



Standards
for England

‘Confidence in Standards’

Standards for England
Corporate Plan 2010-13

March 2010

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Foreword by Chair and Chief Executive

In May 2010 the local standards framework is two years old. Standards for England is, in parallel, two years into its role as strategic regulator of these arrangements to regulate behaviour among members of English local authorities.

That's two years in which the system – and the regulator – have been tested in the real world of local politics. Although that's a world which routinely goes about its business calmly enough, it's also a world where tempers can fray, passions sometimes run high, motivations can be confused and decision making sometimes lacks transparency – not just to members of the public.

Where do we stand now?

Like any infant the local standards framework is learning rapidly through experience. The quality of local complaint handling and the role local standards committees can play in their authority are, inevitably, influenced by the skills and confidence members of local standards committees bring to their work. We have been greatly impressed by the appetite of local committees, and the officers who work with them, to carry out their duties.

At the same time the framework's practical application gives us, as regulator, a picture of its efficacy. Is it robust? Is it succeeding as planned or are there unintended consequences? Is it fair, proportionate and free from political bias? And, where things go wrong, have we the tools to fix them?

We've been building evidence to reach a view on all these issues - and at the end of the 2009/10 business year we passed to government the conclusions of our first review of the framework. We think it can be simplified, and yet be proportionate and effective and so still serve its full purpose.

The climate in which public services operate has changed markedly in the past two years, and will continue to do so. But there can be no doubt that standards remain critically important to the reputation of local government.

This, our third corporate plan as a strategic regulator, sets out how we intend to make further progress towards our two key **regulatory outcomes**:

- That there are high standards of conduct among members of local authorities.
- That there is an effective and proportionate standards framework, operating well.

Two years in we are in a position to say that the vast majority of local authority members are working selflessly for their communities and behaving well. We are confident that the local standards framework offers a firm foundation for public trust that standards of behaviour *are* important in local authorities, and that poor behaviour *will* be identified and dealt with.

Equally we are aware of practical difficulties, (highlighted in our review of the framework in winter 2009-10) and we know from our own experience that some authorities struggle to comply with the core requirements of the local standards framework.

We are at a point now where we are in a position to tackle these issues, tailoring our approaches as appropriate. Our aim in the coming years is to ensure that the standards framework is consistently effective across all authorities.



Bob Chilton
Chair
Standards for England



Glenys Stacey
Chief Executive
Standards for England

Our role

Standards for England is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). We are responsible for championing, promoting and maintaining high standards of behaviour among members of English local authorities.

We have three main roles: pre-emption, prevention and protection.

Pre-emption

We monitor and maintain the local standards framework. We support local authority standards committees in their twin roles; promoting the standards and principles that underpin the members' Code of Conduct and managing complaints locally.

Prevention

We evaluate and assess risks to standards in individual authorities and across local government. We advise, guide and intervene, where necessary, to prevent the undermining of expected standards and to reduce consequential risks.

Protection

We protect public decision making by investigating misconduct allegations against individual members that, for one reason or another, are unsuitable for local resolution. Under certain circumstances we can intervene to protect the integrity of the handling of complaints under the local standards framework.

Authorities we regulate:

- 351 local authorities
- 8,350 parish councils
- 31 fire and rescue authorities
- 38 police authorities
- Six integrated transport authorities
- Eight national park authorities
- the Greater London Authority
- the City of London Corporation
- the Broads Authority
- the Council of the Isles of Scilly

Code of Conduct: Local authorities must have a Code of Conduct which sets out rules governing the behaviour of an authority's members. Each authority's Code must include the provisions of the Model Code of Conduct approved by Parliament. The government issued the current Model Code of Conduct for members on 4 April 2007.

Local standards framework: those arrangements in principal English local authorities requiring them to properly constitute standards committees, which then carry out a range of duties, as set out in the relevant Acts of Parliament and associated regulations and guidance, including handling complaints brought against members of the authority under the Code of Conduct for elected members.

We keep standards high by:

- Providing guidance and advice to standards committees and ensuring they meet their responsibilities.
- Monitoring the impact of the relevant legislation and offering government advice on options for change to assist them in meeting their objectives.
- Championing high standards of case handling and decision making.
- Helping authorities share good practice and fostering a wide, shared understanding of what high standards of conduct are and how they can be championed.

We employ 82 people (1 April 2010) in our Manchester office.

More information on Standards for England can be found at www.standardsforengland.gov.uk. Copies of companion corporate documents, our *Annual Report*, *Annual Review*, '*An Introduction to Standards for England*' and our *Regulatory Statement* are available on line and can be ordered via our website.

Achievements in 2009

2009-10 was a year of transformation for Standards for England, as we developed from a case-working body into a strategic regulator. We made significant changes to our organisation and the way we work.

Focused on local needs

We have increased our focus on supporting authorities in their standards work. We have produced new material targeted at common areas of concern. We have embraced social media, through our online forum, where experiences and best practice can be discussed and shared. We produced a DVD on the local assessment process and redeveloped our web pages to make it easier to find information.

Our new relationship managers are developing strong links with authorities, to work with them to help prevent standards issues escalating and hence reduce the need for corrective action.

Focused on delivery

We have restructured and rebalanced the organisation to transfer resources from our back office support functions to enhanced frontline services. Saving 23% on back office expenditure allows us to deliver more services for the same cost and will help us to achieve our aims more effectively and efficiently.

Our investigation function has been overhauled to ensure that we manage investigations to a timely conclusion and improve our quality control. This has led to a marked reduction in the time it takes us to investigate individual cases, something understandably important to anyone involved.

Focused on making a difference

We conducted a review of the local standards framework to gauge its proportionality and effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. Our recommendations from this review were put to government late in the 2009/10 business year, and we are confident that this will be a basis for strengthening the framework further.

In public life, 2009 will be remembered for the MPs expenses scandal, rather than any shortfall in standards in local government. Standards for England contributed to the Committee of Standards in Public Life review on MPs' expenses to pass on our knowledge and experience of what works in the local council arena.

We have continued to work to identify and share what we consider to be notable practice, through planned research, our annual returns and review and through sponsorship of the LGC Award for standards and ethics.

We will give a full review of our work during the 2009-10 business year and the performance of the local standards framework in our *Annual Review 2009-10* to be published in September 2010.

Our strategy and approach

Vision

Our vision is of a local government community that demonstrates high ethical standards and appreciates the work we do to support them – and an electorate that recognises principles matter to local government.

Mission

Our mission is to champion and promote high standards of conduct among local politicians

Our overarching approach is to continue to develop Standards for England as an effective **strategic regulator**.

The two key **regulatory outcomes** we are seeking to achieve are:

- That there are high standards of conduct among members of local authorities.
- That there is an effective and proportionate standards framework, operating well.

Strategic regulator:

A body charged with overseeing a regulatory regime, working with the regulated community to raise compliance, in accordance with the Hampton principles¹.

We set out our approach to regulation in our *Regulatory Statement*, available on our website. We believe in a balance of local self-regulation and national oversight. Our approach is to be transparent, targeted, risk-based and focused on education and prevention.

In the coming year we are continuing on the path that we set out in our Corporate Plan 2009 -10 *'The Changing Role of the Standards Board for England'* - and building on the same strategic objectives.

Strategic objectives 2010-11

- 1) Be a respected strategic regulator, adding value to local government
- 2) Ensure the local standards framework is a success
- 3) Continue to improve our business capability and effectiveness

¹ The Hampton Review of 2005 *Reducing Administrative Burdens: Effective Inspection and Enforcement* set out key principles for regulatory bodies.

These objectives cover both our commitment to delivering the two regulatory outcomes (objectives one and two) and our determination to be an effective and efficient regulator (objective three).

The following pages discuss our ambitions under each strategic objective and set out a number of specific actions we plan to achieve.

Strategic objectives

Objective 1: Be a respected strategic regulator adding value to local government

We believe that confidence in standards is a vital component of vibrant democratic local government. A healthy and effective standards regime needs to be credible, respected and trusted by those that it serves; in this case local residents across England.

Equally, the standards regulator must be credible and respected by the **regulated community**. Consequently we attach high importance to building our reputation and expertise in the field of standards.

Regulated community:

The appointed and elected members of the authorities for which we have responsibility, who are subject to operating under the members' Code of Conduct under the standards framework.

Standards community:

Chairs and members of standards committees, monitoring officers and others working in local authorities to support standards committees.

There are two key elements to our work under this objective:

- We will continue to shape and improve the local standards framework.
- We will implement our approach to managing risk of standards failure in local authorities.

Activities in 2010-11

Our strategy for developing and nurturing the local standards framework to ensure it is simple, proportionate, affordable and effective will include several activities during the coming year.

- We will play our full part in implementing any agreed changes arising from the review of the framework we conducted late in the 2009-10 business year. The review took into account feedback and input from the standards community and elected members, as well as the results of independent research, and views from stakeholders. We presented a set of recommendations to our sponsor department CLG.

- We will look to implement a further, fundamental review of the Code of Conduct to assess its efficacy in the light of concerns over its complexity and scope
- We will review our own powers to see whether they are adequate to allow us to support local authorities.
- We will continue to improve working relationships with other regulators in local government – for example the Audit Commission and the Local Government Ombudsman so that we work together as effectively and seamlessly as possible. All agencies recognise the part appropriate standards can play in delivering good democratic institutions. Learning from our monitoring of local authorities contributes to Comprehensive Area Assessment, and so Total Place.
- We remain ready to support the introduction of an officer code to parallel the members' Code, should government choose, in the light of the consultation it has carried out, to introduce one.
- We will shape our research strategy to keep us well informed about attitudes to the framework and to the wider perception of local government standards.

We will continue to enhance our **risk-based approach** to the authorities we deal with. Assessing local, systemic or sectoral risks to standards or the success of the framework allows us to target our effort at those activities, situations or authorities that pose the biggest risk. This will ensure we continue to provide value for money, something that we expect to be increasingly important over the coming years.

Systemic risk

Risk which, if realised, could lead to a widespread impact on standards of behaviour or the operation of the framework across several authorities.

Sectoral risk

Risk which, if realised, could lead to an impact on standards of behaviour or the operation of the framework in a number of similar authorities.

We will work with authorities to manage local risk of standards failure. Our approach will be to prioritise the way we work with authorities on the basis of our risk assessment of the likelihood and impact of any failure of standards. Working through our relationship managers (officers whose principal role is to work directly with local authorities) we will take a differential approach based on this assessment to satisfy ourselves that authorities are working to

minimise risks. We envisage working with 30-40 authorities at our highest level of contact and a further 100-120 at an intermediate level, at any one time. Our approach is being developed based on our increasing experience of supporting authorities with standards issues.

The success of the local standards framework relies on our ability to see potential pitfalls or risks to standards in advance. For example, the emergence of new technologies such as internet social networking, blogs and Twitter, have presented their own unique challenges to standards. During 2009-10 we were able to produce guidance, place articles in the local government press and give a presentation at a national members' conference on this subject.

Spotting such challenges allows us to provide early advice and guidance to the standards community to help prevent problems arising. We will be developing our approach to systemic and sectoral risk, closely linked to our research programme, to help us identify trends or potential problems, and so offer appropriate advice at the earliest opportunity.

We believe the delivery of **training** in the regulated community is one of fundamental importance and this is an area in which we, as regulator, should play a more prominent role than previously. Our plans will include delivering some practical aids to help authorities with this crucial element of delivering a successful standards framework – for example the development of some e-learning tools.

In October 2010 we will once again run our highly regarded **Annual Assembly** of Standards Committees in Birmingham. It is both a chance for the standards community to meet, share information and discuss experiences and a cost-effective way for us to engage them in conversation over best practice and emerging trends. The 2009 event attracted over 800 delegates, and its usual very high satisfaction ratings.

Future activities 2011-13

We are committed, over the life of this plan, to ensuring the framework is as effective as possible, informed by what our research is telling us about stakeholder and public attitudes. We will incorporate a cycle of review and improvement in our planning to make sure that the local standards framework is always effective and up-to-date

Our work on identifying and addressing sectoral and systemic risks to standards will mature and we will learn how to increase the effectiveness of this work through reviews of our actions. Similarly the way we assess risk and work directly with authorities, and the way we engage with other partners in the regulatory and local government spheres as we do so, will continue to evolve. We are committed to learning from such engagements and modifying our approaches accordingly.

Our closer working relationships with authorities, through the work of our relationship managers, will mean that we have a good understanding of the issues they face. Through those relationships we will continue to help head off problems before they occur so that we maintain high standards and reduce enforcement actions.

To ensure that we are at the forefront of standards thinking, we will work with national and international partners to share ideas and develop best practice.

We will continue to support the standards community in its development through generating significant opportunities to engage with them, share good practice and discuss issues that arise.

We are committed to ensuring our work is supported by a clear and accurate picture of the world in which we operate, and we will ensure our monitoring activities and our research programme are appropriately focused.

Specific activities in 2010-11

- 1.1 Pursue implementation of the recommendations from our 2009-10 review of the local standards framework
- 1.2 Identify potential systemic and sectoral risks and evaluate mechanisms for assisting them. Then develop and implement an approach to managing identified risks
- 1.3 Roll out our risk based approach to working with local authorities, beginning with consultation and 'proof of concept' testing before full implementation in the second half of the year.
- 1.4 Hold our Annual Assembly in October 2010, to focus on sharing of good practice and knowledge and providing advice and guidance on topics of concern.
- 1.5 Deliver or support other events aligned to our priorities and targeted areas of risk or concern.
- 1.6 Implement an approach to ensure that the training needs of monitoring officers and standards committees are being met. We will make some e-learning training materials available to help ensure consistency and cost effectiveness.
- 1.7 Refine our research strategy and programme, to ensure that it will deliver the right information to shape the future of the local standards framework and help us target our work effectively.
- 1.8 Carry out a review of the Code of Conduct to assess its efficacy and make recommendations for improvement.

Objective 2: Ensure the local standards framework is a success

A successful local standards framework is a key regulatory outcome for Standards for England. Under this objective we will develop and implement our strategy for supporting the standards community.

Our efforts are focused through the local authority monitoring officer and the standards committee. We place a great deal of emphasis on providing easy access to high class information and support, tailored as necessary to meet identified needs.

We will continue to monitor the work of the local framework, in an effective way. We wish to see authorities achieve a high level of compliance with the framework's requirements on how complaints are handled.

Activities in 2010-11

Our **strategy for supporting the standards community** sets out how we will ensure they have easy access to the help they need – information, guidance, expert advice and communities of interest.

- We are committed to ensuring our website and its on-line resources, including our Standards Forum, are delivered to a high standard. Our forum has proved popular with monitoring officers as a way of drawing advice and help from within the community, so we will encourage and develop its use. The forum achieved 1,000 registered users in January 2010, only three months after its launch.
- We will support this with first class published material tailored to the community as a whole and sectors within it.
- We will continue to support published material with skilled advisors on the telephone.
- We will work to support sectors within the regulated community. For example, we are developing our parish strategy. This will set out how we intend to work with those involved in the parish sector to ensure the framework makes a real contribution to high standards and good governance in that sector. We will develop a product aimed specifically at the parish sector this year.
- We will continue to be a visible presence across the sector taking opportunities to share learning and advice at conferences and events. We will continue to give high priority to talking – and listening – to monitoring officers and standards committees.
- We will continue to encourage and facilitate the exchange of best practice, experience and information throughout the standards community, for example by fostering the development of networks and communities of interest within it.

- We will take a proportionate approach and help to facilitate arrangements such as shared standards committees where practical and sensible, to reduce cost and overheads.

We will continue to produce and distribute quality advice and guidance to simplify the work of local standards committees and help prevent standards issues arising. Our guidance products in 2010-11 will also help to improve consistency and reduce the overall cost burden of the framework to the taxpayer.

During 2009-10 we published a wide range of on-line advice and guidance to help monitoring officers / standards committees with their work, to a high degree of satisfaction. Nevertheless in the coming year we intend to review our communications with the standards community to ensure we deliver what they need in ways that are accessible and cost effective.

We will continue to monitor standards activity and practices at authorities to track performance and monitor trends. The information is gathered and returned to us by monitoring officers in **quarterly and annual returns**, as a requirement of the framework. Although it is vital that we obtain a local picture, we appreciate the need to minimise the requirements so that the effort and cost of reporting is kept to reasonable levels. Therefore, we will be reviewing our monitoring approach to make sure that we are only collecting information we need.

Local authorities must be able to respond to and resolve complaints about members' behaviour in a fair and timely manner. We work with authorities, generally and specifically, to ensure that cases are handled effectively.

Cases investigated locally are critical to the success of the framework. These now form the bulk of cases undertaken in England, so collectively have a great impact on the success of the framework. We began work to assess the quality of local case handling late in 2009-10. This work will continue and allow us to identify where we can further help local standards committees be effective.

926 Cases investigated / being investigated by local standards committees

125 Cases investigated / being investigated by Standards for England

New cases, Jan-Dec 2009

Handling those cases which, for one reason or another, are not suitable for local investigation, remains an important part of our work. We will build on the improvements we have made to our own **case handling** through our Project Excellence, delivered last year. For example, communicating more effectively with all the parties in cases to keep them informed of progress is one area that we will continue to develop as we get feedback from our customer satisfaction forms.

Working in consultation with stakeholders, we will explore the options for a '**standards maturity model**'. We want to consider whether there are benefits in describing levels of standards maturity for authorities, setting out what standards, behaviours and levels of compliance are typical at each level.

Future activities 2011-13

We will continue to support the standards community in its work. We will keep our engagement and communications under review and consider what guidance and advice products might best help local standards committees to be effective and efficient.

We are keen to foster strong mutual support networks for local standards committees and to ensure information to support them is readily available through their preferred channels of communication.

We will continue to pay close attention to authorities' performance under the local standards framework, further refining our monitoring arrangements based on their value to us in our work and on feedback from the standards community.

While we will continue to require authorities to show high levels of compliance with their responsibilities, we intend to increase our focus on the *quality* of local standards work. We will build on our 2010-11 work on the quality of local case handling, and look to help standards committees ensure sound decision making at all stages of the complaints handling process.

We will continue to keep our criteria for accepting cases under review and take steps to ensure our casework continues to be of a high standard. Our most serious cases are referred to the First-tier Tribunal (Standards in Local Government) - formerly the Adjudication Panel for England, which also hears appeals against local decisions. We're committed to developing an active relationship with the First-tier Tribunal whereby strong feedback mechanisms help both of us to operate to best effect.

Specific activities in 2010-11

- 2.1 Review our communication with monitoring officers and standards committees to improve our approach and effectiveness
- 2.2 Review our approach to periodic monitoring and to identifying and managing information about local authorities (as part of developing knowledge management work in Standards for England) so as to enable both the effective monitoring of framework performance and the effective management of entity risk.
- 2.3 Assess the quality of local case handling. Implement recommendations to help local standards committees manage cases well.
- 2.4 Develop our liaison with groups from within the regulated and standards communities. Provide tools and materials and assist with the development of supportive networks within the standards community
- 2.5 Continue the production of accurate and timely guidance supporting the effective operation of the local standards framework
- 2.6 Explore options for a 'standards maturity model' that defines a set of standards benchmarks against which an authority can set aspirations and judge attainments.
- 2.7 Continue to deliver timely, high quality investigations for cases that we accept. We will also start a cycle of annual reviews of our referral and acceptance criteria, to ensure the categories of cases we accept support our regulatory outcomes.

Objective 3: Continuing to improve our business capability and effectiveness

To be effective, we recognise the need to continually invest in our business capability: our skills, knowledge and supporting systems. 2009/10 was a major year of change for us; we implemented a new organisational design, which transferred resources from back office functions to the front line, improving our delivery capability and clarifying accountabilities across the organisation. That design becomes fully operational on 1 April 2010.

While we do not envisage such dramatic change over the period covered by this plan, we are committed to continuous improvement. This is influenced both by best business and regulatory practice and through our commitment to providing a quality service to our regulated community, learning through consultation with and feedback from those we work with.

Our focus for 2010-11 will be on ensuring high standards of governance, developing an organisation-wide approach to quality management and improving our knowledge management.

Activities in 2010-11

In 2010 we will fully benefit from our new **organisational design**. The structural diagram on page 24 shows how our three directorates will deliver our work, supported by a small, focused corporate Chief Executive's department.

Our projects portfolio will be redesigned this year, to reflect our new structure and the reduction in size of our change programme. We will undertake a post implementation review of our organisation design project, to make sure that we have met all the objectives and design principles that we set out to achieve in our new organisation.

This year we will support the new design by implementing a simplified, fair pay system based on job evaluation.

We will roll out **business process improvements** and systems improvements developed in our Project Excellence last year to other parts of the business. In Project Excellence we invested in improving the processes and systems that support our investigations functions, so that we can complete cases more quickly while maintaining high quality.

It is important for an organisation working in the field of standards to seek to operate to the highest standards itself. Consequently we will continue to work to ensure our **governance**, at all levels, is of a high quality.

We plan to develop an organisation-wide approach to **quality management**, to better assess how well we are delivering our various products and services.

For us, as for other regulators, data, information and knowledge about those we regulate is a key commodity – it needs to be kept up-to-date, validated, and above all joined up across the different tasks within Standards for England. We plan to develop our **knowledge management** to ensure we are working as smartly, effectively and efficiently as we can.

We wish to see better sharing and use of information within the organisation, so that we are better equipped to understand the authorities we are working with.

Our **employees** are key to our success. We value their skills, enthusiasm and endeavour. We are working to ensure high levels of engagement, training and leadership at Standards for England. In 2008-9, we ran our first staff survey to find out how we were performing internally. It probed issues such as our leadership, communication and reward. The results endorsed our need to reshape as a strategic regulator and fed in to work to implement our new organisational design. We will run the survey again early in the coming year to gauge improvements and take further action in the coming year based on the results.

At Standards for England, we pride ourselves on providing a far reaching service and delivering **value for money** from our low-cost base in Manchester. However, in the current economic climate, we recognise that pressure on public spending is likely to be increasing, so we will look for further ways to save on our non-pay spending and redirect funds to our front-line services.

Future activities 2011-13

In the second and third years of this plan we will continue to push ahead with the work we began in the first year with its focus on quality and knowledge management.

Our work involves collaboration and communication with a number of other regulators and organisations working in the local government and ethics fields. We value these working relationships and will look to ensure they are sustained and strengthened across the changing local public service and regulatory landscapes. We're keen to ensure these relationships work well at a practical level, allowing us to deliver 'joined up' services from the local authority perspective – our developing links with the Audit Commission are a good example.

We are committed to keeping up-to-date with regulatory thinking and we will periodically assess and measure ourselves and our rate of development. We first did this in 2009-10 and this exercise informs our prioritisation and our development. We believe the Hampton principles – applied with regard to our specific role – are a firm blueprint for excellence in regulation. They help us give due regard to our effectiveness and the impact we have on those we regulate, and we will periodically benchmark ourselves against them to identify potential areas for improvement in the work we do.

Specific activities in 2010-11

- 3.1 Defining and implementing a quality management approach within the organisation, to embed quality assurance within the key operational activities and develop a culture of continuous improvement
- 3.2 Implement the outcomes of our pay review to rationalise our pay scales to deal with inequalities in pay and reward and simplify our pay structure
- 3.3 Undertake a further internal staff survey to measure the impacts of the improvements we have made to the business and our people management
- 3.4 Further develop our leadership strategy throughout all levels of management within the organisation to increase our leadership capabilities
- 3.5 Expand the business process improvements identified in last year's Project Excellence to other areas of the business.
- 3.6 Conduct a corporate governance review and act on the results to ensure we operate our business to high standards
- 3.7 Repeat a review of our regulatory performance against the Hampton Principles undertaken in 2009, to measure our improvement and highlight further areas for development
- 3.8 Develop and implement an organisational approach to knowledge management
- 3.9 Identify further savings from our non-pay budget to increase our efficiency and re-invest into frontline services
- 3.10 Undertake a post-implementation review of the effectiveness of the organisational design changes we have introduced, to ensure that we have achieved our objectives and are working effectively in the new structure

Strategic objectives 2010-13:

- 1) Be a respected strategic regulator, adding value to local government
 - a. Ensure there is an effective standards framework across all local government arrangements.
 - b. Make a demonstrable difference to local standards.
 - c. Be recognised as a centre of excellence in the field of ethical governance.

- 2) Ensure the local standards framework is a success
 - a. Ensure that the framework is felt to be fair and proportionate and that complainants and those complained about feel they have been treated fairly.
 - b. Identify failings in the local system and respond accordingly.
 - c. Support standards committees in promoting high standards, so enhancing the reputation of local government.
- 3) Continue to improve our business capability and effectiveness
 - a. Understand and be responsive to the needs of those we work with.
 - b. Have the right skills and apply our resources to meet these needs.
 - c. Make sure that we operate in line with modern regulatory good practice.

Measures of success

Our role is to help government achieve its aims and, as we do that, deliver value for money. To bring transparency to our service delivery, we have a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) that are agreed by CLG, our sponsor department. The business areas covered by the KPIs are those that contribute most directly to the achievement of our overall objectives. By achieving the targets, we will be demonstrating our effectiveness.

For the business year 2010-11, our KPIs reflect our developing focus on the overall success of the standards framework, as well as the regular indicators of our service performance.

We report on our success against our key performance indicators in our annual reports, laid before parliament in the early summer after the end of the preceding business year.

Key Performance Indicators 2010-11				
Ref	Title	Description	Measure	Objective
1	Risk-based approach	Successful implementation and delivery of risk based relationship management approach	Consultation, proof of concept and implementation delivered to milestones	1
2	Local case handling	Monitoring the quality of local case handling so as to assess the effectiveness of our work to improve local performance	Complete our review of local case handling and implement any revised monitoring arrangements	2
3	Investigations	Deliver the investigations we undertake within the agreed performance timeframes	90% of all investigations to be completed within 6 months. 100% to be completed within 12 months.	2
4	Customer satisfaction	Customer satisfaction with our investigations	Implement improved customer satisfaction monitoring and set a benchmark % satisfaction level	2
5	Local compliance Framework requirements	Ensure a high level of compliance with the minimum requirements of the Standards Framework	95% of authorities are fully compliant with legal requirements by year end	2
6	Review implementation	Implement agreed recommendations from the Framework review	Meet agreed milestones set following CLG consideration of the review	1

7	Confidence in the Framework	Confidence among the regulated community and public	Improved % confidence in 1. local authority ability to uncover breach and 2. confidence that breaches will be dealt with appropriately. To be reported March 2012	1, 2
8	Capability development	Continue our capability development programme	1- Implement improved business processes and supporting systems for Liaison & Guidance and Relationship Management 2- Fully implement a revised information architecture to improve our information storage and retrieval	3
9	Value for money	To achieve efficiencies within our support functions and focus expenditure on service delivery	23% saved on our back office costs between 2009/10 and 2010/11	3

How we are organised

Board

- Strategy
- Scrutiny

Chief Executive

- Corporate planning
- Strategic relations

Lead objectives: 1, 2, 3
Lead KPIs: 8,9

Director of Risk

Lead objectives: 1a, 1b
Lead KPIs: 1, 5

Outcomes:

- Effective systemic risk management
- Effective sectional risk management
- Effective entity risk management
- Effective identification of high risk authorities
- Active management of high risk authorities
- Effective Intervention in individual authorities
- Evaluation and assessment of all authorities

Functions:

- Risk assessment and relationship management
- Entity risk management development
- Interventions
- Systemic and sectional risk solutions design
- Risk solutions delivery

Director of Regulation

Lead objectives: 2a, 2b, 2c
Lead KPIs: 2,3

Outcomes:

- Public trust in the redress mechanisms
- Timely investigations to quality standard
- Compliance monitoring effective and in line with modern regulatory standards
- Guidance, advice and support is customer focused, effective and efficient
- Authority information is kept up to date and directed
- Self-supporting standards community driving the standards agenda

Functions:

- Publications
- Guidance and advice
- Monitoring and entity risk map data management
- Misconduct allegations assessment for acceptance
- Misconduct investigations
- Establishing and maintaining standards community networks

Director of Standards

Lead objectives: 1c, 3a, 3b, 3c
Lead KPIs: 4, 6, 7

Outcomes:

- Standards Board operates to best practice standards
- Standards Board engaged in and prepared for strategic developments affecting the local standards framework and its operation
- Standards Board recognised as leading expertise in ethical standards, able to influence and shape the local standards framework
- Standards Board knowledge is structured and is accessible, knowledge grows and is shared

Functions:

- Quality management
- Knowledge management
- Environment scanning
- Identifying systemic and sectoral issues
- Research to support the business
- Corporate legal advice

Funding

Our funding for 2010-11 has been agreed at a slightly reduced level from 2009-10, which reflects the changes to the business that we made within that year.

The budget table below describes our investment and funding plans for the next three years.

Expenditure summary (£'000)	Plan 2010-11	Plan 2011-12	Plan 2012-13
Salary, pension & on costs	3,756	3,756	3,756
Other expenditure	4,190	4,190	4,190
Revenue expenditure	7,946	7,946	7,946
Capital expenditure	200	200	200
Total expenditure (DEL)	8,146	8,146	8,146
Add: Revenue	-339	-339	-339
Less: Depreciation	-410	-410	-410
Grant-in-aid	7,397	7,397	7,397

The 2011-12 and 2012-13 submissions are maintained at the same values as 2010-11 figures pending the outcome of government's next spending review.

Assumptions made

- Staffing levels will remain broadly constant.
- The level of investigations investigated in house will remain broadly consistent at 2009-10 levels.
- There will be no significant changes to the standards framework.