

# West Suffolk Joint Standards Committee

Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury councils

**West Suffolk**  
working together

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Local Government Ethical Standards: Consultation</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>JST/JT/18/001</b>	
<b>Report to and date/s:</b>	West Suffolk Joint Standards Committee – 16 April 2018	
<b>Lead officer:</b>	Leah Mickleborough Service Manager, Democratic Services / Monitoring Officer <b>Tel:</b> 01284 757162 <b>Email:</b> leah.mickleborough@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	The Committee for Standards in Public Life has recently launched a consultation into Local Government Ethical Standards. This report seeks the views of the Joint Standards Committee on the response from the West Suffolk Councils.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>It is recommended that the West Suffolk Joint Standards Committee agrees the Council's response to the consultation, as attached at Appendix A.</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Consultation:</b>	None	
<b>Alternative option(s):</b>	None proposed	
<b>Implications:</b>		
Are there any <b>financial</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>staffing</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>ICT</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>legal and/or policy</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>equality</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	No specific wards affected
<b>Background papers:</b> <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>	Consultation available at: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-ethical-standards-stakeholder-consultation">https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-ethical-standards-stakeholder-consultation</a>
<b>Documents attached:</b>	Appendix A: Proposed response to consultation

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## **1. Background**

- 1.1 In February, the Committee for Standards in Public Life announced a consultation on ethical standards in local government. This follows a long-confirmed intention of the Committee to review local government standards, following the removal of the former Standards Board for England regime as a result of the Localism Act.
- 1.2 The terms of reference of the review are:
  - 1.2.1 Examine the structures, processes and practices in local government in England for:
    - a. Maintaining codes of conduct for local councillors;
    - b. Investigating alleged breaches fairly and with due process;
    - c. Enforcing codes and imposing sanctions for misconduct;
    - d. Declaring interests and managing conflicts of interest; and
    - e. Whistleblowing.
  - 1.2.2 Assess whether the existing structures, processes and practices are conducive to high standards of conduct in local government;
  - 1.2.3 Make any recommendations for how they can be improved; and
  - 1.2.4 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.

## **2. West Suffolk Council Response**

- 2.1 The Commission have provided a number of questions for respondents to consider, but have also requested that submissions total less than 2,000 words.
- 2.2 A proposed submission is attached at Appendix A for the Standards Committee to consider. Given the number of questions, the proposed response has been focussed on those matters which have initiated most debate amongst committee members, and been highlighted with the Monitoring Officer, rather than answering the specific questions, to enable the Council's response to most effectively reflect its own concerns.