

SUBJECT:	Committee on Standards in Public Life Annual Report
REPORT OF:	Monitoring Officer
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Joanna Swift Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
REPORT AUTHOR	Joanna Swift : monitoringofficer@chiltern.gov.uk Tel : 01494 732761
WARD/S AFFECTED	None

1. Purpose of Report

This report draws members' attention to the Committee for Standards in Public Life (CSPL) Annual Report for 2017-18 and its Forward Plan for the coming year.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report is noted.

2. Reasons for Recommendations

Awareness of the work undertaken by the CSPL in the area of standards and ethics supports the Committee's general responsibility to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.

3. Content of Report

- 3.1 The Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) is an independent advisory, non-departmental body which advises the Prime Minister on ethical standards across the whole of public life in England. It monitors and reports on issues relating to the standards of conduct of all public office holders including members of local authorities.
- 3.2 The CSPL publishes an annual report and an extract from its 2017 -18 Report is attached as an Appendix. This contains the Foreword by the Chairman, an overview of work undertaken during the year, its current work plan and Watching Brief for 2018-19. The full document is available on the CSPL website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/annual-report-2017-18>
- 3.3 The CSPL is currently undertaking a review of local government ethical standards. This was launched in January with a three month public consultation and over 300 submissions were received. The review is considering the structure, processes and practices for local government standards, including codes of conduct, investigatory processes, the roles of Monitoring Officers, Clerks and Independent Persons. The CSPL acknowledges that high standards in local government are essential to safeguarding local democracy and maintaining public trust.
- 3.4 Phase one of this review was completed in June and the second phase is on-going with a programme of visits to councils and discussions with councillors. The CSPL aim to publish their report by December and this will be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

3.5 Members will note that the CSPL Watching Brief for 2018-19 includes lobbying, party funding, conflicts of interest and good governance in academies and commissioning and good governance in the National Health Service.

4. Consultation

Not applicable at this stage

5. Options

None

6. Corporate Implications

Financial – None

Legal – None

Risks issues – Not applicable.

Equalities - None

7. Links to Council Policy Objectives

Whilst there are no direct links to the main policy objectives, the Council has a duty under the Localism Act to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.

8. Next Steps

A further report will be brought to the Committee in 2019, once the CSPL publish their review of local government ethical standards.

Background Papers:	None except those referred to in the report.
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