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Mark Lloyd
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Committee on Standards in Public Life

13 December 2017

Dear Mark Lloyd,

Intimidation in Public Life: A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life

I enclose a copy of the Committee on Standards in Public Life's report, Intimidation in Public Life, which was published today.

The increasing prevalence of intimidation in our public life, including of Parliamentary candidates at elections, should concern everyone who cares about our democracy. There has been persistent, vile and shocking intimidatory behaviour, and it is clear that much of this is targeted at certain groups.

We present a full body of evidence showing the extent and seriousness of the problem. We have found intimidation takes place across the political spectrum, both in terms of those engaging in intimidation and those receiving it.

We found evidence the requirement that candidates standing for election as local councillors must publish their home address on the ballot paper has enabled intimidatory behaviour. We believe there is cross-party consensus for legislation to remove this requirement, and call on the government to bring legislation forward which would enable candidates instead to publish the ward in which they live on the ballot paper.

As you are aware, provisions already exist to prevent local authority members' particular financial and other interests being publicly declared where there is a risk of intimidation to them or their family ("sensitive interests"), but we heard evidence that councillors may not always be aware of these requirements. We therefore recommend that Local Authority Monitoring Officers should ensure that local authority members required to declare pecuniary interests are aware of these provisions.

As I said in my letter to you on 28 November, we have committed to considering further the issue of the intimidation of local councillors as part of our forthcoming review of local government standards. I am very grateful that, in your reply on 5 December, you anticipated making a full contribution to that work.

Addressing this important issue in our public life will require a committed and concerned approach from a number of individuals and organisations. We will be monitoring progress on the implementation of our recommendations, and will keep in touch with you over the coming months in that regard.

We expect a comprehensive response to this issue. Determined action on the part of all those involved is required, as the cost to our democracy of not engaging constructively to resolve these issues is too high.

Yours sincerely,



Lord Bew
Chair

Selflessness | Integrity | Objectivity | Accountability | Openness | Honesty | Leadership

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**Committee on
Standards in
Public Life**

Mark Lloyd
Chief Executive
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28 November 2017

Dear Mark

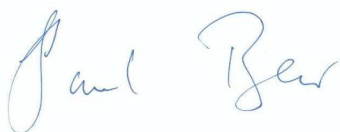
Thank you for meeting with Dr Jane Martin as part of the Committee's review into the intimidation of Parliamentary candidates and others in public life.

At that meeting, you informed Dr Martin that you had received reports, through your party groups, of intimidation directed towards local councillors, and stated that you believed that intimidation of local councillors should be considered by the Committee alongside intimidation of Parliamentary candidates.

The terms of reference for our current review require us to focus on Parliamentary candidates. However, in the light of the concerns you raise, I wanted to let you know that the Committee intends to seek further evidence in relation to the intimidation of local councillors, as well as consider preventative measures and sources of support specific to local government, as part of our review of local government standards. This review is due to commence in January 2018. I hope that the LGA will be able to share its expertise with the Committee as part of that review.

I hope that this is reassuring to you.

Yours sincerely,



Lord (Paul) Bew
Chair, Committee on Standards in Public Life

From the Chief Executive
Mark Lloyd

Lord Bew
Chair
Committee on Standards in Public Life
Room GC.05
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

5 December 2017

Dear *Lord Bew*

Thank you for your letter of 28 November concerning the Committee's review into the intimidation of Parliamentary candidates and others in public life, and for the subsequent invitation to the review's launch event.

The LGA appreciated the opportunity to contribute to the review, and I'm aware that the Leader of our Independent Group Councillor Marianne Overton met with Committee representatives following our meeting.

I am pleased to hear that the issue of intimidation of local councillors will be picked up as part of the review into local government standards. The LGA looks forward to hearing more about the terms of reference for that review, and to making a full contribution as it progresses.

Yours sincerely



Mark Lloyd
Chief Executive