**CSPL (18) 89**

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**

**TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-NINTH MEETING**

**HELD AT 10.00 ON THURSDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2018**

**IN** **70 WHITEHALL, LONDON**

**MINUTES**

Present: Lord Bew, Acting Chair

Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP

Professor Dame Shirley Pearce DBE

Jane Ramsey

Rt Hon Lord Stunell OBE

Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary

Ally Foat, Senior Policy Advisor

Dee Goddard, Senior Policy Advisor (part)

Stuart Ramsay, Senior Policy Advisor

Amy Austin, Office Manager

Maggie O’Boyle, Press Officer

Apologies: Simon Hart MP

Dr Jane Martin CBE

Monisha Shah

**1. REGISTERS**

There were no changes to the register of interests.

**2 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2018 were agreed.

**Matters arising:**

**Government response to MPs’ outside interests**

The Committee noted the Minister’s letter in response to the report on MPs’ Outside Interests. The letter would be published on the Committee’s website.

**Westminster Harassment**

The Committee noted that the Rt Hon Sir Kevin Barron MP had stood down as the Chair of the Commons Standards Committee. He had stepped down after 8 years in the role but had also expressed concerns over Parliament ‘sacrificing transparency’ by banning the naming of MPs being investigated.

The election for the new Chair, who would need to be appointed from the Official Opposition, would take place in October.

The Committee would maintain its watching brief on the issue of bullying and harassment in Westminster.

**3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS REVIEW**

The Committee noted the progress on the review of local government ethical standards: the breadth of evidence received to-date; the proposed structure of the report; and commented on draft conclusions and recommendations.

It was suggested that a sub-committee of members might be formed to aid drafting of the report.

The publication date and format of the launch event was discussed.

**4. INTIMIDATION IN PUBLIC LIFE: FOLLOW-UP**

The Committee noted responses received to-date from stakeholders setting out their action against recommendations in *Intimidation in Public Life.*

It was agreed to write a blog following up the report and, as agreed, to seek to arrange a meeting with political parties on their actions since publication of the report.

**5. RISK REGISTER**

The 6 monthly update of the risk register was noted.

**6. CIRCULATION OF COMMITTEE PAPERS**

The Committee noted obligations regarding circulation of Committee papers under the Cabinet Office data security policy and GDPR legislation.

**7. STANDARDS CHECK**

The Committee noted the standards check for August/September 2018.

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

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

**9. AOB**

**Communications Update**

The Committee noted the communications update for July and August 2018.

**Seminar on online targeting of voters through social media**

The Committee noted that the Constitution Unit were considering holding a seminar on online targeting of voters through social media. The Committee would await further details.

**Farewell to Dee Goddard**

The Committee thanked Dee for all her work for the Committee and congratulated Dee on her new role. Dee had been an outstanding member of the Secretariat and would be sorely missed by all.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

**Thursday 18 October 2018 to be held in Conference Room E, 70 Whitehall.**

**CSPL Secretariat**

**September 2018**