

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Standards Committee **DATE:** 13th February, 2008

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WARDS: All

PART I
FOR DECISION

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION PAPER - ORDERS AND REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE CONDUCT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS.

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Committee the Department of Communities and Local Government's Consultation Paper on Orders and Regulations Relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members (circulated separately) and to submit the Council's response within the deadline of 15th February, 2008.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Committee resolves that the responses on the Consultation Paper as set out in Appendix 1 to this report (as amended, if appropriate) be submitted to Department of Communities and Local Government.

3. Key Policy Implications

3.1 It is important that the public have confidence in all of the Council's decision making processes and the proposed arrangements set out in the Consultation Paper will play a significant part in achieving this.

4. Other Implications

4.1 There are no human rights, legal, financial or staffing implications arising out of the report or the Consultation. Paper.

5. Background/Supporting Information

5.1 The Local Government White Paper, '*Strong and Prosperous Communities*', issued in October 2006, outlined the Government's proposals to introduce a more proportionate and locally based decision-making regime for the investigation and determination of all but the most serious of misconduct allegations against members of local authorities.

- 5.2 For the new, reformed ethical regime based on this devolutionary approach to become operational, the DCLG need to make regulations and orders under the Local Government Act 2000 (the 2000 Act) as amended by Part 10 of the 2007 Act to implement the proposals set out in the Local Government White Paper to deliver a more locally based conduct regime for local government members, with local standards committees making initial assessments of misconduct allegations and most investigations and determinations of cases taking place at local level.
- 5.3 In its Consultation Paper the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is consulting on the detailed arrangements for putting into effect the revised ethical regime; other undertakings relating to the operation of the regime in respect of the political restrictions imposed on certain local government posts; the maximum pay of political assistants and proposals to amend the Relevant Authorities (Standards Committees) (Dispensations) Regulations 2002, with a view to resolving concerns which have been raised by some local authorities on the operation of some aspects of the current provisions.
- 5.6 Members will see that DCLG have asked local authorities to respond to 16 specific questions. The proposed answers to these questions together with some general comments are set out in Appendix 1 of this report for Members' consideration/approval.

6. Background Papers

None