



Message received? Managing communications

Chair: Prof. Judy Simons, Board Member, the Standards Board for England

Tim Bogan, Head of Communications, the Standards Board for England

Edward Welsh Director of Media & Campaigns, Local Government Association

Session format

- Information
- Media relations exercise
- Any questions?

What is happening?

- Local filter
- Press enquiries will be coming to you
- How you manage the media, not 'if'

General principles

- Part of the mainstream
- Professionally handled
- No surprises
- Open but not seeking publicity

Your press office

- Make friends with your press officer
- Help them prepare

Planning ahead

- Plan your approach
- Be prepared

At the complaint stage

- No comment on whether complaints have been received...
- ... until we've decided what to do with them
- Only after all parties are informed
- Not proactive

Referral decisions

- Name
- Type of complainant
- Investigation or not?
- If not, why not?
- 'The potential breach of which parts of the Code gave rise to the investigation'

Adding value

- 'No smoke without fire' stories are unwise
- Investigation is intended to discover facts
- Most members act in a way that is ethical and appropriate
- Other positive messages, depending on media strategy

During an investigation

- Just confirm it's underway
- Don't give a completion date
- Don't say what stage it's at

Final report

- Investigation is over
- Hearing pending
- Final reports not available to press
- Decision on breach lies with standards committee

After the hearing - options

- Proactive press release
- React to questions
- Reactive defensive statement
- Case summary

Case summaries

- Based on final report
- Signed off by investigator / ethical standards officer
- Short (fewer than 500 words)
- For press and public
- Simple

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