



**TITLE: THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND ANNUAL REVIEW  
2004-05**

**TO/ON: STANDARDS COMMITTEE 5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2005**

**BY: MARK WESTON, HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC  
SERVICES**

**LEAD MEMBER: JANET GRAHAM (HUMAN RESOURCES AND  
MEMBER DEVELOPMENT)**

**STATUS: FOR PUBLICATION**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To inform Members of the Standards Board for England Annual Review 2004-05.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 To note the report.

**3. REPORT AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS AND TIMETABLE  
FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

3.1 The Standards Board for England was established as an independent body under the Local Government Act 2000. It oversees and promotes the Members' Code of Conduct – a set of rules defined by Parliament that Members of Local Authorities must adhere to. It details how Members should behave, relating specifically to issues such as the misuse of Authority resources, and the recording of interest on a public register. It is compulsory for all Members to sign up to the Code.

3.2 The Board is responsible for promoting high standards of conduct and investigating allegations of misconduct by Members.

3.3 The Standards Board has now issued its Annual Review for 2004-05. A copy of the Review is attached to this report.

3.4 Members will note from the report that the Standards Board for England met a number of its key objectives last year including:-

- Clearing a backlog of 400 investigations that built up while they were waiting for the full legislative framework to be put in place.

- Speeding up their investigations – completing nearly twice as many investigations this year than in 2003-04.
- Halving the time taken to make a decision on whether to investigate a complaint.
- Filtering out malicious, vexatious and tit for tat complaints.
- Focusing positively on cases with the potential to damage local democracy.
- Enabling successive local investigations – for example by giving guidance and helping authorities establish their processes.
- Encouraging Local Authorities to take leadership on ethics.
- Developing the ethical governance toolkit jointly with the Audit Commission and Improvement and Development Agency.

#### **4. CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES**

##### **4.1 FINANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

4.1.1 Not applicable.

##### **4.2 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICAL ARRANGEMENTS**

4.2.1 Member consideration of the Standards Board for England Annual Review 2004-05 will assist Members in understanding the workings of the Standards Board.

##### **4.3 HUMAN RESOURCES**

4.3.1 Not applicable.

#### **5. RISK**

5.1 There are no risk arising out of this report.

#### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM THE REPORT**

6.1 None.

#### **7. EQUALITIES ISSUES ARISING FROM THE REPORT**

7.1 None.

#### **8. WARDS AFFECTED**

8.1 None.

## **9. CONSULTATIONS**

9.1 None.

Background documents: None.

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