

# **Somerset West and Taunton Council**

## **Standards Committee – 26 July 2022**

### **Update on the Committee on Standards in Public Life Report**

**This matter is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts**

**Report Author: Amy Tregellas, Governance Manager & Monitoring Officer**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 In January 2019, the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) published their report on Local Government Ethical Standards and wrote to the Government, asking them to consider the recommendations set out in the report.
- 1.2 The Government responded to the recommendations in March 2022.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to update Members following the response from the Government.

#### **2 Recommendations**

That the Committee:

1. Notes the Committee on Standards in Public Life Report on Local Government Ethical Standards and the Government Response.

#### **3 Risk Assessment**

- 3.1 Having a robust Standards regime is a key part of the Council's ethical governance arrangements.

#### **4 Background and Full details of the Report**

- 4.1 In 2018/19 the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) carried out a review of the Ethical Standards framework particularly focusing on the period following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011.
- 4.2 The CSPL wanted to assure themselves that the current framework is conducive to promoting and maintaining the standards of behaviour and conduct expected by the public.
- 4.3 The CSPL review took place in 2018. The review covered all local authorities in England, including town and parish councils.
- 4.4 Information was gathered through public consultation (319 responses were received), 30 individual stakeholder meetings, 5 visits to local authorities in England and desk based research. This work culminated in a 110 pages report.

- 4.5 The Report (attached as Appendix A) was published in January 2019 and made a number of recommendations which required changes to primary legislation, secondary legislation and the Local Government Transparency Code.
- 4.6 The Minister of State for Equalities and Levelling Up Communities responded on behalf of the Government in March 2022 (attached as Appendix B).

## **5 Links to Corporate Strategy**

- 5.1 Having a robust ethical governance framework is a fundamental part of delivering the Council's Corporate Strategy.

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

None arising from this report

## **7 Unitary Council Financial Implications and S24 Direction Implications**

- 7.1 There are no Unitary Council Financial Implications or S24 Direction Implications.

## **8 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 None arising from this report

## **9 Climate and Sustainability Implications**

- 9.1 None arising from this report

## **10 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications**

- 10.1 None arising from this report

## **11 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 11.1 None arising from this report

## **12 Social Value Implications**

- 12.1 None arising from this report

## **13 Partnership Implications**

- 13.1 None arising from this report

## **14 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

- 14.1 None arising from this report

## **15 Asset Management Implications**

- 15.1 None arising from this report

## **16 Data Protection Implications**

16.1 None arising from this report

## 17 Consultation Implications

17.1 None arising from this report

### Democratic Path:

- **Standards Committee – Yes**
- **Cabinet/Executive – No**
- **Full Council – No**

**Reporting Frequency: Ad-hoc**

### List of Appendices

Appendix A	Local Government Ethical Standards Report: A review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life
Appendix B	Government Response to the Report.

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