

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 21<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2012**

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**From:** James Cessford [mailto:James.Cessford@standardsboard.gov.uk]

**Sent:** 17 January 2012 16:39

**To:** Sarah Sternberg

**Subject:** Cessation letter CRM:00872084

Dear Ms Sternberg

As you may recall, we recently wrote to you outlining the government's proposed timeframe for the intended abolition of the "Standards Board Regime", including Standards for England, through the Localism Act 2011.

We are now able to confirm, following the making of the relevant Commencement Order, that our regulatory role in handling cases on your behalf and issuing guidance will cease from 31 January 2012.

As previously outlined this means that, from the end of this month, Standards for England will no longer have powers to accept new referrals from local standards committees or conduct investigations into complaints against members.

Existing referrals or investigations which we have been unable to complete by the close of January will be transferred back to the relevant authority for completion. However, any complaints which are currently being handled locally will need to continue as will any matters relating to completed investigations or appeals which have been referred to the First Tier Tribunal. We expect DCLG to make further provisions relating to these cases and the introduction of the new framework in due course.

Where we have cases which are unlikely to be completed by the month end, we have already contacted the monitoring officers in question to agree handover arrangements.

Standards for England staff will continue to be on-hand between now and the end of January to facilitate the transfer of existing referrals and open cases back to local standards committees, as well as to provide advice and guidance on the current framework.

However, please note, our role in providing guidance on the current standards framework will cease from 31 January. This means that our Guidance Enquiries function, including the Standards for England 'Enquiries' telephone, email and postal services, and the online Standards Forum will no longer exist from this date.

In addition, existing guidance products and information will be removed from our website and will no longer be available from us in hard copy after 31 January. From February our resources will be concentrated on orderly closure of the organisation, expected to happen on 31 March 2012.

However, given that the local parts of the framework will continue until DCLG commence the remaining standards provisions and relevant orders, you may wish to ensure that you have downloaded or have copies of all our existing guidance on the local standards framework before they are removed from our website.

To help facilitate this we have already taken steps to reformat the 'Guidance Documents & Pages' area of our website to feature five downloadable ZIP files containing all the documents currently available in our guidance library. The documents have been divided into key areas, including Standards Committee Functions, The Code of Conduct, Newsletters and Welsh Police Authorities, to enable users to download the guidance most relevant to their needs. To access these downloads please visit <http://www.standardsforengland.gov.uk/Guidance/TheCodeofConduct/CodeGuidance/>

We also have a number of hard copy guidance and DVD products which are available upon request. However, these are available on a first-come, first-served basis only as stocks are limited and we are unable to order new stock.

Please note, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have yet to confirm when the other standards elements of the Localism Act 2011, such as the removal of powers from existing local standards committees, requirement to adopt a local Code and to appoint an independent member, will come into force. Any questions about current and future standards arrangements should therefore be referred to the Local Government Standards team in the Conduct and Council Constitutions Division at DCLG. They can be contacted via the DCLG switchboard on 0303 444 0000.

However, should you have any questions prior to 31 January about the abolition of Standards for England or the availability of guidance on the existing framework, please do not hesitate to contact us, either via the 'Enquiries Helpline' on 0845 078 8181 or by email on [enquiries@standardsforengland.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@standardsforengland.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

Tim Leslie  
Interim Chief Executive