**CSPL (19) 83**

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**

**TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY-NINTH MEETING**

**HELD AT 10.00 ON THURSDAY 18 JULY 2019**

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

**MINUTES**

Present: Lord Evans KCB DL, Chair

Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP

Simon Hart MP

Dr Jane Martin CBE

Dame Shirley Pearce DBE

Jane Ramsey

Monisha Shah

Rt Hon Lord Stunell OBE

Nicola Richardson, Senior Policy Adviser

Aaron Simons, Senior Policy Adviser

Amy Austin, Policy Adviser

Maggie O’Boyle, Press Officer

Apologies: Professor Mark Philp, Chair, Research Advisory Board

Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary

Lesley Glanz, Executive Assistant

Professor Cees Van der Eijk and Dr Jonathan Rose joined the Committee ahead of formal business to discuss their latest research into public perceptions of the fairness of the 2016 EU referendum and 2017 general election. The Committee expressed their thanks to Cees and Jonathan for their thought-provoking paper and for the engaging discussion that followed. They welcomed the offer to be kept updated of any further developments in their research in this field.

**1. REGISTERS**

Members were asked to let the Secretariat know of any changes to their register of interests.

**2 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2019 were agreed without amendment.

**Chair’s update**

**Feedback Paper**

The Chair noted and agreed with feedback that emphasised that the Committee was a deliberative body. He informed the Committee that he was drafting a ‘Ways of Working’ note that would codify the conventions around how the Committee operates.

The Chair informed the Committee that the Secretariat were working on a way to transition to online distribution of briefing papers.

**Letter to the new PM**

The Committee agreed to write to the new Prime Minister to introduce the Committee and our work.

**Meeting with Nick Borwell, Principal of the Civil Service Leadership Academy (CSLA)**

The Chair’s meeting with Nick Borwell, Principal of the Civil Service Leadership Academy (CLSA), was noted.

**Meeting of Chairs of Independent Offices**

The meeting of the Chairs of Independent Offices, held on 4 July, was noted. The Chair had relayed the meeting’s enthusiasm for the Committee’s work on mapping the standards landscape, and for a follow up seminar examining the landscape as a whole.

**3. WESTMINSTER HARASSMENT**

The Committee noted the conclusions of Naomi Ellenbogen QC’s report following her inquiry into conduct in the House of Lords and Gemma White QC’s report on her inquiry into bullying and harassment of staff employed by MPs, and expressed its concern at the reports of bullying and harassment in both Houses of Parliament.

The Committee discussed possible further steps, and agreed it would be appropriate to establish a sub-Committee made up of independent members to examine the Ellenbogen and White reports in greater detail.

**4. INTIMIDATION IN PUBLIC LIFE**

The Chair and Jane Ramsey informed the Committee of their recent meeting with Jess Phillips MP and Sam Smethers, Chief Executive of the Fawcett Society, to discuss harassment of women in politics.

Jane Ramsey updated the Committee on the work that is underway with the Jo Cox Foundation on a joint ‘standard’ around conduct and behaviour consistent with the aspiration in *Intimidation in Public Life* that there should be cross-party consensus on recognising and addressing intimidation, harassment and abusive behaviour.

**5. AI AND PUBLIC STANDARDS**

The Chair updated the Committee on progress with the AI review, including meetings at Moorfields Eye Hospital and Hackney Council.

The view was expressed that the final report should be aimed at the general public and framed in such a way that it is accessible to those outside of government. It was suggested that the report should be subtitled with a series of questions asking why AI is important, will it be fair, how will it be accountable etc. The Committee agreed.

It was also emphasised that this should be a report that the head of a school, local authority, or NHS trust could read, and that the report should enable them to introduce AI into their area of work in a way that upholds high ethical standards. The Committee agreed.

A structure for the final report was approved by the Committee.

**6. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS FOLLOW UP**

Jane Martin updated the Committee on the follow-up to our review into Local Government Ethical Standards. It was agreed that the Committee would write to the relevant Minister asking for a formal response to our review. The Committee was also pleased with the contents of a letter from the Local Government Ombudsman, Michael King, and agreed to respond positively.

**7. ANNUAL REPORT**

The Committee noted the final draft of the Annual Report and agreed to send in comments by email.

**8. CSPL 25th Anniversary**

The Committee noted progress with plans to mark the Committee’s 25th anniversary. It was agreed that the Committee would consider options for reviewing the Nolan Principles in its 25th Anniversary year and to see if an extra principle of compassion or respect should be added.

**9. STANDARDS CHECK**

The standards check for July was noted.

**10. FORWARD AGENDA AND FORWARD LOOK OF EVENTS**

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

**11. AOB**

**Communications Update**

The Committee noted the communications update for July 2019.

**Date of Next Meeting**

**19 September 2019.**