

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE REVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To note the Government's recent response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life's 2019 Review of Local Government Ethical Standards.
- 1.2 To consider whether there are implications for the Standard's Committee's role, including the Code of Conduct and local arrangements.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 This Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) completed their review of Local Government Ethical Standards in January 2019, making a set of 26 recommendations that the CSPL believed would "enable councillors to be held to account effectively and [...] enhance the fairness and transparency of the standards process".
- 2.2 Kemi Badenoch MP, Minister of State for Equalities and Levelling Up Communities, responded on behalf of H M Government on 18 March 2022. The response was in the form of a covering letter and individual responses to the CSPL's 19 recommendations. This letter is included as Appendix 1 to this report.

**3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 The Government did not accept the majority of CSPL's recommendations but expressed willingness to work with those in the sector to continue to explore opportunities to improve the existing standards systems.

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 There are no recommended options, but members may wish to assure themselves of current practices and explore specific actions with the Monitoring Officer.

5. **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

5.1 There are no financial or other resource implications arising from this response.

6. **OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

6.1 The Council's Annual Governance Statement recognises the importance of having in place a robust ethical standards framework to help promote high standards of ethical conduct by members. This report supports this aim by apprising members of H M Government's response to the national review of Local Government Ethical Standards.

6.4 There are no other relevant implications related to this report.

7. **OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

7.1 The completion of an Integrated Impact Assessment is not required.

8. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

8.1 The CSPL consulted widely on their work on Local Government Ethical Standards. The Standards Committee considered the consultation document on 21 March 2018 (minute 209 refers), replying to CSPL on 28 March 2018.

8.2 There are no conflicts of interest identified.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That the Standards Committee note H M Government's response to the CSPL's Review of Local Government Standards.

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Date: 22 June 2022

**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report –**

CSPL Review of Local Government Ethics (2019)

Government Response to Recommendations from CSPL (2022)