



Commission for Standards in Public Life presents to Caucus

Grand Cayman, 5 July 2021 – The Commission for Standards in Public Life (CSPL) met with the PACT Government on Monday, 26 July, to discuss the CSPL’s role as an independent body committed to enhancing democracy in the Cayman Islands.

The CSPL was created by Section 117 of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009 (“the Constitution”) to assist in setting the highest standards of integrity and competence in public life in order to ensure the prevention of corruption or conflicts of interest.

The current membership of the CSPL comprises Chairperson Dr. Sonia Bush and Members Isatou Smith, J. Rosalie Twohey, Richard Addlestone and Keith Blake (who extended his apologies for missing the Caucus presentation, as he was in the UK at the time.)

In the presentation to Caucus, the Commission members outlined the functions and powers of the CSPL, and its reporting requirements in accordance with the relevant laws.

The Commission members further presented an overview of the Register of Interests (ROI) and some key definitions under the Standards in Public Life (SPL) Act and Regulations. Some of the key definitions that were emphasized by the CSPL included the terms Standards in Public Life, Person in Public Life, and Conflict of Interest.

The CSPL members also outlined some of the Commission’s recent successes. One recent achievement is the development of an online portal for the Register of Interests.

The new digital system replaces the previously used manual submission of forms, in an effort to streamline the process for submission of Declarations of Interest by Persons in Public Life.

A Register of Interests is prescribed under the SPL Act and is a set of written declarations

made by persons in public life in which they disclose to the Commission such interests, assets, income and liabilities of that person, or of any other person connected with him or her. The Register of Interests Online Portal can be found at:

<http://www.standardsinpubliclifecommission.ky/register-of-interest>.

The Standards in Public Life Act and the Standards in Public Life Regulations were enacted on 1 and 2 March, 2020. The CSPL continues to review, discuss, and meet with the Legal Drafting Department to progress draft amendments to the SPL Act and Regulations. It is expected that a draft amendment Bill will be finalised by the first quarter of 2022.

Under the SPL Act and Regulations, the term “standards” refers to guidelines and benchmarks for ethical conduct in decision making. These standards are also referred to as the Nolan Principles and are enforced through codes of conduct. These codes may be specific to groups of persons, such as the Ministerial Code of Conduct recently adopted by the Cabinet of the Cayman Islands.

The CSPL emphasized that ‘standards’ are, in part, also upheld by compliance with the filing and updating of declarations of interest for entry into the Register of Interest.

In accordance with the SPL Act and Regulations, a ‘conflict of interest’ means a situation where a person in public life has a private interest that may improperly influence, or be seen to improperly influence, their public duties and responsibilities. This may also apply to the private interests of persons connected to persons in public life if they are closely connected to a person in public life.

CSPL Chairperson, Dr. Sonia Bush said, “The CSPL takes this opportunity to thank the Honourable Premier for inviting the CSPL to make a presentation to his Caucus. The CSPL stands ready to assist the government with fine-tuning any codes of conduct or other standards,

as required by its constitutional remit.”

Premier Hon. Wayne Panton, JP, MP said, “My colleagues and I would like to thank Dr. Sonia Bush and the members of the CSPL for their presentation on the role and work of the CSPL. We look forward to working with the CSPL to continue to improve governance standards in the public sector in the Cayman Islands.”

Learn more about the Commission for Standards in Public Life at <http://www.standardsinpubliclifecommission.ky/> or send a confidential email to info@standardsinpubliclifecommission.ky.

(GIS)

Captions:

Members of the Commission for Standards in Public Life (CSPL) with the PACT Government Caucus following the Commission’s first presentation to the new administration on Monday, 26 July 2021.

