

## Summary Sheet

### Standards and Ethics Committee Report

Standards and Ethics Committee Meeting – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018

**Title :** Consultation by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in relation to its review of local government ethical standards

### Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

### Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

N/A

### Report Author(s)

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### Ward(s) Affected

All

### Executive Summary

A report setting out the consultation being undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in relation to its review of local government ethical standards and arranging for the Standards and Ethics Committee to respond to the consultation.

### Recommendations

That the Committee:

- i) Consider the consultation document herewith and make appropriate comments for submission.
- ii) If appropriate establish a Working Party to meet once to formulate a full response to the consultation.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 - Committee on Standards in Public Life - Local government ethical standards consultation

**Background Papers**

None

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

None

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

**Title** : Consultation by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in relation to its review of local government ethical standards

## **1. Recommendations**

That the Committee:

- i) Consider the consultation document herewith and make appropriate comments for submission.
- ii) If appropriate establish a Working Party to meet once to formulate a full response to the consultation.

## **2. Background**

2.1 The Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) is carrying out a review of local government ethical standards. To inform this review the CSPL is carrying out a consultation, which runs from 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018 to 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

### **2.2 Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference for the review are to:

- examine the structures, processes and practices in local government in England for:
  - maintaining codes of conduct for local councillors
  - investigating alleged breaches fairly and with due process
  - enforcing codes and imposing sanctions for misconduct
  - declaring interests and managing conflicts of interest
  - whistleblowing
- assess whether the existing structures, processes and practices are conducive to high standards of conduct in local government
- make any recommendations for how they can be improved
- note any evidence of intimidation of councillors, and make recommendations for any measures that could be put in place to prevent and address such intimidation.

2.3 The review will consider all levels of local government in England, including town and parish councils, principal authorities, combined authorities (including Metro Mayors) and the Greater London Authority (including the Mayor of London).

## **2.4 Who can respond?**

Anyone with an interest may respond to the consultation questions. The Committee welcomes submissions from members of the public.

However, the consultation is aimed particularly at the following stakeholders, both individually and corporately:

- local authorities and standards committees
- local authority members (for example, Parish Councillors, District Councillors)
- local authority officials (for example, Monitoring Officers)
- think tanks with an interest or expertise in local government
- academics with interest or expertise in local government
- representative bodies or groups related to local government

Further information, submission guidelines, and consultation questions can be found in the consultation document, herewith at Appendix 1.

- 2.5 The matters covered within the review by the CSPL, in particular the sanctions available to the Council/Committee in relation to breaches of the Code of Conduct have concerned the Committee on several occasions in the past. As such it would be beneficial for the Standards and Ethics Committee to make a submission to the Consultation. While comments are welcomed from Committee members at the meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018, it may be most appropriate to establish a Working Party to meet separately (on one occasion) in order to formulate the Committees submission.

## **3. Key Issues**

- 3.1 The key issues are set out above

## **4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 4.1 Recommendations are set out above.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 As stated above, this report is to arrange for a response by the Standards and Ethics Committee to a consultation carried out by the CSPL in relation to its review of local government ethical standards

## **6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 6.1 Consultation responses need to be received by the CSPL by 5.00pm on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

## **7. Financial and Procurement Implications**

- 7.1 None

## **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 The Council and the Standards and Ethics Committee have a statutory duty to promote and maintain ethical standards. Responding to this consultation will be in accordance with that duty.

**9. Human Resources Implications**

9.1 None

**10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

10.1 None

**11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

11.1 None

**12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

12.1 None

**13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 None

**14. Accountable Officer(s)**

Dermot Pearson, Assistant Director, Legal Services