**CSPL (21) 11**

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**

**TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOURTH MEETING**

**HELD AT 10.00 ON THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 2021**

**BY VIDEO CALL**

**MINUTES**

Present: Lord Evans KCB DL, Chair

Dr Jane Martin CBE

Dame Shirley Pearce DBE

Monisha Shah

Rt Hon Lord Stunell OBE

Rt Hon Jeremy Wright QC MP

Professor Mark Philp, Chair, Research Advisory Board

Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary

Amy Austin, Senior Policy Adviser

Nicola Richardson, Senior Policy Adviser

Aaron Simons, Senior Policy Adviser

Lesley Glanz, Executive Assistant

Maggie O’Boyle, Press Officer

Chief Constable Richard Lewis, Chair of the UK Police Ethics Guidance Group and lead for the National Police Chief Council’s Professional Ethics Working Group, and Chief Inspector John Wrintmore joined the meeting ahead of formal business, 10.00 - 10.45.

The meeting was held by video call in view of COVID-19.

**DISCUSSION ON POLICE ETHICS**

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair welcomed Chief Constable Lewis, Chair of the UK Police Ethics Guidance Group and lead for the National Police Chief Council’s (NPCC) Professional Ethics Working Group, and his Staff Officer, Chief Inspector John Wrintmore. CC Lewis is leading the NPCC ethics work.

CC Lewis explained his long standing interest in this area and the work of the NPCC’s professional ethics working group, particularly in relation to plans to rewrite the police national code of ethics. He was interested in how the CSPL had impact and traction in making changes to standards in public life. Members and CC Lewis had a full discussion, noting particular problems that the police might face - how to manage the relationship between the code of ethics and standards set out for police officers, and the problem of remoteness of a code of professional ethics from individual police officers (in other professions, e.g. medicine, individuals are accountable to a professional body which oversees their code of ethics).

The Chair thanked CC Lewis for taking the time to speak to the Committee, a discussion which all members had found relevant and valuable. The Chair confirmed that the Committee would be happy to contribute to the consultation on the new code of ethics once issued, and agreed to stay in touch, both as a Committee and in one to one conversation with members if CC Lewis would find that helpful.

**1. APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received.

**2. REGISTERS**

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

**3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2020 were agreed.

**Chair’s update**

Members noted a number of points:

* The Chair and Secretariat were pursuing with the Cabinet Office the recruitment process to fill the vacant independent posts on the Committee.
* The Minister for Housing’s office hoped to update the Committee on progress with the government response to the CSPL’s Ethical Standards for Local Government report in the next 2 weeks.
* Mark Philp had spoken at a session at the Study of Parliament Group on the regulation of MPs on 8 January 2021.
* The Chair had accepted an invitation to speak at the Non-Executive Directors’ induction event on 26 January 2021.
* Sir Stephen Irwin, Chair of the Independent Expert Panel in the Commons would attend the February Committee meeting.
* Two blogs had been published this month, one by the Chair on CSPL’s year ahead and one by Dr Jane Martin on local government follow up.

**4. REVIEW OF REGULATION OF ELECTION FINANCE**

The Committee considered issues arising from the evidence and reviewed options. The Committee would consider further in April.

**5. STANDARDS MATTER 2**

The Committee discussed plans for public engagement and a summary of the approach to the review. The Secretariat took comments on board and would report back in February.

**6. AI AND PUBLIC STANDARDS: FOLLOW UP**

The Committee noted that the government’s response was still awaited and that the Chair would take part in a panel discussion on AI governance, hosted by the Public Chairs Forum on 18 March 2021.

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

The Committee noted that the planned three year update on *Intimidation in public life* had been published on 17 December 2020.

It was noted that the SNP, the Liberal Democrats, Plaid Cymru and the Green Party had now confirmed their support for the joint statement on conduct of political party members. The Labour Party was expected to report back shortly.

The Committee would respond to the press regulator IMPRESS’s consultation reviewing their Standards Code.

**9. COVID-19: WATCHING BRIEF**

The Committee noted its continued watching brief on risks to the Principles by COVID-19.

**10. STANDARDS CHECK**

The standards check for December/January was noted.

**11. FORWARD AGENDA**

The Committee noted the forward agenda.

**12. AOB**

**Communications Update**

The Committee noted the communications update for December 2020.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 18 February 2020 at 10.00 via video conference call.

CSPL Secretariat

January 2021