



## Local filter: In detail

**Chair: Sara Goodwin**, Head of Legal, the Standards Board for England

**Aileen Johnson**, Director of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

## **Standards Board for England local filter pilot**

- **Carried out by Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council standards committee**

## **Oldham's experience**

### **Background:**

- **Oldham's standards committee – up for it!**
- **Karen Mellor - Oldham's Head of Constitutional Services – Project manager for all the pilots run by Standards Board For England**

## Oldham's experience

### The process followed (1):

- standards committee approval – March 2007
- report to committee-June 2007
- filter pilot pack circulated with DVD and exercise date agreed

## Oldham's experience

- **Pre-meeting between chair and monitoring officer held 23/7/07 to confirm:**
  - happy with summary provided SBE. In one case the monitoring officer prepared a diagram to explain the summary
  - that both chair and monitoring officer had clear understanding of the case facts
  - that both chair and monitoring officer had views with regard to the applicable clauses in the Code
- **No recommendations made:**
  - did not want to unduly influence standards committee members in coming to their conclusions

## Oldham's experience

- **Would we do it differently next time?**
  - regulations and guidance from the Standards Board
  - timings
  - Code of Conduct checklist

## Oldham's experience

**The process followed (2):**

- **26 July 2007 – pilot committee meeting**
- **all available members took part, and came prepared**
- **monitoring officer had prepared suggested timings that were agreed as framework by committee**

## **Oldham's experience**

- **chair outlined process**
- **discussion on each case, in order provided by the Standards Board, relating them to applicable clauses in Code, using local filter pilot complaint handling chart provided by the Standards Board**
- **committee worked through the steps set out in local filter, and a record was made for transcription on to the local filter pilot decision recording form**

## **Action following decision**

- **draft local filter pilot recording form circulated to members following meeting by monitoring officer**
- **meeting not recorded and published as constituted meeting, but in “real life” it would be**

## Further action

- Decision notice would be published
  - Relevant parties notified
- } Within statutory time frames, with advice on appeals mechanisms

## Resources

- **officer time – three days**
- **nine committee members**
- **in case of pilot – one extra meeting**

## Process

- Any questions on process we followed?

## Recommendations for the future

### Overall:

- good experience
- members enjoyed the pilot
- were generally well prepared and enthusiastic

## Recommendations for the future

### New responsibilities need:

- **guidance**
  - clear guidance generally/on size/structure of committees
  - flow chart – good framework
  - on expertise required of committee members
  
- **training**
  - on process and hearings and appeals generally
  - on application of the Code
  - on the role of the Standards Board in the new world

## Any questions or recommendations?

## **The local filter – making it work**

### **Committee was of the view:**

- **no immediate change to the membership of 11 comprising of:**
  - **four independent members**
  - **five borough councillors**
  - **two parish councillors**
  
- **panel to work on the principles established in the Licensing regime.**

## **The local filter – making it work**

### **Committee was of the view:**

- **no need to increase meetings set by annual council (previously seven, this year four) a special meeting can be called**
  
- **initially, no need to increase resources, but ensure speciality training providing to relevant members and officers**
  
- **joint arrangements to be considered.**

## The local filter – making it work

Any questions or recommendations?

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