



REPORT OF: The Monitoring Officer

TO: Standards Committee

DATE: 20 July 2020

Subject:

Committee on Standards in Public Life - Local Government Ethical Standards

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide the Committee with a position statement on the recommendations made in the Committee on Standards in Public Life report of January 2019 on local government ethical standards.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to note the report.

3. BACKGROUND

The Committee on Standards in Public Life made a number of recommendations in their January 2019 [report](#) on local government ethical standards.

In that report, they identified some best practice recommendations which represent a benchmark for ethical practice and which they expect any local authority should implement. (See Appendix)

The Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal & Governance are reviewing the recommendations made and the Committee is asked to note that at the next meeting a full update will be provided alongside any recommendations for change, acknowledging the consultation on the revised Model Code of Conduct set out separately on this Agenda.

4. RATIONALE

The LGA has committed to reviewing the current model member code of conduct, as recommended by the Committee on Standards in Public Life's report into [Local Government Ethical Standards](#).

The Standards Committee has the role within the Council (as set out in the Constitution), to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members

and to assist councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members Code of Conduct.

In reviewing the best practice recommendations as set out in the Appendix the Head of Secretariat of the Committee on Standards in Public Life has written recently to Chief Executives advising that although they *“indicated that they would review the implementation of those best practice recommendations in 2020, We completely understand the unexpected and unprecedented pressures that local authorities are facing this year with COVID-19, so we are not of course asking for an immediate response.”*

Some of the recommendations are related also to LGA Code of Conduct report separately on this Agenda, however a full report will be presented to the Standards Committee at their next meeting in October addressing each individual recommendation although a number are already incorporated in the Council’s current arrangements

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The current Council Code of Conduct and complaint processes was adopted in line with the Council’s obligations under section 27 (2) of the Localism Act 2011 and complies with the requirements under section 28 of the Act.. Consideration of revisions reflecting on the Committee on Standards in Public Life’s report into local government ethical standards as regards Code of Conduct are being led by the LGA. Any final recommendations for adoption of revisions to the current Code of Conduct or to take on board the wider recommendations as set out in the attached would be subject to a further report at the next meeting.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

A governance framework in local authorities is necessary to promote and maintain high ethical standards, and to ensure public confidence.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None contained in this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

The Standards Committee regularly discusses the Council’s arrangements for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct, and the Report produced by the Committee on Standards in Public Life was widely circulated and followed a consultation process in 2018.

Chief Officer/Member

Contact Officer: David Fairclough

Date: 9 July 2020

Background Papers: Report by Committee on Standards in Public Life – Local Government Ethical Standards