

REPORT TO: Standards Committee
DATE: 8th September 2010
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Resources
SUBJECT: Standards For England Round Up
WARDS: N/A

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To bring Members of the Committee up to date with the latest news from Standards for England.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the report be noted.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 There have been no issues of Standards for England's Bulletin since the last meeting of this Committee.

3.2 On 28 May 2010 Standards for England issued a statement concerning the Government's Planned Decentralisation and Localism Bill, which included a proposal to abolish the Standards Board regime. The Chair of Standards for England indicated great disappointment with the decision pointing out that since 2007 Standards for England had dealt only with those matters which local authorities could not deal with themselves. Their recent review of this devolved local framework found that it was delivering increased confidence in the accountability of local politicians, improved Member behaviour and contributed to better governance. It was confirmed in the statement that Standards for England do not have clear details as yet as to what is proposed for the future and that the local Standards Framework remains pending further legislative change. Standards for England's priorities are to fulfil statutory duties, to support local authorities in maintaining high standards and to assist the Government in developing and implementing any new arrangements.

Since that Statement, monitoring officers have been contacted by Standards for England advising them not to continue providing quarterly update reports.

It remains to be seen what the future will hold for the Standards regime and of course Members will be advised as soon as possible of any developments.

- 3.3** On 24 June 2010, Standards for England advised that a new “Compact Toolkit” offering help and guidance in building up greater working relationships with parish and town councils had been launched. This had been jointly developed by Standards for England, the National Association of Local Councils, and the Society of Local Council Clerks. It is designed for use by Standards Committees, Monitoring Officers, SLCC Branch Officers and County Association Officers

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** None

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** None

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES

- 6.1** Children and Young People in Halton - None
- 6.2** Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton - None
- 6.3** A Healthy Halton - None
- 6.4** A Safer Halton - None
- 6.5** Halton’s Urban Renewal – None.

7. RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1** No key issues have been identified which will require control measures.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1** The report of itself does not contain specific equality and diversity issues.

9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

- 9.1** None