editors

- 1. Interview requests and media enquiries should go to Maggie O'Boyle on 07880 740627.**
2. The Committee on Standards in Public Life advises the Prime Minister on ethical standards across the whole of public life in the UK. It monitors and reports on issues relating to the standards of conduct of all public office holders.
3. The Committee report on policing accountability is available on the Committee's website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cspl-launches-tone-from-the-top-leadership-ethics-and-accountability-in-policing>
4. The Committee's 2011 report 'Party political finance – ending the big donor culture' can be downloaded here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/political-party-finance-ending-the-big-donor-culture>. Following publication of the report, the main parties held cross party talks which broke up in July 2013.
5. The current members of the Committee are: Lord (Paul) Bew, Chairman, Rt Hon Lord Alderdice, Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett MP DBE, Carolyn Fairbairn, Sheila Drew Smith OBE, Patricia Moberly, Richard Thomas CBE and Dame Angela Watkinson MP DBE.