**CSPL (21) 59**

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**

**TWO HUNDRED AND NINETIETH MEETING**

**HELD AT 10.00 ON THURSDAY 15 JULY 2021**

**MINUTES**

Present: Lord Evans of Weardale KCB DL, Chair

Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP

Dr Jane Martin CBE

Dame Shirley Pearce DBE

Monisha Shah

Rt Hon Lord Stunell OBE

Rt Hon Jeremy Wright QC MP

Ewen Fergusson, Observer

Professor Gillian Peele, Observer

Professor Mark Philp, Chair, Research Advisory Board

Maggie O’Boyle, Press Secretary

Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary

Amy Austin, Senior Policy Adviser

Nicola Richardson, Senior Policy Adviser

Aaron Simons, Senior Policy Adviser

Lesley Glanz, Executive Assistant

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

**1. APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received.

The Chair welcomed as observers to the meeting, Ewen Fergusson and Professor Gillian Peele who had been appointed as new independent members to the Committee from 1 August.

**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 June 2021 were agreed.

**Chair’s update**

Members noted the following:

* **Regulating Election Finance:** The successful launch of the Regulating Election Finance Report.
	+ The event was held online and facilitated by Dr Alistair Clark.
	+ There had been wide media coverage and a warm and considered welcome of the report by the Electoral Commission.
	+ Damian Collins MP had led a Westminster Hall debate on election finance on 8 July. The report was welcomed and quoted favourably during the debate. The government response to date had been more cautious.
	+ Lord Stunell drew attention to the opportunity of the passage of the Elections Bill to incorporate many of the report’s recommendations.
	+ The Committee thanked Nicola Richardson for her hard work in drafting an excellent report on a demanding and complex subject.
* **Electoral Commission roundtable:** The Chair had attended a roundtable discussion hosted by the Electoral Commission.
* **Local Government Ethical Standards:** The indications were now that the government would respond to the Local Government Ethical Standards 2019 report after the summer recess. Members were frustrated with this delay by the government. The Chair had accepted an invitation to speak at a National Association of Local Councils conference on 2 December.
* **House of Lords Conduct Committee:** A recent report of the House of Lords Conduct Committee had endorsed the Commissioner’s recommended sanctions for three peers who had refused to undertake the valuing everyone training.

**4. STANDARDS MATTER 2**

Members discussed issues and questions of emphasis for the Standards Matter 2 report to be published later this year. This included headings such as the importance of high ethical standards; how well standards are upheld; leadership and culture; the relevance of the Seven Principles; and the effectiveness of the standards regulatory landscape.

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

The Committee noted its continued watching brief on risks to the Principles of Public Life by Covid.

**6. STANDARDS CHECK**

The Committee noted the standards check for June 2021.

**7. FORWARD AGENDA**

The Committee noted the forward agenda.

**8. AOB**

**Communications Update**

The Committee noted the communications update for June 2021.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 16 September 2021 at 10.00.

**Monisha Shah**

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Monisha for her work for the Committee. The Committee was indebted to her for always contributing and adding to the roundness and intelligence of the debate. And for her willingness in extending her term of appointment by 8 months in order to cover vacancies on the Committee. The Chair and members wished Monisha well for the future.

CSPL Secretariat

July 2021