

Summary Sheet

Standards and Ethics Committee Report

Standards and Ethics Committee Meeting - 13th June 2019

Title : Committee on Standards in Public Life – Review of Local Government Ethical Standards – Best Practice Recommendations

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)

Stuart Fletcher, Legal & Democratic Services, Riverside House, Main Street,
Rotherham S60 1AE
Tel : 01709 823523

Ward(s) Affected

All

Executive Summary

An analysis of the Committee on Standards in Public Life recommendations of best practice which the Council already complies with, along with an action plan for the Council to implement the other best practice recommendations.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Agree to establish a Working Group to decide on and where possible implement the steps be taken to introduce all of the best practice recommendations set out in the Committee on Standards in Public Life report.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – CSPL Report Executive Summary, List of Recommendations and List of Best Practice

Appendix 2 – Analysis - List of Best Practice, Current RMBC Position, Action required

Background Papers

Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life Local Government Ethical Standards - A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-government-ethical-standardsreport>

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Title : Committee on Standards in Public Life – Review of Local Government Ethical Standards – Best Practice Recommendations

1. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Agree to establish a Working Group to decide on and where possible implement the steps be taken to introduce all of the best practice recommendations set out in the Committee on Standards in Public Life report.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Committee on Standards in Public Life (“CSPL”) advises the Prime Minister on ethical standards across the whole of public life in England. It monitors and reports on issues relating to the standards of conduct of all public office holders. CSPL is an independent advisory non-departmental public body.
- 2.2 As Members are aware, during 2018, the CSPL undertook a review of local government ethical standards. A copy of the full CSPL report is a background paper to this report, has been circulated previously to members of the Committee and is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-governmentethical-standards-report>. A copy of the Executive Summary, List of Recommendations and List of Best Practice was included in the papers for the last meeting and for ease of reference again appears at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The Review included a number of recommendations, along with a list of Best Practice. As stated in the previous report to Committee, many of the CSPL recommendations will require primary legislation; the implementation of which will be subject to Parliamentary timetabling. Some changes can be made through secondary legislation or amendments to the Local Government Transparency Code, which could be implemented by government relatively quickly.
- 2.4 The review also included a list of best practice. The best practice recommendations are set out at Appendix 2, and are directed to local authorities, and the CSPL stated in their report that they expect that any local authority can and should implement them. The CSPL intend to review the implementation of their best practice recommendations in 2020.
- 2.5 At the previous meeting the Committee resolved that an analysis be undertaken as to which of the best practice recommendations the Council was already complying with, and what changes would be needed in order to ensure compliance with all of the best practice. That analysis has been undertaken and is set out again in Appendix 2.
- 2.6 As such it is recommended that the Committee establish a Working Group in order that those actions within Appendix 2 which are required for the Council to comply with the CSPL best practice recommendations are undertaken.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The analysis of which of the best practice the Council currently complies with and what further action is required in order to comply with all of the best practice is set out at Appendix 2.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 The relevant recommendations are set out above.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 N/A

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 It is recommended that a working group be established at the meeting on 13th June 2019. This working group will then report back to the Standards and Ethics Committee meeting in September 2019, setting out how the best practice recommendations made in the Review of Local Government Ethical Standards have been/are to be implemented.
- 6.2 The CSPL has stated in its report that it will be reviewing the implementation of the best practice recommendations within relevant authorities in 2020.

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 maintain and promote ethical standards. The CSPL report sets out best practice as to how the Council should fulfil this statutory 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)

Bal Nahal, Head of Legal Services