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| To: | **Standards Committee** |
| Date: | **11 September 2018** |
| Report of: | **Monitoring Officer / Head of Law and Governance** |
| Title of Report: | **The Oxford City Council response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life – Local Government Ethical Standards Consultation** |

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| Summary and recommendations | |
| Purpose of report: | **This report informs the Committee of the Committee on Standards in Public Life – Local Government Ethical Standards Consultation and the Oxford City Council response to that consultation.** |
| Key decision: | No |
| Recommendation:  That the Standards Committee notes the report. | |
| Appendix 1 | The Oxford City Council response **to the Committee on Standards in Public Life – Local Government Ethical Standards Consultation** |

# Introduction and background

1. The Committee on Standards in Public Life is undertaking a review of local government ethical standards. The Committee on Standards in Public Life considers that robust standards arrangements are needed to safeguard local democracy, maintain high standards of conduct, and to protect ethical practice in local government. The consultation period ran from 29 January to 18 May 2018.
2. The Committee on Standards in Public Life welcomed submissions from members of the public but the consultation was 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
* 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

1. 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

1. 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. Details of the review can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-ethical-standards-stakeholder-consultation>.
3. The Oxford City Council response to the review is attached at Appendix 1.
4. As there was no scheduled meeting of the Standards Committee during the consultation period the Oxford City Council response was prepared by the Monitoring Officer and the Committee and Member Services Manager.
5. The [Committee on Standards in Public Life website](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-ethical-standards-stakeholder-consultation) states that they received 317 responses to the consultation and that they will publish the report by the end of 2018. The Committee and Member Services officers will monitor this and ensure that the report is circulated to all members of the Standards Committee once it is published.

**Legal implications**

1. None – for information only.

**Financial implications**

1. None – for information only.

**Risk management**

1. None – for information only.

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