

ANGUS COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

25 JANUARY 2000

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

8 FEBRUARY 2000

STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE - THE SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE'S PROPOSALS

**JOINT REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE, DIRECTOR OF LAW AND ADMINISTRATION AND
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

ABSTRACT

This Report seeks agreement to the terms of a Council response to the consultation paper by the Scottish Executive entitled "Standards in Public Life".

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:-

1. notes that, in the light of the timescale for submission of comments, the attached comments have been submitted to the Scottish Executive, following consultation with the Convener and Vice Convener of this Committee; and
2. considers whether they would wish to make any further comments to the Scottish Executive in this regard.

2. NEW ETHICAL FRAMEWORK

A copy of the consultation document entitled "Standards in Public Life" which seeks comments on the proposed Ethical Standards in Public Life etc (Scotland) Bill is in the Members' Lounge. In the foreword to the document, Scottish Ministers point out that the proposed Bill draws on the Scottish tradition of public service and on the principles of openness, accountability and transparency. The aim is to support and buttress high standards of public service - high standards must not only be maintained, they must also be seen to be maintained. The Bill is intended to ensure that both elected Councillors and appointed members of public bodies will be governed by the same standards. It is also intended to rectify the unsatisfactory situation where there is no effective sanction if current standards are breached.

3. REPEAL OF SECTION 2A (SECTION 28)

The Scottish Executive also plans to use the Bill as the opportunity to repeal Section 2A of the Local Government Act 1986 (more commonly known as Section 28), the legislation which bars Councils from "intentionally promoting homosexuality" in schools or through publishing material or funding organisations. Scottish Ministers state that the Scottish Executive is committed to the principles of equal opportunities and to tackling exclusion in all walks of life in Scotland and that these principles apply to sexual orientation as much as to differences of sex and race.

4. CONSULTATION PERIOD

Comments on the consultation paper and draft Bill were sought by 14 January. In order to meet this timescale, comments were prepared and discussed with the Convener and Vice Convener of this Committee. It has been made clear in the Council's response that further comments may be submitted following consideration by this Committee.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this Report.

6. CONSULTATION

Consultation has taken place with the Director of Finance.

A B Watson, Chief Executive
Catherine A Coull, Director of Law and Administration
Jim Anderson, Director of Education

Note: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing this report.