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**Re: Freedom of Information request - Scope**

1 message

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**Public Standards Mailbox** <public@public-standards.gov.uk>

10 July 2023 at 08:43

To: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 18 June 2023 in which you requested the following information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000:

Please provide me with copies of any policies, procedures, guidance or training materials which clarify the scope of the work of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, its members and staff.

In response to your question about training materials for staff, CSPL staff are employed by the Cabinet Office, so you should direct your request to the Cabinet Office.

In relation to your query about the scope of the Committee, we can confirm that we do have information in scope of your request. This information is published on our website and therefore falls under Section 21 of the FOIA, information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. The links to that information are below for ease of reference (two of these links were in your email to us):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-committee-on-standards-in-public-life/about>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-committee-on-standards-in-public-life/about/terms-of-reference>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-committee-on-standards-in-public-life/about/our-governance>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/annual-report-2022-2023>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/committee-on-standards-in-public-life-triennial-review>

You also asked the following questions; our answers follow below.

(1) Are there any groups or individuals who are out of scope for example, the judiciary , diplomats, Government Whips, the royal family, the military, the security services?

The Principles of Public Life apply to all those in public life, including private companies providing public services which are funded by the taxpayer. The CSPL may consider arrangements for upholding standards in all areas of public life.

(2) Would the Committee investigate ethical issues in cases where a crime has or may have been committed?

Where a crime may have been committed, this is a matter for the police. The CSPL is not a regulatory body and does not investigate individual cases.

(3) Do you have a policy of not looking into matters that fall under the remit of the Information Commissioner or other regulators?

The CSPL is not a regulator so would not normally consider cases that fall to the appropriate regulator to investigate. The Committee focuses on broad principles, systems and frameworks and not on specific complaints or alleged abuses. The Committee's role is to consider arrangements for upholding standards in public life and to promote the Nolan Principles and advise the Prime Minister.

(4) Can members of the public report general areas of concern to the Committee for investigation that are not individual complaints?

Members of the public are welcome to highlight areas of concern and the Committee welcomes their engagement with issues of public standards. The Committee is responsible for deciding its own work programme.

(5) Is there any procedure by which concerns raised can be closed because they are 'out of time'?

This is not applicable to the Committee as we are not a regulator and do not consider or investigate individual cases or complaints.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal

review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to:

Internal Review Officer  
Committee on Standards in Public Life  
1 Horse Guards Road  
London SW1A 2HQ  
[public@public-standards.gov.uk](mailto:public@public-standards.gov.uk)

Please remember to quote reference number **CSPL FOI 2302** in any further correspondence relating to this request for information. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow, Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]



**Committee on Standards in Public Life**  
E: [public@public-standards.gov.uk](mailto:public@public-standards.gov.uk)  
1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ  
Follow us on Twitter [@publicstandards](https://twitter.com/publicstandards)

On Sun, 18 Jun 2023 at 10:02, [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Committee on Standards in Public Life,

Please provide me with copies of any policies, procedures, guidance or training materials which clarify the scope of the work of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, its members and staff.

I have read the terms of reference page on the Gov.uk website which mainly consists of extracts from Hansard.[A] On your "About us" page, it says " We are not a regulator and cannot investigate individual complaints." [B] Whilst this is all helpful, it leaves some questions unanswered. For example:

- (1) Are there any groups or individuals who are out of scope for example, the judiciary , diplomats, Government Whips, the royal family, the military, the security services?
- (2) Would the Committee investigate ethical issues in cases where a crime has or may have been committed?
- (3) Do you have a policy of not looking into matters that fall under the remit of the Information Commissioner or other regulators?
- (4) Can members of the public report general areas of concern to the Committee for investigation that are not individual complaints?
- (5) Is there any procedure by which concerns raised can be closed because they are 'out of time'?

[A] <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-committee-on-standards-in-public-life/about/terms-of-reference>

[B] <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-committee-on-standards-in-public-life/about>

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Please use this email address for all replies to this request:

[REDACTED]

Is [public@public-standards.gov.uk](mailto:public@public-standards.gov.uk) the wrong address for Freedom of Information requests to Committee on

Standards in Public Life? If so, please contact us using this form:

[https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/change\\_request/new?body=the\\_standards\\_committee](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/change_request/new?body=the_standards_committee)

Disclaimer: This message and any reply that you make will be published on the internet. Our privacy and copyright policies:

<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/help/officers>

For more detailed guidance on safely disclosing information, read the latest advice from the ICO:

<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/help/ico-guidance-for-authorities>

<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/help/ico-anonymisation-code>

Please note that in some cases publication of requests and responses will be delayed.

If you find this service useful as an FOI officer, please ask your web manager to link to us from your organisation's FOI page.

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