

# Press release: Local government ethical standards: Committee calls for evidence

The Committee on Standards in Public Life has today [called for evidence](#) about how local councils are supporting good ethical standards in local government in light of changes over the past ten years.

Committee member, [Dr Jane Martin CBE](#) who will be leading on the review, said:

“Robust arrangements to support ethical standards are needed to safeguard local democracy and facilitate the representative process, but also to ensure high standards of conduct by councillors. The Committee considers it is timely to undertake a health check of local government so the public can have confidence that the standards arrangements supporting local democracy are working effectively.

“The Committee has maintained a longstanding interest in local government ethical standards, and regularly receives correspondence from members of the public expressing their concern about this issue.

“We are keen to hear first-hand how effective councils’ standards arrangements are, in light of the substantial changes in the standards landscape for local government over the last ten years.

“We are interested in how local authorities have designed their complaints handling, scrutiny and sanctions regimes in order to maintain excellent ethical standards and how members, local government officials and the public experience them.

“The Committee would like to hear from councils and individuals who can help us understand how ethical standards issues are dealt with by local authorities.”

Based on the submissions to this review and meetings with key stakeholders, we intend to publish our findings and recommendations late in 2018.

## Notes to Editors

1. Interview requests and media enquiries should go to Maggie O’Boyle on 07880 740627.
2. The independent Committee on Standards in Public Life advises the Prime Minister on ethical standards across the whole of public life in the UK. It monitors and reports on issues relating to the standards of conduct of all public office holders.

3. The Committee has an independent Chair. Its membership is comprised of four independent members and a representative from each of the Labour, Conservative, and Liberal Democratic parties.
4. You can follow the Committee on Twitter [@PublicStandards](#)

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## [News story: Have your say on marine planning in England](#)

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is inviting stakeholders to get involved in the next stage of the marine planning process for the North East, North West, South East and South West.

Workshops are running throughout February and March and will provide an ideal opportunity for stakeholders to check progress towards the development of marine plans in their area. The workshops will be supported by an opportunity to respond on-line.

The engagement will focus on:

- Draft marine plan area visions.
- Draft options to address issues in each marine plan area.

For more information on marine plan areas and to subscribe to marine planning follow the links below:

[North West](#)

[South East](#)

[South West](#)

[North East](#)

Consultation workshops are taking place on the following dates and locations:

Area	Location	Venue	Date
North West	Whitehaven	Beacon Portal	07/02/18
North West	Liverpool	Adelphi Hotel	08/02/18
South East	Chatham	Sun Pier House	21/02/18
South East	London	The Wesley Euston	22/02/18
South West	Newquay	The Headland Hotel	06/03/18
South West	Plymouth	Future Inn	07/03/18
South West	Weston-super-Mare	The Winter Gardens	08/03/18

Area	Location	Venue	Date
North East Seahouses		The Hub	20/03/18
North East Newcastle		Copthorne Hotel	21/03/18
North East Middlesbrough		Middlesbrough Football Club	22/03/18

You can [sign up](#) for the workshops now.

## Further information

- There are 11 English marine plan areas, including inshore and offshore areas. Each area will be covered by a marine plan by 2021 with a 20 year view of activities.
- Marine planning addresses the key issues for the marine area, including the coast, estuaries and tidal waters, as well as developments that impact on these areas. The plans will include a vision and objectives together with policies to achieve them.
- Marine plans are used by public authorities as part of the decision-making process for all new activities and developments in or affecting the marine area.
- Marine plans build on the requirements of the Marine and Coastal Access Act and the Marine Policy Statement.

## About marine planning

MMO has produced a short animation called 'What is marine planning?' to explain marine planning.

[Video](#)

Find out more about [marine planning](#).

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## [Press release: Award-winning Geovation Programme seeks new GeoTech and PropTech disruptors](#)

Location and property data start-ups could be in line to receive funding, business support and the strategic backing of Ordnance Survey (OS) and HM

## Land Registry (HMLR)

The Geovation Programme is now [accepting applications](#) from start-ups using location and/or land and property data in their products and services. If selected to join the Programme, the start-ups will each receive up to £20,000 in funding and a range of resources and services to help develop their businesses. This includes access to experienced software developers, geospatial expertise from OS, property expertise from HMLR, and mentoring to assist with business proposals and investor relationships.

Geovation has been specially designed to offer the best possible support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), start-ups and individuals that are using geospatial technology and data to create new products and services. At the start of 2018, Geovation was presented with an international award from the Geospatial World Forum who awarded Geovation its [Geospatial Hub of the Year Award](#). The jury noted that “Geovation has successfully connected individuals and SMEs and created opportunities, envisioned solutions and brought differentiation”.

Geovation members are using location and property data and new technologies to help transform a variety of sectors, including property, mobility and transport, infrastructure, energy, health, and connectivity. Since opening its doors two years ago, Geovation has seen the ventures it has supported raise £12.7 million in investment and created 90 new jobs.

Head of Geovation Alex Wrottesley said:

We offer an exceptional launchpad to PropTech and GeoTech businesses. Programme Members can expect funding, space and data, experienced technical development capacity, and tailored mentorship and support to help develop their business ideas. To be recognised by our international peers with an award for facilitating industry collaboration and adding value to projects critical to the success of the nation’s digital economy was pleasing and unexpected. The recognition is also a compliment to the excellent work of the Geovation team and the support we receive from Ordnance Survey and HM Land Registry. We’re very much future-focused and are looking forward to meeting and working with next group of Programme Members, and being a part of their story and them ours.

John Abbott, Director of Digital, Data and Technology at HM Land Registry, said:

The programme is delivering terrific results, so we are delighted to continue our support for the next tranche of start-ups working on property-related services to make transactions simpler, faster and cheaper for everyone. We expect to see the benefits of this investment across legal, financial and property sectors – stimulating growth for the wider economy and bringing more opportunities to the UK.

Miranda Sharp, Director of Innovation at Ordnance Survey, said:

Combining new technologies and innovative business models to address social and economic challenges lies at the heart of the Government's modern Industrial Strategy. Geovation embodies this. It's an exciting time for Ordnance Survey, and for the geospatial community at large. With the emergence of technologies that have the potential to transform our world and the way we live and do business, I feel we're on the verge of something special. It will be a data-driven world where place is the common factor, which is going to be core to getting value from data connecting, and Geovation is at the heart of this.

For further information, examples of businesses, interviews, and images, contact Keegan Wilson at Ordnance Survey:

## About Geovation

[Geovation](#) is an Ordnance Survey Initiative in association with HM Land Registry, which is dedicated to supporting open innovation and collaboration using location and property data. Location is at the heart of many of the most successful digital products and services. Land and property is the foundation of our national economy.

## About HM Land Registry

1. HM Land Registry is a government department created in 1862. It operates as an executive agency and a trading fund and its running costs are covered by the fees paid by the users of its services. Its ambition is to become the world's leading land registry for speed, simplicity and an open approach to data.
  2. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth in excess of £4 trillion, including around £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains more than 25 million titles, which show evidence of ownership, for some 85% of the land mass in England and Wales.
  3. For further information about HM Land Registry visit [our website](#).
  4. Follow us on Twitter [@HMLandRegistry](#), our [blog](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).
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## News story: New accountability rules for insurers

The new rules will give consumers peace of mind that those at the top of the big insurers will be held personally responsible for any wrongdoing. The rules will also ensure that a code of conduct is set out for all staff, and that employees who do a job where they could do significant harm to consumers, or to the UK's financial stability, are approved annually by their firm.

John Glen, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury and City Minister said:

Britain's first-class regulation is one of many reasons our country is so attractive for financial services investment. The Senior Managers and Certification Regime plays a big part in this, ensuring that those at the top display the behaviours and values that the British people expect.

The extension of the Regime to insurance firms will ensure individual accountability for misconduct at the most senior levels within the insurance sector.

The Senior Managers and Certification Regime, first introduced for banks and building societies in 2016, will be extended to include insurance firms from 10 December 2018. Currently the Regime applies to banks, building societies, credit unions, investment firms and UK branches of foreign banks. The government previously legislated to extend the Regime across all financial services firms. The extension into insurance is the start of this.

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) are also consulting on how the Regime will apply when it is extended to include smaller firms regulated only by the FCA (also known as solo-regulated firms).

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## News story: Improving health through digital innovations: apply for funding

Consultant meeting with a patient to discuss healthcare options.

Innovate UK has up to £8 million to invest in new technologies through the digital health technology catalyst.

## **Addressing priority areas for health services**

The catalyst was set up under the government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund to address challenges around the development of digital health innovations. Digital technology is seen as a significant opportunity to improve outcomes for patients and at a lower cost.

Projects could be in a number of priority areas for health services. This includes cancer diagnosis and treatment, mental health services, diabetes reduction, emergency care provision, management of primary care workload and enabling patient choice.

They could also include health services to maintain or improve care while reducing costs.

## **A range of technologies could attract funding**

We expect to fund projects across a range of technologies including:

- virtual and augmented reality
- artificial intelligence and machine learning
- use of sensors, internet of things, and networks
- informatics, data analytics and process

They could help:

- clinical decision-making
- patients with their treatments
- improve disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and long-term care

## **Competition information**

- the competition opens on 15 February 2018, and the deadline is at midday on 18 April 2018
- projects must be led by an SME working with at least one partner
- we expect projects to range in size between £300,000 and £1 million and to last up to 30 months
- businesses could attract up to 70% of their project costs
- a briefing event takes place on 20 February 2018