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| To: | **Standards Committee** |
| Date: | **24 June 2019** |
| Report of: | **Monitoring Officer / Head of Law and Governance** |
| Title of Report:  | **Committee on Standards in Public Life – Local Government Ethical Standards**  |

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| Summary and recommendations |
| Purpose of report: | **This report informs the Committee of the progress in implementing the recommendations of the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on Local Government Ethical Standards.** |
| Key decision: | No |
| Recommendation: That the Standards Committee resolves to:1. note the report; and
2. consider whether there are any particular recommendations from the Committee on Standards in Public Life that the Committee would like to consider further at a future meeting.
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| Appendix 1 | **List of Recommendations** |
| Appendix 2 | **Publication of councillors’ and candidates’ home addresses** |
| Appendix 3 | **List of Best Practice**  |

# Introduction and background

1. In 2018 the Committee on Standards in Public Life (“the CSPL”) undertook a review of local government ethical standards. The CSPL considers that robust standards arrangements are needed to safeguard local democracy, maintain high standards of conduct, and to protect ethical practice in local government.
2. The CSPL published the [Local Government Ethical Standards report](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-government-ethical-standards-report) on 30 January 2019 (the CSPL report).
3. The CSPL report contains 26 recommendations which are listed in **Appendix 1**. Many of these recommendations will involve legislative change. The Government has yet to publish a formal response to the CSPL report.
4. In March 2019 the Minister for Local Government wrote to the leaders of all local authorities regarding changes to the rules applying to local government elections on the “publication of councillors’ and candidates’ home addresses” **(Appendix 2).** The changes presented were the subject of a recommendation in the Parliamentary Committee on Standards in Public Life report: ‘Review of Intimidation in Public Life’ and also form part of Recommendation 2 of the CSPL report. These changes were in place for the local and European elections in May 2019.
5. The same letter also referenced a further recommendation from that same report (Review of Intimidation in Public Life) concerning the “handling of sensitive interests” and the action on local authority monitoring officers to ensure that councillors required to declare pecuniary interests are aware of the sensitive interest provisions in the Localism Act 2011. This issue is included as part of the compulsory Code of Conduct training to be delivered by the Monitoring Officer to all City Councillors in June and July 2019.
6. The CSPL report includes 15 best practice proposals for local authorities to implement. The CSPL has said that it will review the progress on implementation in 2020. **Appendix 3** lists those best practice proposals and summarises the Council’s progress in implementing them. 10 of the best practice proposals are already in place and the remaining 5 are under consideration within the Council or in consultation with the other Oxfordshire authorities since they each adopted the same shared code of conduct. It is anticipated that the Council will be able to demonstrate compliance with each of the best practice recommendations by early 2020.

**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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