

4 DECEMBER 2020

PC13-20 | STANDARDS MATTER 2: PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND PUBLIC SECTOR SURVEYS

Executive Summary

The Committee on Standards in Public Life has recently launched a consultation as part of its review into the institutions, processes and structures in place to support high standards of conduct. The terms of reference of the review are to: review the evidence as to how well ethical standards are upheld in public life in the UK, review the evidence on the strength of the UK's arrangements for regulating and promoting ethical standards, review the adequacy and continuing relevance of the Seven Principles of Public Life, identify examples of best practice in the regulation of ethical standards, identify examples of best practice in the promotion of cultures that celebrate and encourage high ethical standards. NALC will be responding to this consultation. The main consultation document is available [here](#).

As at 4 December 2020 CoSiPL have extended their consultation which will now conclude with final responses to it of 29 January 2021. NALC is now accordingly extending its own response deadline for the local council sector to inform its own response - please see the extended sector deadline at foot of this document.

Consultation questions

NALC will be responding to the consultation questions as follows:

Consultation Questions:

Question 1: Standards of Conduct in the UK

A. How well do you think ethical standards - as enshrined by the Seven Principles of Public Life - are upheld in public life today?

B. Do you believe that there have there been any notable shifts in approaches or attitudes to ethical standards in public life in recent years?

C. What do you see as the most significant threats to ethical standards in public life today?

Question 2: The Seven Principles of Public Life

A. Do the Seven Principles of Public Life accurately describe the appropriate ethical responsibilities for those in public roles, including both political and non-political office-holders?

B. Would you amend or replace any of the principles or their descriptors? If so, how?

Question 3: The UK's arrangements for regulating standards

A. Are you confident that the UK's arrangements for regulating ethical standards are robust and effective?

B. Are there any areas of public life where regulation on issues of ethical standards is not strong enough?

Question 4: Best practice in standards regulation

A. What makes an effective standards regulator?

B. Do the UK's standards regulators have the right powers and remit to act effectively?

C. Should the independence of standards regulators be enhanced and protected, and if so, how?

Question 5: Creating ethical cultures

A. How can the Seven Principles best be embedded within a public sector organisation's working culture?

B. What are the most significant obstacles to embedding high ethical standards in a public sector organisation?

Your Views

Please email your responses to this consultation to policycomms@nalc.gov.uk by 17.00 on 15 January 2021 [please note extended deadline]. County associations are asked to forward this briefing onto all member local (parish and town) councils in their area.