**APPG for Whistleblowing AGM 10th May 2023**

**Room R Portcullis House**

**Minutes**

**Attending:** Mary Robinson MP (MR) (Chair), Maggie Throup MP, Jo Gideon MP (JG), Richard Foord MP, James Daly MP, Alison Thewliss MP, Paul Howell MP, Lord Cromwell

**Apologies:** Dame Maria Miller, Dame Margaret Hodge, Lord Triesman

**Secretariat:** Georgina Halford-Hall (GHH), Lesley Wan, Dr Chris Day, Alison Crotch-Harvey,

**Apologies:** Iain Mitchell KC, Stephen Kerr MSP.

**Observers:** Jennifer Foster, Trevor Leahy, Better Working Lives for All, Ireland.

**Meeting opened 1300**

1. Welcome and Introduction - MR

2. Apologies – MR

3. Mins of last AGM and Financial Statement agreed MR

4. Election of Officers

Mary Robinson reappointed as chair, seconded by Lord Cromwell and Jo Gideon and Maggie Throup.

Maggie Throup, Jo Gideon, Richard Foord, James Daly, Alison Thewliss, Lord Cromwell, Dame Margaret Hodge, Dame Maria Miller, Lord Sharkey – all put themselves forward and appointed as officers of the APPG.

4. MR - Reappointment of WhistleblowersUK as secretariat – unanimous vote to reappoint.

5. Vote of thanks for Georgina Halford-Hall and WhistleblowersUK. The Chair put on record her personal gratitude for the work of Georgina Halford-Hall and the team at WhistleblowersUK for the work and support since July 2018. The Chair gave particular recognition to the outstanding work that brought together Whistleblowing Awareness Week in April 2023.

Vote of thanks seconded by all of the officers.

7. General Update on the years activity by MR & GHH. (report attached)

7.1. Mary Robinson proposed that the aims of the APPG continue, namely to aim to repeal PIDA and replace it with the proposals adopted by the APPG and now contained in the PMB brought by Baroness Kramer Whistleblowing currently awaiting passage to the Commons.

7.2. #WBAW demonstrated the public, political and global support for the reform of whistleblowing law in the UK.

7.3. APPG to closely monitor and engage in the Government Review of the WB Framework. Mary Robinson to write to the Minister, former vice chair of the APPG, Kevin Hollinrake to request a meeting to discuss the scope and present our evidence. **AP – Mary Robinson**

7.4. GHH provided a round up of activity and answered questions relating to the Government WB Framework Review. Summary: GHH and DrCD have met with the review team in advance of the launch of the call to evidence to put forward the case for a widening of the scope of the review. In addition, WhistleblowersUK have set up two new focus groups one to consider the Judiciary and constitutional affairs in relation to existing law chaired by retired Judge Nicholas Cooke assisted by Judge Dr Victoria McCloud as an independent authority, and an International Group of organisations to compare and contrast the APPG Bill against other emerging global legislation. Both groups will deliver reports to the APPG for inclusion as part of its evidence for the Government review, alongside existing work from the Health, Financial Services and Faith and Charities Focus Groups.

8. Presentation by Dr Chris Day updating the APPG on his case.

Dr Day provided a brief overview of his 9 year case, explaining the recent events and the latest judgement rejecting the claim brought by the BMA for the recovery of wasted costs arising from a previous hearing. This claim was supported by the Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt and Sir Norman Lamb, arising because a key witness had destroyed 90000 documents relating to the case and failed to attend the hearing. The Judge stated in the decision rejecting the claim, that evidence relating to the avoidable death of a patient was inadmissible and that Dr Day was unreasonable in bringing this claim.

This was followed by a discussion about the merits of the Employment Tribunal and the need for greater scrutiny.

The APPG concluding that the evidence was compelling and demonstrates the failure of PIDA in protecting whistleblowers against detriment and the public against harm.

APPG gave its full support to Dr Day.

**AP – MR/secretariat** – Letter to all Select Committee Chairs requesting an investigation into whistleblowing and the effectiveness of the Employment Tribunal.

9. MR and MT raised the issue of the importance of the APPG proposals in improving culture and the psychological safety of those whose responsibility it is to raise concerns including National Guardians and Whistleblowing Officers in light of new legislation including Mandatory Reporting, sharing their experience of the Health and Social Care round table on the 21st April.

10. JG raised the issue of the ongoing use of NDA’s across the university sector, NHS, Construction and Banking Sectors and the importance of the APPG proposals in putting an end to this. LW advised the APPG that the Legal Services Board is reviewing the use of NDA’s and would liaise with the secretariat and feedback the APPG findings.

The APPG agreed to continue to collate evidence of the mis-use of NDA’s and support Dame Maria Miller’s Bill.

**AP – Letter of support to MM**

11. Work plan - It was agreed that the APPG and its members will support the proposals set out in the Whistleblowing Bill and to make this a priority for the coming year using all upcoming legislation as an opportunity to include amendments following on from action over the last 12 months.

AP – All, identify all opportunities for the inclusion of amendments, PQ’s UQ’s and debates.

11.1. #WBAW follow up event. The APPG agreed that November was the right time for this to coincide with the first report of from the Government Review. It was agreed that this would be an event run over 2 days. Grant Thornton have offered to host one day.

**AP – Secretariat** to produce a plan and recommend dates for agreement.

MR proposed a vote of thanks to Grant Thornton, seconded by all members present.

12. AOB – nil.

13. Thanks and Close – MR welcomed new officers, thanked colleagues and the secretariat for and closed the Meeting at 1400.