

**Bolsover District Council**

**Standards**

**15<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

Election Candidates and Campaigns: A Consultation on New Laws

**Report of the Head of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer**

This report is public.

**Purpose of the Report**

- To provide Committee on a consultation regarding new laws in relation to Election Candidates and Campaigns.
- To create a collective response from the Standards Committee to the questions set out in the appendix to this report.

**1 Report Details**

Earlier this year, the Committee on Standards in Public Life published a wide-ranging review of the impact of intimidation in public life with a focus on the role of social media.

The Committee made recommendations for social media, political parties, police and local government and suggested the government consult on ways in which electoral law could be changed to protect candidates and their supporters. A Cabinet Office consultation, which closes on 22 October, takes this forward.

The intimidation of candidates and campaigners may threaten the integrity of public service and the democratic process but is not at present covered by existing electoral law. The first proposal in this consultation is intended to remedy this situation.

The scope will cover candidates and campaigners at all polls, in general elections and local elections, and will be extended to campaigners in referendum campaigns.

The consultation also covers clarification of the offence of undue influence or intimidation of voters, including a controversial proposal to include a specific reference to intimidation at polling stations and the potential extension of the requirement of an imprint from written to online campaign materials.

The consultation is of relevance to England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

The jurisdiction and extent of different aspects of the consultation are complex and are highlighted in the course of the briefing. All elements will apply to UK wide General Elections.

This briefing will be of interest to all elected members, chief officers, and those with electoral and equalities responsibilities.

Responses to the consultation can be made to the address given in the consultation document or by email to elections@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

**The consultation closes on 22 October 2018.** Respondents are asked to indicate in what capacity they are writing.

## **2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation**

To raise awareness of the consultation and encourage Members to participate on an individual basis.

To gain a collective view from the Standards Committee.

## **3 Consultation and Equality Impact**

N/A

## **4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

N/A

## **5 Implications**

### **5.1 Finance and Risk Implications**

There are no direct financial implications with regard to the report.

### **5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection**

There are no legal or data protection implications arising from the report.

### **5.3 Human Resources Implications**

N/A.

## **6 Recommendation**

That Standards Committee Members consider the consultation questions attached to the appendix and submit a group response.

## **7 Decision Information**

<p><b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p><i>BDC: Revenue - £75,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £150,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £250,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
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<b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b> (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
<b>Has the relevant Portfolio Holder been informed</b>	Yes
<b>District Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework</b>	All

**8 Document Information**

<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
1	Consultation Questions
<b>Background Papers</b> (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Contact Number</b>
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