

**COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE
320th MEETING HELD
AT 10.00 ON THURSDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2024**

MINUTES

Present: Doug Chalmers CB DSO OBE (Chair)
Rt Hon Lady Arden DBE
Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett GBE MP
Rt Hon Ian Blackford MP
Ewen Fergusson
Baroness Finn
Professor Gillian Peele

Professor Mark Philp, Chair, Research Advisory Board

Lesley Bainsfair, Secretary
Nicola Richardson, Senior Policy Adviser
Amy Austin, Policy Adviser
Lesley Glanz, Executive Officer
Maggie O'Boyle, Press Officer¹

Chief Constable Andy Marsh, CEO, College of Policing, joined the meeting ahead of formal business.

Police Code of Ethics

The Chair welcomed Chief Constable (CC) Andy Marsh, CEO, College of Policing, who joined the Committee meeting ahead of formal business for an informal discussion about the new [Police Code of Ethics](#).

Chief Constable Marsh explained that the review of the Code of Ethics started in 2020 (the first Police Code of Ethics was published in 2014). The review was a well thought through, unrushed process which was seen as important in order for the new Code to gain traction. The intention is that the new Code will be seen as a beacon that draws people in and helps officers to do the right thing on difficult days.

In reviewing the Code, the College of Policing worked with a range of practice and subject matter experts as well as academics, and carried out desk research. 50 codes were reviewed from a range of public sectors as well as looking at international practice in the USA, Canada and Australia. All police conduct investigations since 2004 were also reviewed as part of the process.

The formal public consultation on the Code took place March - April 2023, but there was considerable informal engagement taking place ahead of the formal consultation.

¹ Maggie O'Boyle provides part-time press support to the Civil Service Commission, the House of Lords Appointments Commission, the Advisory Committee for Business Appointments, and the Office for the Commissioner for Public Appointments and the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

As part of the process, 540 pieces of feedback were received from stakeholders which were individually assessed and used to inform the final products.

The Code of Ethics is made up of 3 parts: the first part sets out the ethical policing principles - courage, respect and empathy, and public service; the second part is the guidance on ethical behaviour; and the third part is the statutory Code of Practice which is approved by the Home Secretary and gives Chief Constables legal responsibility to have due regard to the Code of Ethics. This means ensuring ethical behaviour within their force by role modelling this behaviour and through continuous professional development. The Code is intended to embed ethics through reward and to ensure that the performance framework does not provide the wrong incentives.

CC Marsh referred to the key notion of procedural justice which is a strong driver of policing by consent. Organisational justice is important too as members of the force need to see that the organisation is fair, and there is a duty of wellbeing for police officers and staff.

CC Marsh emphasised the importance of leading the police community to embrace the new Code and welcome the change, to ensure that the Code was lived. CC Marsh also emphasised the value he set by duty of candour which is part of the Code of Practice for Chief Constables, but something he would like to see embedded at all levels of policing. The College of Policing was working with behavioural scientists on capability, opportunity, motivation and behaviour– the methodology for which is being used to tackle sexism and misogyny in the workplace.

On behalf of the members, the Chair thanked CC Marsh again for taking the time to speak to the Committee and the commitment and passion he clearly had for bringing the new Code of Ethics to life.

1. APOLOGIES

None.

2. REGISTERS

Members were asked to let the Secretariat know of any changes to the register of interests which had been circulated.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2024 were agreed.

Chair's update

The Chair reported that he had continued with his schedule of introductory meetings. Since the last Committee meeting, the Chair had met with:

- Dr Hannah White, Director, Institute for Government
- Rt Hon Harriet Harman MP, Chair of the Commons Standards Committee

- John Pullinger, Chair, Electoral Commission
- Lord Pickles, Chair, ACOBA
- Sir Willam Shawcross, Public Appointments Commissioner
- Simon Madden, Director, Propriety & Constitution Group
- Head of Public Appointments Talent & Outreach, Cabinet Office Appointments Unit (re public appointments role model initiative)
- Martin Jelley, Lords Commissioner for Standards
- Pamela Dow, Chief Operating Officer, Civic Future
- Sir John Aston, Harding Professor of Statistics in Public Life
- Dr Jat Singh, head of the Compliant and Accountable Systems Research Group.

Members discussed a number of items relevant to this General Election year, including promotion of the Nolan Principles; and concerns about intimidation and disinformation.

Members also noted a number of reports on standards that had recently been published.

4. FOLLOW UP TO AI AND PUBLIC STANDARDS: UPDATE

Members agreed to publish the AI and Public Standards follow up report, together with the responses received from government departments, regulators and other public bodies.

5. AI SEMINAR

Members discussed the planned AI seminar to take place on 21 March.

6. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

Members agreed the subject of the next review and the outline project plan. It was agreed to announce the review in March.

7. CURRENT STANDARDS ISSUES

No discussion.

8. FORWARD AGENDA

The Committee noted the forward agenda.

9. AOB

Communications Update

The Committee noted the communications updates for January 2024.

Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 21 March 2024 at 10.00.

CSPL Secretariat
February 2024