

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Standards and Ethics Committee - 16 June 2022

Report Title

Committee on Standards in Public Life – Review of Local Government Ethical Standards – Government Response

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

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

A report setting out the government response to the Review of Local Government Ethical Standards undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

Recommendations

1. That the Committee consider the Government's response to the CSPL Review of Local Government Ethical Standards and as such consider whether any amendments to the Council's Code of Conduct are necessary.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 - Government response to the Committee's individual recommendations that were directed at Government

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

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Committee on Standards in Public Life – Review of Local Government Ethical Standards – Government Response

1. Background

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 As some Members will recall, during 2018, the CSPL undertook a review of local government ethical standards. This Committee contributed to the consultation which was undertaken in respect of the review. The CSPL report was published in January 2019 and reported to this Committee in March 2019 and subsequently in terms of implementation of recommendations. A copy of the full CSPL report is a background paper to this report, and is available on the following link [Local Government Ethical Standards January 2019 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- 1.3 Many of the recommendations within the CSPL review, for example in relation to the sanctions available to local authorities for breaches of the Code of Conduct, required amendments to legislation and as such were directed to the Government. The Government’s response to the report has recently been published, and appears at Appendix 1.
- 1.4 The Committee is asked to consider the Government response to the CSPL Review, and in particular the Government response to those Recommendations which refer to the Code of Conduct. As such the Committee is asked to consider whether any amendments to the adopted model Code of Conduct should be recommended to Council.
- 1.5 Further the Committee may wish to consider the Government responses to the recommendations made to it, and consider whether any further action is appropriate, such as making comments on the Government’s position to the LGA or the CSPL as the Committee has done previously.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The key issues are set out above.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 The recommended proposals are set out above.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 A comprehensive consultation exercise was undertaken by the CSPL when undertaking the Review of Local Government Ethical Standards.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

Any potential amendments to the Code of Conduct would be reported to the September meeting of the Standards and Ethics Committee for subsequent consideration by Council.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 None

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 The Council and the Standards and Ethics Committee have a statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. The CSPL review and any action taken as a result and consequential amendments to the relevant legislation which the Government implements will contribute to the maintenance of those high standards of conduct.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

None

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

None

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

None

11. Implications for Partners

11.1 The CSPL review and consequential amendments to the relevant legislation which the Government implements are relevant to Parish and Town Council members.

12. Risks and Mitigation

None

13. Accountable Officer(s)

Bal Nahal, Head of Legal Services

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