

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE  
TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-THIRD MEETING  
HELD AT 10.00 ON THURSDAY 16 JANUARY 2020  
IN 1 HORSE GUARDS ROAD, LONDON**

**MINUTES**

Present: Lord Evans KCB DL, Chair  
Dame Shirley Pearce DBE  
Jane Ramsey  
Monisha Shah  
Rt Hon Lord Stunell OBE  
Rt Hon Jeremy Wright QC MP

Professor Mark Philp, Chair, Research Advisory Board

Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary  
Nicola Richardson, Senior Policy Adviser  
Aaron Simons, Senior Policy Adviser  
Amy Austin, Policy Adviser  
Maggie O'Boyle, Press Officer

Philippa Foster Back, Director, Institute of Business Ethics, *present for item 1*

Julie Harding, Independent Director of Cultural Transformation, House of Commons, *present for item 2*

Apologies: Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP  
Dr Jane Martin CBE

The Chair welcomed the Rt Hon Jeremy Wright QC MP to his first meeting of the Committee. Jeremy had been appointed as the Conservative member of the Committee on 21 November 2019 for a three year term.

**1. INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS ETHICS**

The Committee welcomed Philippa Foster Back, Director, Institute of Business Ethics (IBE).

The IBE is an educational charity, funded by donations from large corporate companies, professional services firms, and professional bodies. It is a subscriber-based, impartial organisation. The IBE has a range of activities, focused around its definition of business ethics, and the application of ethical values to business behaviour. The IBE is interested in how companies behave, not what they do; it sees itself as part of the corporate governance agenda. The IBE is doing a lot of work around speaking out. To support its work, the IBE has produced tool kits that are free to download, and board briefings e.g recently the IBE published a briefing on corporate ethics and the digital world. Once a year, the IBE publishes surveys on attitudes of the public towards business ethics; and once every three years, on people in work's attitudes to business ethics in work, both in the private and public sector.

The Chair thanked Phlipa for a very interesting presentation about the Institute's work and useful discussion on areas of common interest between the Institute and the Committee. Both organisations agreed to stay in touch.

## **2. CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS**

The Committee welcomed Julie Harding, Independent Director of Cultural Transformation in the House of Commons. Julie kindly updated the Committee on her work over the past year. Julie would be leaving the one-year post, as planned, at the end of January.

Julie reported that she thought there had been good progress in the past year, the new Speaker was very supportive on the issue, though there was of course still work to do. The cultural transformation team, with staff workshops had identified the following words to describe the culture people wanted to see in the House: 'inclusive, courageous, collaborative and trusted'. There was a refreshed strategy to which the HR strategy needed to be aligned.

The Chair thanked Julie for a very useful discussion and welcomed the progress that had been made. It was agreed to invite Julie's successor to update the Committee in six months.

The Chair and Jane Ramsey would be meeting the Leader of the House of Commons on 27 January as part of the Committee's continued watching brief in this area.

## **3. REGISTERS**

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

## **4. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2019 were agreed. No meeting was held in December.

### **Chair's update**

The Committee noted the Chair's update which reported his meetings with Madeleine Alessandri, former Deputy National Security Advisor; Nadine Smith, Director of the Centre for Public Impact; and Peter Riddell, Commissioner for Public Appointments.

It was noted that Rebecca Dobson Phillips' work on mapping the standards landscape would be published on the Committee's website in February. It was agreed the Committee should stay in touch with Rebecca, with the idea of potentially updating the work every two years.

## **5. AI AND PUBLIC STANDARDS**

Final drafting changes on the AI review were noted. Publication and launch of the review would take place on 10 February 2020.

## **6. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee discussed possible areas for future review. The future work programme would be further discussed at the February Committee meeting.

**7. INTIMIDATION IN PUBLIC LIFE: FOLLOW UP**

The Committee noted progress with The Jo Cox Foundation on the joint standard of conduct for political parties; and noted letters from Facebook, Google and Twitter which updated the Committee on measures the social media companies had taken in response to recommendations in the intimidation in public life report.

**8. STANDARDS CHECK**

The standards check for December/January was noted.

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

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

**10. AOB**

**IPSA Consultation**

The Chair invited members to send any comments on the draft submission to the IPSA consultation on changes to the Scheme of MPs' Business Costs and Expenses for 2020-21 to the Secretariat. The deadline for submission to the consultation was 31 January 2020.

**Communications Update**

The Committee noted the communications update for November and December 2019.

**Date of Next Meeting**

**27 February 2020**

CSPL Secretariat  
January 2020