



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Cllr Sue Baxter
National Association of Local Councils
109 Great Russell Street
London
WC1B 3LD

Luke Hall MP
Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government**

Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Tel: 0303 444 3450
Email: luke.hall@communities.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/mhclg

Our Ref:10377588

4 March 2021

Dear Sue,

Thank you for your email dated 10 February, to Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP, regarding the Government's response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life's (CSPL's) review of Local Government Ethical Standards. I appreciate how important this matter is to you and I am grateful to you for contacting this department with your concerns.

I absolutely agree with you that high standards of conduct are needed at all levels of Government; It is crucial that local authority members inspire the confidence and trust of their electorate and the Government is committed to supporting local government to build and maintain its reputation for operating with high ethical standards. I appreciate your offer and desire to work constructively with the Government to help strengthen the ethical standards framework for local government.

I acknowledge that the Government response to the CSPL's review is overdue and apologise for the fact that publication has been held up, firstly due to the 2019 election and then subsequently in the urgent business of responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, I can assure you that the Government recognises it has a key part to play in ensuring the standards framework is clear, effective and serves to enhance the reputation of local government. We have considered the Committee's recommendations carefully, including the recommendation to introduce a time-limited sanction of suspension for councillors for the most serious incidences of misconduct, and we intend to publish our formal response shortly.

Our intention is to publish a consultation on the recommendations that we agreed to alongside the Government response. The scope of some of our consultation questions are likely to go beyond the Committee's recommendations as we are keen to take this opportunity to explore ways that we can further strengthen the standards arrangements for local government.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to write to me about this important subject.

LUKE HALL MP