

## Audit and Standards Committee

29<sup>th</sup> March 2018

### Local Government Ethical Standards Consultation

#### Recommendation

The Audit and Standards Committee is asked to consider the attached Committee on Standards in Public Life consultation document (review of local government ethical standards) and to identify any points which they would wish to see included in a response to the consultation.

#### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Committee on Standards in Public Life is undertaking a review of local government ethical standards.
- 1.2 Robust standards arrangements are needed to safeguard local democracy, maintain high standards of conduct, and to protect ethical practice in local government.
- 1.3 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
  - 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).

## 2.0 Options and Proposal

2.1 The consultation document is attached at **Appendix A**.

2.2 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)
- Independent Persons appointed under section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011

2.3 Further information, submission guidelines, and consultation questions can be found in the consultation document.

## 3.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

3.1 If the Committee takes a decision to submit a collective response to this consultation, it will need to be submitted by **17.00 on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018**.

## Background papers

None

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): None

Other members: None