

# North Tyneside Council

## Report to Standards Committee

### Date: 8 March 2018

## ITEM 8

Title: Consultation – Local Government Ethical Standards

Report from Service Area: Law and Governance

Responsible Officer: Vivienne Geary, Monitoring Officer (Tel: 643 5339)

Wards affected: All

### PART 1

#### 1.1 Purpose

This report advises the Committee that the Committee on Standards in Public Life has launched its consultation to inform its review of local government ethical standards.

#### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

The Committee is requested to delegate authority to the Head of Law and Governance in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee to respond on behalf of the Committee to the consultation, taking into account and comments and views expressed by the Committee in the consideration of this matter.

#### 1.3 Information

1.3.1 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 Committee on Standards in Public Life has launched its consultation to inform its review of local government ethical standards. This consultation closes at 5pm on 18 May 2018.

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).

### 1.3.2 Who can respond?

Anyone with an interest may respond to the consultation questions. The Committee welcomes submissions from members of the public.

However, 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)
- 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

Further information, submission guidelines, and consultation questions can be found in the consultation document attached at Appendix 1.

## 1.4 Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Review of Local Government Ethical Standards: Stakeholder Consultation

## 1.5 Contact officers:

Vivienne Geary, Head of Law and Governance

(0191) 643 5339

Stephen Ballantyne, Lawyer Specialist: Governance and Employment

(0191) 643 5329

## 1.6 Background information:

None.