

Title: **Standards Board for England Bulletin –  
September Issue**

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**1 Purpose**

To inform members of the September Issue of the Bulletin produced by the Standards Board for England (attached as Appendix 1).

**2 Background**

- The Standards Board publishes a Bulletin every two months. It provides policy information and news on Standards issues. It is also available on the Standards Board web-site.

**Lobby Groups and Single Issue Campaigns (page 2)**

The Bulletin clarifies the position under the new Code of Conduct of members who are also members of lobby or campaign groups.

Members are required to declare a personal interest if they are a member of a group that lobbies or campaigns about an issue that comes up for discussion or decision at their authority. Such members will not, however, have a prejudicial interest unless the decision affects their financial position or relates to a licensing or regulatory matter.

**Local Filter for Code of Conduct Complaints (page 4)**

This item in the bulletin highlights two key changes that will be brought in with the enactment of the Local Government's Public Involvement in Health Bill.

This will involve Standards Committees receiving all complaints relating to the Code. Standards Committees will need to decide whether to refer complaints

for further action locally, to refer them to the Standards Board or whether no further action should be taken.

Where complaints are to be dealt with locally, Standards Committees will be able to ask for an investigation to be undertaken and will also be able to deal with cases by alternative means such as mediation or training. Serious cases can be referred to the Adjudication Panel for England. The Bulletin sets out estimates of the Standards Board on the impact on local authorities that this increased role will bring about. The Standards Board estimates that based on an average of six complaints per year there will be a referral rate of 25% to local investigation giving an average of one or two investigations per year per authority.

The Standards Board intends to produce guidance on the operation of the local filter system and it is to be noted that they will also be monitoring the operation of the local filter once the new arrangements come into being.

## **6 Recommendation**

Members are asked to consider this Bulletin.