**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**

**293rd MEETING**

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

**MINUTES**

Present: Lord Evans of Weardale KCB DL, Chair

Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP

Ewen Fergusson

Professor Gillian Peele

Dr Jane Martin CBE

Dame Shirley Pearce DBE

Rt Hon Lord Stunell OBE

Professor Mark Philp, Chair, Research Advisory Board

Maggie O’Boyle, Press Secretary

Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary

Nicola Richardson, Senior Policy Adviser

Aaron Simons, Senior Policy Adviser

Lesley Glanz, Executive Assistant

The meeting was held online.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Rt Hon Jeremy Wright MP

**2. SIR DAVID AMESS MP**

The Committee noted with great shock and sadness the death of Sir David Amess MP and sent their condolences to Sir David’s family, friends and colleagues.

**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 meetings held on 16 and 27 September 2021 were agreed.

**Chair’s update**

Members noted:

* **Recruitment for an independent member of CSPL.**  Members emphasised the importance of seeking candidates from a wide variety of backgrounds.
* **Retirement of Bob Posner, Chief Executive, Electoral Commission in spring 2022.** Bob had given his time generously to the Committee during the regulating election finance review.
* **The Chair’s blog on party funding,** published on our blog site on 13 October.
* **Correspondence from SexMatters requesting that the Committee undertake an inquiry ‘into Stonewall’s relationship with public bodies and the issue of the political erasure of sex’.** Members agreed that serious though these matters were, the Committee could not undertake such an inquiry as they were not within the Committee’s remit.
* **Constitution Unit draft report on Parliament’s watchdogs:** The Committee discussed the Committee’s response to the draft report.

**5. STANDARDS MATTER 2**

Members noted the proof of the final report, stakeholder feedback and launch plans.

Maggie O’Boyle declared her interest: providing part time press support to ACOBA, HOLAC, CSC and OCPA.

**6. Elections Bill**

Members noted progress on passage of the Elections Bill.

**7. CSPL GOVERNANCE**

The Committee reviewed its governance documents for publication and agreed to review the papers annually.

**8. RISK REGISTER**

The Committee noted the risk register and suggested some amendments. A revised risk register would be circulated for the November meeting.

**9. STANDARDS CHECK**

The Committee noted the standards checks for October 2021 which had been circulated weekly over the past month.

**10. FORWARD AGENDA**

The Committee noted the forward agenda.

**11. AOB**

**Forward work programme**

Members agreed to discuss the Committee’s forward work programme at its November meeting, including prioritising watching briefs and follow up to previous work.

Separately, it was agreed to seek a meeting with the Minister for Local Government to pursue the government’s response to the Committee’s January 2019 local government ethical standards report. The government had still not responded to the report.

**Communications Update**

The Committee noted the communications update for September 2021.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 18 November 2021 at 10.00.

Members discussed the pros and cons of online and in person meetings. The benefits of online meetings were noted - ease of accessibility and lack of travel, but agreed it was important to meet face-to-face at least annually, and at times of new appointments to the Committee.

CSPL Secretariat

October 2021