

# Standards Committee

**Wed 30th Sep  
2009  
7.00 pm**

Committee Room 2  
Town Hall  
Redditch



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# Access to Information - Your Rights

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Your main rights are set out below:-

- Automatic right to attend all Council and Committee meetings unless the business would disclose confidential or “exempt” information.
- Automatic right to inspect agenda and public reports at least five days before the date of the meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect minutes of the Council and its Committees (or summaries of business undertaken in private) for up to six years following a meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect lists of background papers used in the preparation of public reports.
- Access, upon request, to the background papers on which reports are based for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting.
- Access to a public register stating the names and addresses and electoral areas of all Councillors with details of the membership of all Committees etc.
- A reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports relating to items to be considered in public must be made available to the public attending meetings of the Council and its Committees etc.
- Access to a list specifying those powers which the Council has delegated to its Officers indicating also the titles of the Officers concerned.
- Access to a summary of the rights of the public to attend meetings of the Council and its Committees etc. and to inspect and copy documents.
- In addition, the public now has a right to be present when the Council determines “Key Decisions” unless the business would disclose confidential or “exempt” information.
- Unless otherwise stated, all items of business before the Executive Committee are Key Decisions.
- (Copies of Agenda Lists are published in advance of the meetings on the Council’s Website:  
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**If you have any queries on this Agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of the above rights of access to information, please contact  
Ivor Westmore  
Committee Support Services**

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**Tel: (01527) 64252 (Ext. 3269) Fax: (01527) 65216**  
**e.mail: [committee@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:committee@redditchbc.gov.uk) Minicom: 595528**

# Welcome to today's meeting.

## Guidance for the Public

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### **Agenda Papers**

The **Agenda List** at the front of the Agenda summarises the issues to be discussed and is followed by the Officers' full supporting **Reports**.

### **Chair**

The Chair is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting. Generally to one side of the Chair is the Committee Support Officer who gives advice on the proper conduct of the meeting and ensures that the debate and the decisions are properly recorded. On the Chair's other side are the relevant Council Officers. The Councillors ("Members") of the Committee occupy the remaining seats around the table.

### **Running Order**

Items will normally be taken in the order printed but, in particular circumstances, the Chair may agree to vary the order.

**Refreshments** : tea, coffee and water are normally available at meetings - please serve yourself.

### **Decisions**

Decisions at the meeting will be taken by the **Councillors** who are the democratically elected representatives. They are advised by **Officers** who are paid professionals and do not have a vote.

### **Members of the Public**

Members of the public may, by prior arrangement, speak at meetings of the Council or its Committees. Specific procedures exist for Appeals Hearings or for meetings involving Licence or Planning Applications. For further information on this point, please speak to the Committee Support Officer.

### **Special Arrangements**

If you have any particular needs, please contact the Committee Support Officer.

Infra-red devices for the hearing impaired are available on request at the meeting. Other facilities may require prior arrangement.

### **Further Information**

If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Support Officer (see foot of page opposite).

### **Fire/ Emergency instructions**

**If the alarm is sounded, please leave the building by the nearest available exit – these are clearly indicated within all the Committee Rooms.**

**If you discover a fire, inform a member of staff or operate the nearest alarm call point (wall mounted red rectangular box). In the event of the fire alarm sounding, leave the building immediately following the fire exit signs. Officers have been appointed with responsibility to ensure that all visitors are escorted from the building.**

**Do Not stop to collect personal belongings.**

**Do Not use lifts.**

**Do Not re-enter the building until told to do so.**

**The emergency Assembly Area is on Walter Stranz Square.**

# Declaration of Interests: Guidance for Councillors

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DO I HAVE A "PERSONAL INTEREST" ?

- Where the item relates or is likely to affect your **registered interests** (what you have declared on the formal Register of Interests)

**OR**

- Where a decision in relation to the item might reasonably be regarded as affecting **your own** well-being or financial position, or that of your **family**, or your **close associates** more than most other people affected by the issue,

you have a personal interest.

WHAT MUST I DO? **Declare the existence, and nature, of your interest and stay**

- The declaration must relate to specific business being decided - a general scattergun approach is not needed
- **Exception** - where interest arises only because of your membership of another **public body**, there is no need to declare unless you **speak** on the matter.
- You **can vote** on the matter.

IS IT A "PREJUDICIAL INTEREST" ?

In general only if:-

- It is a personal interest **and**
- The item affects your **financial position** (or conveys other benefits), or the position of your **family, close associates** or bodies through which you have a **registered interest** (or relates to the exercise of **regulatory functions** in relation to these groups)

**and**

- A member of public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably believe the interest was likely to **prejudice** your judgement of the public interest.

WHAT MUST I DO? **Declare and Withdraw**

BUT you may make representations to the meeting before withdrawing, **if** the public have similar rights (such as the right to speak at Planning Committee).





# Standards

30th September 2009

7.00 pm

## Committee

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

### Agenda

#### Membership:

#### Membership:

#### Independent Members

D Andrews (Chair)  
M Collins  
B Warwick

#### Borough Council Members

A Clayton  
J Field  
A Fry  
M Hall  
P Mould  
W Norton  
J Pearce

#### Feckenham Parish Council Member

J James  
J Matthews

<b>1. Apologies</b>	To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend this meeting.
<b>2. Declarations of Interest</b>	To invite Councillors to declare any interests they may have in items on the agenda.
<b>3. Minutes</b> (Pages 1 - 4) Borough Director	To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 24th June 2009.  (Minutes attached)
<b>4. Matters arising</b>	To consider any exceptional updates on matters raised at the previous meeting and not separately listed on the agenda.

# STANDARDS

Committee

30th September 2009

<p><b>5. Members' Planning Code of Good Practice</b></p> <p>(Pages 5 - 22)</p> <p>Monitoring Officer, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services</p>	<p>To consider a revised Planning Code of Good Practice for adoption by the Council.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>6. Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)</b></p> <p>(Pages 23 - 108)</p> <p>Monitoring Officer, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services</p>	<p>To consider a report prepared for the Standards Board for England.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>7. Review of the local Assessment Process</b></p> <p>Monitoring Officer, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services</p>	<p>To consider the assessment and outcome of an investigation into a written allegation that a Councillor has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct as adopted by the Borough Council.</p> <p>(In view of the fact that it contains information relating to an individual or which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual, this report will not be for publications and will be circulated only to relevant Offices and Members of the Standards Committee. In views of this, it is anticipated that discussion of this matter will take place after the exclusion of the public).</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>8. Chair's / Members' Reports</b></p> <p>Borough Director</p>	<p>To consider any Chair / Member updates not separately covered on the agenda list, including brief feedback from any Seminars or Conferences.</p> <p>(Oral report)</p>

# STANDARDS

Committee

30th September 2009

<p><b>9. Parish Council Report (if any)</b></p>	<p>To consider any report in relation to Feckenham Parish Council.</p> <p>(Oral report)</p>
<p><b>10. Work Programme</b></p> <p>(Pages 109 - 110)</p> <p>Monitoring Officer, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services</p>	<p>To consider and review the Committee's Work Programme.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>





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# Standards

## Committee

24th June 2009

### MINUTES

**Present:**

**Independent Members:**

D Andrews (Chair) and B Warwick

**Borough Council Members:**

Councillors A Clayton, M Hall, P Mould and J Pearce

**Feckenham Parish Council Member:**

Councillor J Matthews

**Officer:**

S Mullins

**Committee Officer:**

D Sunman

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted for Borough Councillors Fry and Norton and Mr M Collins (Independent Member).

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. MINUTES**

There were no minutes submitted for approval.

**4. REVIEW OF DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS, HOSPITALITY AND INTERESTS**

The Committee received a report on a review of gifts, hospitality and Interests made by Members in the last year and to review the Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality adopted by the Council on 13 August 2007.

.....  
Chair

# **Standards Committee**

24th June 2009

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Officers reported that Appendix 1 to the report had not included information regarding Independent Members' and Parish Councillors' personal interests and apologised for the omission.

Members noted that there were large variances in the way individual Members registered their personal interests and that there seemed to be uncertainty around what should or should not be included.

It was reported that work is ongoing to investigate ways of placing the Register of Members' Interests on the Council's website so that public access is available on the Internet as well as through paper copies held at the Town Hall. Members expressed concern regarding the possibility of scanned signatures being included on the web-site.

Members were informed that only two declarations of interest had been made in the last two years in terms of gifts and hospitality. Officers reported that when the Council's Code of Conduct on Gifts and Hospitality was adopted it had been the intention that training would be provided for all Members. This training had not taken place.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) **the report be noted;**
- 2)
  - a) **a single document be compiled in order to enable a comparison of Member's responses when completing the Register of Interests form, which could be used in training;**
  - b) **investigations continue regarding publication of a Register of Interest on the web-site;**
- 3) **training and further guidance be provided to all Members on the declaration of personal interests, including interests arising from gifts and hospitality; and**
- 4) **a further review be carried out on the Register of Interests following completion of forms in 2010 following completion of training.**

## **5. REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

Members were informed that the Register of Interests forms had been distributed in the last week. To date 11 forms had been returned.

# Standards

## Committee

24th June 2009

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**6. CHAIR'S / MEMBERS' REPORTS**

Members received a verbal report regarding conduct and procedure at a recent Planning Committee.

**RESOLVED that**

**a number of Members attend Planning Committee to gain an overall impression of how the Committee is run and report to the next meeting.**

**7. PARISH COUNCIL REPORT (IF ANY)**

There was no report from the Parish Council.

**8. WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received a report on the Committee's Work Programme for 2009/10. There were no additions to the Work Programme.

**RESOLVED that**

**the report be received.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.05 pm  
and closed at 8.40 pm





## Standards

No Direct Ward Relevance

### Committee

30th September 2009

#### MEMBERS' PLANNING CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

(Report of the Monitoring Officer)

#### 1. Summary of Proposals

To consider a revised Planning Code of Good Practice for adoption by the Council.

#### 2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

- 1) the draft Code be referred to the Planning Committee for consideration; and
- 2) that, if Planning Committee suggests no substantive changes to the draft Code, the Code be recommended to Council for approval; and
- 3) that, if the Planning Committee suggests substantive changes, the draft Code be brought back to this Committee for further consideration, prior to recommendation on to Council.

#### 3. Financial, Legal, Policy Risk and Sustainability / Environmental Implications

##### Financial

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

##### Legal & Policy

- 3.2 Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 established an ethical framework for the conduct of Members. Sections 51 and 52 of the Act placed a duty on Local Authorities to adopt a Code of Conduct for Members and a duty on Members to undertake to comply with the adopted Code of Conduct respectively. The current Code of Conduct came into effect on 3rd May 2007.

# Standards

## Committee

30th September 2009

- 3.3 The Council has adopted a Planning Code of Practice and this has been in place for some time. However, the Code needs to be updated to take account of the changing role of Members in the planning process.

### Risk

- 3.4 If the Members' Planning Code of Good Practice is not adopted, there is a risk that Members will not be enabled to take their full role in planning matters, thereby stifling the Council's role as a place-shaper. There is also the risk that Members may compromise the Council's planning and decision-making process due to being unclear about what is or is not appropriate.
- 3.5 There is a risk that if a Member fails to comply with the Council's Codes of Conduct, a complaint could be made against them to the Council's Standards Committee or, in the most serious cases, to the Standards Board for England. There are a range of sanctions that can be imposed, depending on the nature and severity of the breach. In the most serious cases, breach of the Code of Conduct could lead to imprisonment.

### Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.6 There are no sustainability, environmental or climate change implications arising from this report.

### Report

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 Earlier this year, the Local Government Association has produced guidance entitled "probity in planning: the role of councillors and officers – revised guidance note on good planning practice for councillors and officers dealing with planning matters".

- 4.2 The guidance states as follows in its foreword:

"Planning has a positive and proactive role to play at the heart of local government. It is a powerful tool that helps councils achieve the ambitions of local communities. Good planning stimulates growth and promotes innovation. It helps to translate goals for healthier communities, higher employment, better housing, reduced congestion, educational attainment, safe and sustainable communities into action through well-designed medical centres, offices, universities, homes, roads and other facilities vital to achieving them.

# Standards

## Committee

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- 4.3 The planning system works best when the roles and responsibilities of the many players essential to its effective operation are clearly understood. It is vital that elected councillors and planning officers understand their roles and the context and constraints in which they operate.
- 4.4 Planning decisions involve balancing:
- a) the needs and interests of individual constituents and the community, with
  - b) the need to maintain an ethic of impartial decision-making on what can be highly controversial proposals.
- 4.5 The challenge of achieving the balance between these dual roles led the LGA to issue its original Probity in planning guidance note in 1997. However, since then a comprehensive ethical framework for local government was introduced following the Local Government Act 2000. A revised national code of conduct for councillors was introduced in 2007. Each authority is required to adopt a local code of conduct that sets out rules governing the behaviour of its members.
- 4.6 This 2009 update provides refreshed advice on achieving this balance in the light of such changes. It also better reflects local authorities' roles as place shapers and the enhanced role for councillors as champions of their local communities. It recognises councillors' ability to participate in discussions prior to the receipt of a planning application on behalf of their communities, and engaging in spatial planning policy formulation.
- 4.7 It provides advice on this following the Killian Pretty review's recommendations. It also advises on how to avoid predetermination or bias in decision making. Whilst the advice is designed primarily for officers and councillors involved in plan-making and development management, it will also assist scrutiny and standards committees dealing with planning matters.

## 5. Key Issues

- 5.1 The LGA guidance "Probity in Planning" *identifies* the key issues as set out in the following paragraphs: A lot has changed in expectations of the planning system in recent years and planning is moving to the heart of local authorities' place-shaping and community planning roles.
- 5.2 Councillors are encouraged to act as champions of their local communities and this requires creative and wide engagement. The guidance from the LGA is intended to facilitate the development of councillors' community engagement roles.

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- 5.3 The Nolan report resulted in pressures on councillors to avoid contact with developers in the interests of ensuring probity. However in the place-shaping context, early councillor engagement is now positively encouraged to ensure sustainable development proposals can be harnessed to produce the settlements that communities need.
- 5.4 Planning decisions are not based on an exact science. Rather, they rely on informed judgement within a firm policy context. Decisions can be highly controversial as they affect the daily lives of everyone. This is heightened by the openness of the system (it actually invites public opinion before taking decisions) and the legal nature of the development plan and decision notices. It is important, therefore, that the process is characterised by open and transparent decision-making.
- 5.5 One of the key purposes of the planning system is to manage development in the public interest. In performing this role, planning necessarily affects land and property interests, particularly the financial value of landholdings and the quality of their settings. It is important, therefore, that planning authorities should make planning decisions affecting these interests openly, impartially, with sound judgement and for justifiable reasons. The process should leave no grounds for suggesting that a decision has been partial, biased or not wellfounded in any way.
- 5.6 Bearing in mind all these factors, it is not surprising that, from time to time, things can go wrong unless councils are on their guard. This is why the guidance is essential. The intention of the guidance is not to suggest that there is one best way of doing things. Local circumstances may well provide good reasons for local variations of policy and practice. However, each council should review the way in which it conducts its planning business, holding in mind the recommendations of the guidance.
- 5.7 The guidance refers to the actions of a planning committee of an authority, as the main decision-making forum on planning matters. However, it is recognised that authorities have developed a range of alternative forms of decision-making: area committees; planning boards, and of course, the full council itself - as the final arbiter in planning matters. It is important to stress, therefore, that the advice in this guidance note applies equally to these alternative forms of decision-making arrangements. Indeed, it becomes very important if the full council is determining planning applications referred to it, or adopting local development documents, that councillors taking those decisions understand the importance of this guidance. The guidance also applies to councillor involvement in any planning enforcement.

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- 5.8 The revised guidance note is useful to both councillors and officers who become involved in operating the planning system - it is not therefore restricted to professional town planners and planning committee members. The successful operation of the planning system relies on mutual trust and understanding of each other's role. It also relies on each ensuring that they act in a way which is not only fair and impartial but is also clearly seen to be so.

### Draft Code

- 5.9 The draft Planning Code of Good Practice at Appendix 1 has been drafted in response to the LGA's guidance, to enable Members to safely take the proactive role in place-shaping and community planning.
- 5.10 The draft Code covers a number of areas where Members and Councils can get themselves into difficulties, such as the declaration of interests, fettering of discretion, contact with applicants, developers and objectors, lobbying of and by Members, site visits and decision-making.
- 5.11 Many of the complaints about Members made to local authority Standards Committees or to Standards for England arise out of planning matters. Many of these relate to failure to disclose personal and prejudicial interests, but also to improper use of position and bullying. The adoption of the draft Code will help to ensure that Members are aware of what is appropriate in a planning context, to avoid the risk of the Council's decisions being held to be invalid or unlawful.
- 5.12 The Planning Committee has not yet had an opportunity to consider the proposed draft Code and Officers suggest that the draft Code, subject to any comments the Standards Committee may have, is referred to the Planning Committee for its consideration.

### 6. Other Implications

- |                  |   |                                       |
|------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Asset Management | - | There are no identified implications. |
| Community Safety | - | There are no identified implications. |
| Human Resources  | - | There are no identified implications. |
| Social Exclusion | - | There are no identified implications. |

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### 7. Lessons Learnt

Planning is one of the most controversial areas for Member decision-making and clear guidance is required for Members involved in the planning process to prevent them from falling foul of the rules.

### 8. Background Papers

Probity in Planning - : the role of councillors and officers – revised guidance note on good planning practice for councillors and officers dealing with planning matters” (Local Government Association, 2009)

Model Member Planning Code of Good Practice (ACSeS)

### 9. Consultation

There has been no consultation carried out in preparing this report.

### 10. Author of Report

The author of this report is Sue Mullins (Monitoring Officer), who can be contacted on extension 3210 (e-mail: [sue.mullins@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:sue.mullins@redditchbc.gov.uk) ) for more information.

### 11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Members’ Planning Code of Good Practice

## Members' Planning Code of Good Practice



### Appendix 1

#### Background

The Planning Code of Good Practice has been prepared in response to the Local Government Association's Guidance Note on the preparation of Local Codes of Good Practice on Planning Matters in the light of the introduction of the new ethical framework and replaces the Council's former local code of conduct on planning matters.

This Code is as per the model adopted by the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors (ACSeS) and launched on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2003. The drafting of the model code was subject to consultation and comment from a number of other local authorities through the machinery of the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors (ACSeS), the Standards Board for England, the Local Government Ombudsman, Audit Commission and from firms of solicitors or counsel acting on their behalf.

Planning is not an exact science. Rather, it relies on informed judgement within a firm policy context. It is also contentious because its decisions affect the daily lives of everyone and the private interests of individuals, landowners and developers and land values. All this is heightened by the openness of the system and the legal nature of development plans and decision notices.

Consequently, with any application which has been refused or approved in the face of opposition, the decision may well be reviewed in any of the following ways. Any question of a procedural defect, impropriety or misconduct, whether warranted or not, may lead to an application for judicial review or a complaint of maladministration to the Local Government Ombudsman. Even if not taking such action, the aggrieved party may attempt to convince others that the decision was flawed. Of necessity, the planning process must not only be fair, it must be seen to be fair.

#### Introduction

**The aim of this code of good practice:** to ensure that, in the planning process, there are no grounds for suggesting that a decision has been biased, partial or not well founded in any way.

**The key purpose of Planning:** to control development in the public interest.

**Your role as a Member of the Planning Authority:** to make planning decisions openly, impartially, with sound judgement and for justifiable reasons.

**When the Code of Good Practice applies:** this code applies to Members at all times when involving themselves in the planning process. (This includes when taking part in Planning Committee meetings or when involved on less formal occasions, such as meetings with Officers or the public and consultative meetings and pre-application discussions). It applies as equally to planning enforcement matters or site specific policy issues as it does to planning applications.

**The successful operation of the planning system:** relies on mutual trust and understanding of Member and Officer roles. It also relies on Members and Officers ensuring that they act in a way which is not only fair and impartial, but is clearly seen to be so.

**If you have any doubts about the application of this Code to your own circumstances you should seek advice early, from the Monitoring Officer, Deputy Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services Officers, and preferably, well before any meeting takes place.**

## **1. Relationship to the Members' Code of Conduct**

- **Do** apply the rules in the Members' Code of Conduct first, as there must always be compliance with these.
- **Do** then apply the rules in this Planning Code of Good Practice, which seek to explain and supplement the Members' Code of Conduct for the purposes of planning control. If you do not abide by this Code of Good Practice, you may put:
  - the Council at risk of proceedings on the legality or maladministration of the related decision; and
  - yourself at risk of either being named in a report made to the Standards Committee or Council or, a complaint being made to the Council's Standards Committee or, in case of serious breaches, a complaint being made to Standards for England (formerly the Standards Board for England).

## **2. Development Proposals and Interests under the Members' Code**

- **Do** disclose the existence and nature of your interest at any relevant meeting, including informal meetings or discussions with Officers and other Members. Preferably, disclose your interest at the beginning of the meeting and not just at the commencement of discussion on that particular matter. *(Use the disclosure form provided for disclosing interests.)*



- **Do** then act accordingly. **Where your interest is personal and prejudicial:-**
  - **Don't** participate, or give the appearance of trying to participate, in the making of any decision on the matter by the Council as the Planning Authority.
  - **Don't** try to represent Ward views, get another Ward Member to do so instead.
  - **Don't** get involved in the processing of the application.
  - **Don't** seek or accept any preferential treatment, or place yourself in a position that could lead the public to think you are receiving preferential treatment, because of your position as a Councillor. This would include, where you have a personal and prejudicial interest in a proposal, using your position to discuss that proposal with Officers or Members when other members of the public would not have the same opportunity to do so.
  - **Do** be aware that, whilst you are not prevented from seeking to explain and justify a proposal in which you have a personal and prejudicial interest to an appropriate Officer, in person or in writing, the Code place limitations on you in representing that proposal. You may address the Planning Committee but only to make a presentation in the same manner than would apply to a normal member of the public, after which you must leave the room whilst the meeting considers it. You may not remain to observe the meeting's considerations on it from the public gallery. In order to be able to address the Planning Committee on a proposal in which you have a personal and prejudicial interest, you must notify Planning Services of your wish to address the Committee in accordance with the Council's public speaking rules.
  - **Do** notify the Monitoring Officer in writing and note that:
    - you should send the notification no later than submission of the application in which you have a personal and prejudicial interest, where you can;
    - the proposal will always be reported to the Committee as a main item and not dealt with by Officers under delegated powers; and
    - it is advisable that you employ an agent to act on your behalf on the proposal in dealing with Officers and any public speaking at Planning Committee.
- **Do** seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services Officers if you are unsure about whether or not you have an interest which needs to be declared, preferably in advance of the meeting at which the interest is likely to arise.

### **3. Fettering Discretion in the Planning Process.**

- **Don't** fetter your discretion and therefore your ability to participate in planning decision making at this Council by making up your mind, or clearly appearing to have made up your mind (particularly in relation to an external interest or lobby group), on how you will vote on any planning matter prior to formal consideration of the matter at the meeting of the planning authority and of your hearing the Officer's presentation and evidence and arguments on both sides.

**Fettering your discretion** in this way and then taking part in the decision will put the Council at risk of a finding of maladministration and of legal proceedings on the grounds of there being a danger of bias or pre-determination or a failure to take into account all of the factors enabling the proposal to be considered on its merits.

- **Do** be aware that you are likely to have fettered your discretion where the Council is the landowner, developer or applicant and you have acted as, or could be perceived as being, a chief advocate for the proposal. (This is more than a matter of membership of both the proposing and planning determination committees, but that through your significant personal involvement in preparing or advocating the proposal you will be, or perceived by the public as being, no longer able to act impartially or to determine the proposal purely on its planning merits.)
- **Do** consider yourself able to take part in the debate on a proposal when acting as part of a consultee body (where you are also a member of the Parish Council, for example, or both a Borough and County Councillor), provided:
  - the proposal does not substantially effect the well being or financial standing of the consultee body;
  - you make it clear to the consultee body that:
    - your views are expressed on the limited information before you only;
    - you must reserve judgement and the independence to make up your own mind on each separate proposal, based on your overriding duty to the whole community and not just to the people in that area, ward or parish, as and when it comes before the Committee and you hear all of the relevant information; and
    - you will not in any way commit yourself as to how you or others may vote when the proposal comes before the Committee; and
  - you disclose the personal interest regarding your membership or role when the Committee comes to considers the proposal.
- **Don't** speak and vote on a proposal where you have fettered your discretion (for example, where you have committed yourself to a particular view on a planning issue prior to its consideration at Planning Committee). You do not also have to withdraw, but you may prefer to do so for the sake of appearances.
- **Do** explain that you do not intend to speak and vote because you have or you could reasonably be perceived as having judged (or reserve the right to judge) the matter elsewhere, so that this may be recorded in the minutes. (*Use the disclosure form provided for disclosing interests. – replace our form??*)
- **Do take the opportunity to exercise your separate speaking rights as a Ward/Local Member (this is granted by the authority's standing orders or by the consent of the Chairman and Committee) where you have represented your views or those of local electors and fettered your discretion, but do not have a personal and prejudicial interest. Where you do:**
  - *advise the proper Officer or Chairman that you wish to speak in this capacity before commencement of the item;*

- remove yourself from the member seating area for the duration of that item; and
- ensure that your actions are recorded.

*[We need to be clear what we're saying about Ward Member role in view of the recent issue with Cllr Clayton]*

#### **4. Contact with Applicants, Developers and Objectors**

- **Do** refer those who approach you for planning, procedural or technical advice to Officers.
- **Don't** agree to any formal meeting with applicants, developers or groups of objectors where you can avoid it. Where you feel that a formal meeting would be useful in clarifying the issues, you should never seek to arrange that meeting yourself but should request the Development Control Manager to organise it. The Officer(s) will then ensure that those present at the meeting are advised from the start that the discussions will not bind the authority to any particular course of action, that the meeting is properly recorded on the application file and the record of the meeting is disclosed when the application is considered by the Committee.
- **Do** otherwise:
  - follow the rules on lobbying;
  - consider whether or not it would be prudent in the circumstances to make notes when contacted; and
  - report to the Development Control Manager any significant contact with the applicant and other parties, explaining the nature and purpose of the contacts and your involvement in them, and ensure that this is recorded on the planning file.
- **Do** comply with the Council's Protocol on Pre-Application Discussions.

##### **In addition in respect of presentations by applicants/developers:**

- **Don't** attend a planning presentation unless an Officer is present and/or it has been organised by Officers.
- **Do** ask relevant questions for the purposes of clarifying your understanding of the proposals.
- **Do** remember that the presentation is not part of the formal process of debate and determination of any subsequent application, this will be carried out by the appropriate Committee of the planning authority.
- **Do** be aware that a presentation is a form of lobbying and you must not express any strong view or state how you or other Members might vote.
- **Don't** approach applicants, developers or agents with a view to securing changes to an application or achieving planning gain. Any such contact would normally be conducted by and through Officers and should always be reported to Planning Committee.

## 5. Lobbying of Councillors

“Lobbying”, which can be defined as an approach to a Councillor by an applicant, developer, objector or other third party, is considered an important part of the democratic process. The Nolan Report recognised the two roles that Councillors perform in the planning process, namely, the representation of public opinion and the determination of applications.

However, lobbying can, unless care and common sense are exercised by all parties, lead to the impartiality of a Councillor being called into question and the need for an interest to be declared. When being lobbied, all Councillors should take care about expressing an opinion which may be taken as indicating that they have already made up their mind on the application (“*predetermination*”) before they have considered all representations and the planning content. Councillors should not lobby other Councillors to act for them, or act as an agent for other Councillors, or put pressure on Officers for a particular recommendation.

- **Do** explain to those lobbying or attempting to lobby you that, whilst you can listen to what is said, it prejudices your impartiality and therefore your ability to participate in the Committee’s decision making to express an intention to vote one way or another or such a firm point of view that it amounts to the same thing (predetermination).
- **Do** give procedural advice, such as recommending that those who are lobbying you should write to the Development Control Manager so that their views can be included in the Officer’s report to Planning Committee.
- **Do** remember that your overriding duty is to the whole community not just to the people in your ward and, taking account of the need to make decisions impartially, that you should not improperly favour, or appear to improperly favour, any person, company, group or locality.
- **Don’t** accept gifts or hospitality from any person involved in or affected by a planning proposal. If a degree of hospitality is entirely unavoidable, ensure it is of a minimum, its acceptance is declared as soon as possible and remember to register [of interests](#) where its value is over £25 (in accordance with the Council’s rules on gifts and hospitality).
- **Do** copy or pass on any lobbying correspondence you receive to the Development Control Manager at the earliest opportunity. **Do** note the contents of the correspondence and advise that it has been passed to Officers.
- **Do** promptly refer to the Development Control Manager any offers made to you of planning gain or constraint of development, through a proposed s.106 Planning Obligation or otherwise.
- **Do** inform the Monitoring Officer where you feel you have been exposed to undue or excessive lobbying or approaches (including inappropriate offers of gifts or

hospitality), who will in turn advise the appropriate Officers to follow the matter up.

- **Do** note that, unless you have a personal and prejudicial interest, you will not have fettered your discretion or breached this Planning Code of Good Practice through:
  - listening or receiving viewpoints from residents or other interested parties;
  - making comments to residents, interested parties, other Members or appropriate Officers, provided they do not consist of or amount to pre-judging the issue and you make clear you are keeping an open mind;
  - seeking information through appropriate channels; or
  - being a vehicle for the expression of opinion or speaking at the meeting as a Ward Member, provided you explain your actions at the start of the meeting or item and make it clear that, having expressed the opinion or ward/local view, you have not committed yourself to vote in accordance with those views and will make up your own mind having heard all the facts and listened to the debate.

## 6. Lobbying by Councillors

- **Don't** become a member of, lead or represent an organisation whose primary purpose is to lobby to promote or oppose planning proposals. If you do, you will have fettered your discretion and are likely to have a personal and prejudicial interest.
- **Do** join general interest groups which reflect your areas of interest and which concentrate on issues beyond particular planning proposals, such as the Victorian Society, CPRE, Ramblers Association or a local civic society, but disclose a personal interest where that organisation has made representations on a particular proposal and make it clear to that organisation and the Committee that you have reserved judgement and the independence to make up your own mind on each separate proposal
- **Don't** excessively lobby fellow councillors regarding your concerns or views nor attempt to persuade them that they should decide how to vote in advance of the meeting at which any planning decision is to be taken
- **Don't** decide or discuss how to vote on any application at any sort of political group meeting, or lobby any other Member to do so. Political Group Meetings should never dictate how Members should vote on a planning issue.

## 7. Site Visits

A formal site visit will often be helpful if the impact of the proposed development is difficult to visualise from plans and supporting information including photographs, or there is good reason why the comments of the applicant and objectors cannot be adequately expressed in writing.

- **Do** try to attend site visits organised by the Council where possible.
- **Don't** request a site visit unless you feel it is strictly necessary because:
  - particular site factors are significant in terms of the weight attached to them relative to other factors or the difficulty of their assessment in the absence of a site inspection; or
  - there are significant policy or precedent implications and specific site factors need to be carefully addressed.
- **Do** ensure that any information which you gained from the site visit is reported back to the Committee, so that all Members have the same information
- **Do** ensure that you treat the site visit only as an opportunity to seek information and to observe the site.
- **Do** ask the Officers at the site visit questions or seek clarification from them on matters which are relevant to the site inspection.
- **Don't** hear representations from any other party, with the exception of the Ward Member(s) whose address must focus only on site factors and site issues. Where you are approached by the applicant or a third party, advise them that they should make representations in writing to the Development Control Manager and direct them to or inform the Officer present.
- **Don't** express opinions or views to anyone.
- **Don't** enter a site which is subject to a proposal other than as part of an official site visit, even in response to an invitation, as this may give the impression of bias unless:
  - you feel it is essential for you to visit the site other than through attending the official site visit,
  - you have first spoken to the Development Control Manager about your intention to do so and why (which will be recorded on the file) and
  - you can ensure you will comply with these good practice rules on site visits.

## 8. Public Speaking at Meetings

- **Don't** allow members of the public to communicate with you during the Committee's proceedings (orally or in writing) other than through the scheme for public speaking, as this may give the appearance of bias.
- **Do** ensure that you comply with the Council's procedures in respect of public speaking.

## 9. Officers

Councillors and Officers have different, but complementary roles. Both serve the public but Councillors are responsible to the electorate, while Officers are responsible to the Council as a whole. As a general rule, instructions will usually be given to Officers through a Council or Committee decision.

Staff must always act impartially. In order to ensure that senior Officers do so, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 imposes restrictions on their outside activities. The Council will identify which of their Officers are subject to these restrictions. This list will be reviewed regularly. Staff paid on salary grade SO1 and above must also seek permission from their Manager to carry out any private work.

- **Don't** put pressure on Officers to put forward a particular recommendation. (This does not prevent you from asking questions or submitting views to the Development Control Manager, which may be incorporated into any committee report).
- **Do** recognise that Officers are part of a management structure and only discuss a proposal, outside of any arranged meeting, with a Head of Service or those Officers who are authorised by their Head of Service to deal with the proposal at a Member level.
- **Do** recognise and respect that Officers involved in the processing and determination of planning matters must act in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for Officers and their professional codes of conduct, primarily the Royal Town Planning Institute's Code of Professional Conduct. As a result, planning Officers' views, opinions and recommendations will be presented on the basis of their overriding obligation of professional independence, which may on occasion be at odds with the views, opinions or decisions of the Committee or its Members.

## 10. Decision Making

- **Do** ensure that, if you request a proposal to go before the Committee rather than be determined through Officers' delegated powers, that your reasons are recorded and repeated in the report to the Committee.
- **Do** come to meetings with an open mind and demonstrate that you are open-minded.
- **Do** comply with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and make decisions in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- **Do** come to your decision only after due consideration of all of the information reasonably required upon which to base a decision. If you feel there is insufficient time to digest new information or that there is simply insufficient information before you, request that further information. If necessary, defer or refuse but **do** make sure that you keep an open mind until all relevant information is to hand to avoid fettering your discretion.
- **Don't** vote or take part in the meeting's discussion on a proposal unless you have been present to hear the entire debate, including the Officers' introduction to the

matter.

- **Do** have recorded the reasons for Committee's decision to defer any proposal.
- **Do** make sure that if you are proposing, seconding or supporting a decision contrary to Officer recommendations or the development plan that you clearly identify and understand the planning reasons leading to this conclusion/decision. These reasons must be given prior to the vote and be recorded. Be aware that you may have to justify the resulting decision by giving evidence in the event of any challenge.
- **Do** treat proposals for development of Council-owned land in the same way as those submitted by other persons.

## 11. Training

- **Don't** participate in decision making at meetings dealing with planning matters if you have not attended the mandatory planning training prescribed by the Council.
- **Do** endeavour to attend any other specialised training sessions provided, since these will be designed to extend your knowledge of planning law, regulations, procedures, Codes of Practice and the Development Plans beyond the minimum referred to above and thus assist you in carrying out your role properly and effectively.
- **Do** participate in the annual review of a sample of planning decisions to ensure that Members' judgements have been based on proper planning considerations.



**MEMBER'S DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

A Member with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

<b>MEMBER'S NAME:</b>	
<b>MEETING OF:</b>	
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	

❖ I disclose for the information of the meeting that I have a personal interest in .....

(1)

which will be the subject of consideration by the meeting.

THE NATURE OF THAT (2)  
INTEREST IS .....

AND (3) [Delete if not applicable] (4)

❖ The personal interest is a prejudicial interest and I shall withdraw from the chamber during deliberation of the item.

OR (4) [Delete if not applicable]

❖ The interest is disclosed on grounds of planning good practice, as I have or have appeared to judge [or reserve the right to judge] the planning matter elsewhere, including whilst serving on another body, and I will not take part in the debate or vote. I [will] [will not] [Delete as applicable] be also withdrawing from the chamber.

**SIGNED:** .....

**Dated** .....

❖ To be read out by the Member when invited to by the agenda or at the commencement of consideration of that item. PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND PASS IT TO THE COMMITTEE OFFICER DURING THE MEETING.

- (1) State details of the item (agenda item, planning application number, etc.)
- (2) State what the general nature of the personal interest in the matter is. (You do not need to supply specific details unless you wish to).
- (3) State only if this is a prejudicial as well as a personal interest

*A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must also:*

- *withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting is being held whenever it becomes apparent that the matter is being considered at that meeting (or immediately after giving statements or evidence to where the Code and the Council's public participation rules permit it) unless s/he has obtained a dispensation from the Standards Committee;*
- *not exercise executive functions in relation to that matter; and*
- *not seek improperly to influence a decision about that matter.*

(4) State where you have an interest which flows from fettering one's discretion as described in the Members' Planning Code of Good Practice.

What matters are being discussed at the meeting?

Does the business relate to or is it likely to affect to any of your registered interests?

These will include

- persons who employ you, appointed you or paid your election expenses;
- your business, company ownership, contracts or land; or
- gifts or hospitality received (in the previous three years of this Code)



# Research Report



## **Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)**

**Prepared for: The Standards Board for England**

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# Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

Prepared for: The Standards Board for England

Prepared by: **BMG Research**

**June 2009**

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Produced by **BMG Research**

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background and method

This report presents the results of a quantitative survey of satisfaction with the Standards Board for England (hereafter referred to as the Standards Board), attitudes to the ethical environment and in relation to changes to the ethical framework.

A self-completion postal methodology was applied, which collected the views of stakeholders from all types of local government authority in England, including principal authorities, town and parish councils, and police, park and fire authorities.

The survey included elected and non-elected members, monitoring officers and town and parish clerks.

The questionnaire was sent to named stakeholders who were asked to complete and return one questionnaire and distribute a number of further questionnaires in accordance with instructions and a random sampling procedure set out for them. An optimum number of questionnaires was distributed - effectively two in total for towns and parishes and seven in total for all other authorities. A further mailing was distributed for elected members who do not sit on local standards committees.

In total, 3,784 questionnaires were distributed across 473 principal councils and police, park and fire authorities, and 1,758 questionnaires were distributed across 879 town and parish councils. Response rates in the context of total questionnaires distributed were 44% among town and parish councils (775 questionnaires) and 32% among principal and other authorities (1,198 questionnaires). These response rates are in line with the most recent wave of research (wave 2), conducted in 2007.

A freepost envelope was provided for each questionnaire. A reminder mailing was sent out midway between first mail-out on 15 January 2009 and final close for returns on 9 March 2009.

Approximately 70% of the questionnaire was a repeat of one used in a baseline survey conducted in 2003 (reported on in 2004) and a second wave conducted and reported on in 2007. Further questions were developed to meet current intelligence requirements. Questions covered areas including:

- Overall attitudes to the Standards Board for England, including reasons for the levels of satisfaction described.
- Perceptions of success across a number of aspects of the Standards Board's role.
- Attitudes to the ethical environment, including support for the Code of Conduct and support for an additional code for officers, and perceptions of trends in the standard of members' behaviour.
- Perceptions of the Standards Board's success in supporting stakeholders through changes to the standards framework, and informing stakeholders of its new role as a strategic regulator.

- The perceived importance of a number of different types of information provided and how well-informed respondents feel in each case.
- Views on the amount and frequency of published information received, formats and topics, and aspects of its content, such as accuracy and clarity.
- Awareness, usage and views on a number of publications distributed by the Standards Board, and views on the Standards Board's website.
- Suggestions for improvement in terms of methods and aspects of communication, and topics covered.

The tracking of progress and other changes through waves one, two and three is an important objective of this research, reflected in charts throughout this report. Further charts showing such breakdowns can be produced on request.

## 1.2 Note to data tables and subgroups

Due to an increase in the town/parish sample this wave, the data was weighted back to the proportions of authority type in wave 2, to restore proportionality and allow wave on wave comparisons with waves 1 and 2. Detailed profiling of other demographics shows that total samples across the three waves are broadly comparative and therefore comparisons can be made in confidence between total sample data. For more information please see Appendix 2.

Subgroups of the total are charted in this report where the data suggests significant variations.

A cross-tabulated data report accompanies this written report. The cross-tabulated data may be consulted for more detail. Please note that table bases (i.e. the base for all statistics in the table) are labelled at the top left, and in most cases this is all respondents, including those who declare that they do not know, or who do not provide an answer. This replicates the way that data tables were produced in waves one and two. (A second data report is available, with all tables based on 'valid responses only' i.e. excluding don't know, not applicable and unstated responses).

Subgroups shown in the cross tabulated data include:

- Authority Type (town/parish; principal authority; police/park/fire)
- Principal Authority Type (principal authority subset: district; met etc)
- Region
- Position held in authority
- Whether on standards committee
- Role on standards committee
- Authority control (Political party)
- Gender
- Age
- Satisfaction with the Standards Board
- Experience of allegations

Where definitions within subgroups differ from previous waves, e.g. respondent role definitions, the closest possible defined role is included in comparative graphs.

Where no comparative role exists, or the base is too small (e.g. Council Leaders) that role is not charted in the report.

Where charts show data broken down by authority type, there are three types - town and parish, principal authority (LA) and other, or police, park and fire authorities.

In some interpretations of the data, reference is made to 'net' figure. This represents the balance of opinion on attitudinal questions such as the percentage of the total who are satisfied, minus the percentage of the total who are dissatisfied. Those with a neutral attitude are included in the base, and therefore lower net satisfaction ratings may reflect higher percentages with a neutral attitude, although the percentage of those dissatisfied relative to satisfied has the greatest impact.

Also provided with this report is an excel file of formatted verbatims showing open-ended responses on communications (suggestions about topics and formats). Classification was undertaken on the basis of the main theme of the statement made and therefore references made to relative numbers of mentions of each theme are provided as a guide only.

## 2 Key Findings and Recommendations

### 2.1 The majority of key indicators reflect positive trends

- Wave three (2009) continues and confirms a number of positive trends suggested by the wave 2 survey in 2007. Improvements can be seen in many areas including overall satisfaction with the work of the Standards Board; proportions of stakeholders who speak highly of the Standards Board; perceptions that members' standard of behaviour has improved; and ratings of the published information and guidance provided by the Standards Board.
  - A total of 46% are now satisfied with the work of the Standards Board, cf. 38% in 2007 and 29% in 2004. Bases unless stated in this report include all stakeholders responding, including don't know and no opinion. When we exclude respondents other than those who give a satisfaction rating, 50% are satisfied in 2009, cf. 42% in 2007 and cf. 35% in 2004.
  - 30% of the total sample would now speak highly of the Standards Board (with/without being asked), cf. 23% in 2007 and 21% in 2004.
  - 47% of stakeholders think members' standard of behaviour has improved in recent times cf. 44% in 2007 and 27% in 2004.
  - Satisfaction with published information and guidance (very/fairly) has increased to 61% in 2009, from 55% in 2007 and 50% in 2004.
- Reasons given for satisfaction with the work of the Standards Board include the quality, clarity or promptness of the support and guidance provided as well as general support for the Code of Conduct and the importance of maintaining standards of behaviour.

### 2.2 A small minority of indicators suggest areas for greater focus

In a minority of areas wave on wave analysis shows selected indicators to have either remained static or declined slightly. It is recommended that these areas receive some strategic focus. Areas for suggested focus include the following:

- Timeliness of communications i.e. responding promptly, getting communications to stakeholders to allow time for their own decision-making or according to a timetable which suits them.
  - Nets (% good minus % poor) for timeliness of response by letter are +56% in 2009, cf. +58% in 2007 and +50% in 2004.
- 'Ease of getting hold of the right person' when contacting the Standards Board.
  - While 'ease of getting hold of the right person' remained static in waves 1 and 2, (+64% in both waves), it appears to have declined in its net rating in 2009 (with a +58% net rating as 'good').

- Frequency of website usage i.e. encouraging more stakeholders to log on and making those who already log on do so more often.
  - 42% of stakeholders had not visited the Standards Board website in the last year. This is only 1% less than in 2007, when 43% had not visited the website. In 2009 7% visit the site at least fortnightly and a further 15% monthly, cf. 8% at least fortnightly and 15% at least monthly in 2007.
- Specific stakeholder types remain less engaged with the Standards Board for England than others, and may require greater tailoring of communications to enhance stakeholder relationships.
  - In terms of being kept personally informed, responses from members of the exec./cabinet and elected members continue to be more negative than positive, with net ratings of -3% in each case. Nevertheless, this is a significant improvement on 2007 when net ratings were -42% among members of the exec/cabinet and -12% among elected members. Therefore, while there is some way to go, the trend is a positive one.
  - Only 15% of town and parish stakeholders state in 2009 that they would speak highly of the Standards Board, cf. more than a third of stakeholders in other authorities.
  - Satisfaction with published information and guidance among town and parish stakeholders. 82% of monitoring officers are satisfied with the Standards Board's published information and guidance, cf. 55% of town and parish clerks.
- Reasons given for being dissatisfied with the Standards Board often relate to judgments and perceived inconsistency or ineffectiveness of decision-making, in addition to timeliness of communications and continued frustrations in some cases with unmanageable quantities of vexatious/spurious allegations.
- In terms of the Standards Board for England's investigative function, perceptions of 'the speed with which investigations are undertaken', are rated lowest of three aspects assessed (net satisfaction of +8%), while again professionalism is highest (net satisfaction rating +31%).

### 2.3 Tackling public lack of confidence

- Stakeholder responses suggest that the Standards Board is now more likely to be seen to be playing a role in terms of public perceptions of ethics in local government: Net perceived success in 'Enhancing the reputation of local government among the public' was -7% in 2004, and -12% in 2007, but has now increased to +7%. In other words, 7% more stakeholders consider the Standards Board successful on this aspect than who consider it unsuccessful.
- Nevertheless, a comparison of stakeholder versus public responses (using data from the Cardiff University/BMG study on *Public Trust in Local Government*)

shows a significant disparity between public and stakeholder confidence in the process.

- Open-ended comments from local authority stakeholders reflect a demand for more guidance from the Standards Board on dealing with public perceptions and in particular managing media involvement.
- There is general support for a theoretical code of conduct for officers (82% agree while only 9% disagree). Support decreases slightly among monitoring officers and town/parish clerks relative to elected member and independent respondents.

## 2.4 Demand for information

- As in previous waves, the majority of respondents consider that the amount of information and guidance they receive from the Standards Board is 'about right'.
- 23% of stakeholders now consider that they would like more information and guidance from the Standards Board, cf. 26% in 2007 and 28% in 2004. This indicator is not clear-cut since communications can serve both to satiate demand and to breed further demand. It would therefore be interesting to investigate via the planned focus group research any reasons why groups of stakeholders are still seeking a greater amount of information and guidance.
- Topics in demand in future include good practice for standards committees, sanctions guidance and alternative action. Specific requests were also raised for more guidance for dual-hatted members, information on how to deal with public perceptions locally and information on other authorities' standards committees' practices.
- A particular disparity remains, as in previous waves, between the level to which stakeholders feel informed in terms of case law examples, and the importance that they attribute to this type of information going forward (suggesting ongoing demand).

## 2.5 Bedding in the devolved framework

- Encouragingly, 74% of stakeholders agree and only 9% disagree that improving members' standard of behaviour is now a local issue (net +65%).
- Similarly, 72% agree and 10% disagree that they support the devolution of the ethical framework (net +62%).
- Slightly fewer stakeholders feel confident enough to confirm that the 'new ethical framework is now firmly embedded in local government' (61% cf. 9% who disagree, generating net agreement of +52%). This indicator will be particularly useful to track going forward. Potential methods/guidance to assist the process may be an interesting topic of discussion in the planned focus group research.

### Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

- In the ethical environment attitude battery, the statement with which fewest respondents agree relates to the standards committee having a high profile within the authority (42%). A general strategy of boosting the profile of standards committees and spreading greater understanding of their role across local authority staff and members and among local citizens would be likely to be well received by many survey respondents.



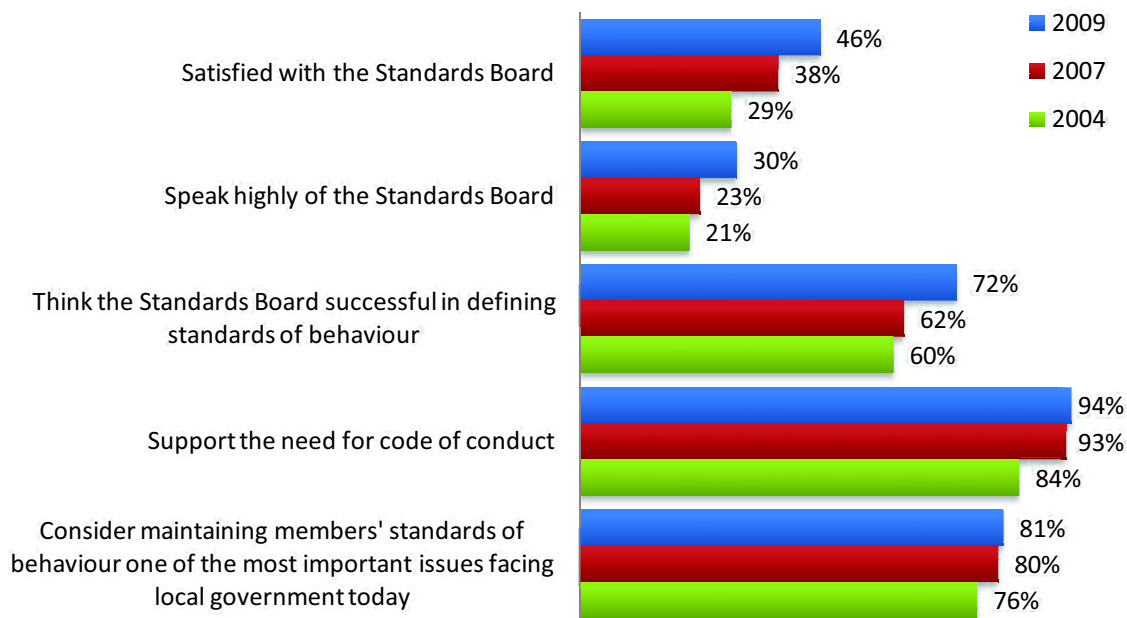
### 3 Overall Attitudes to the Standards Board

#### 3.1 Key attitude indicators (wave on wave)

Wave one was reported on in 2004, when the Standards Board was beginning to develop its reputation in local government. Wave two reflected attitudes towards a firmly established body with a higher profile in local government, moving into the new framework. The current wave 3 (2009) reflects perceptions towards the Standards Board in its new role as a strategic regulator within a devolved system.

As shown in figure 1, results on selected key indicators show positive progress in terms of attitudes to the work of the Standards Board and ethical standards in general.

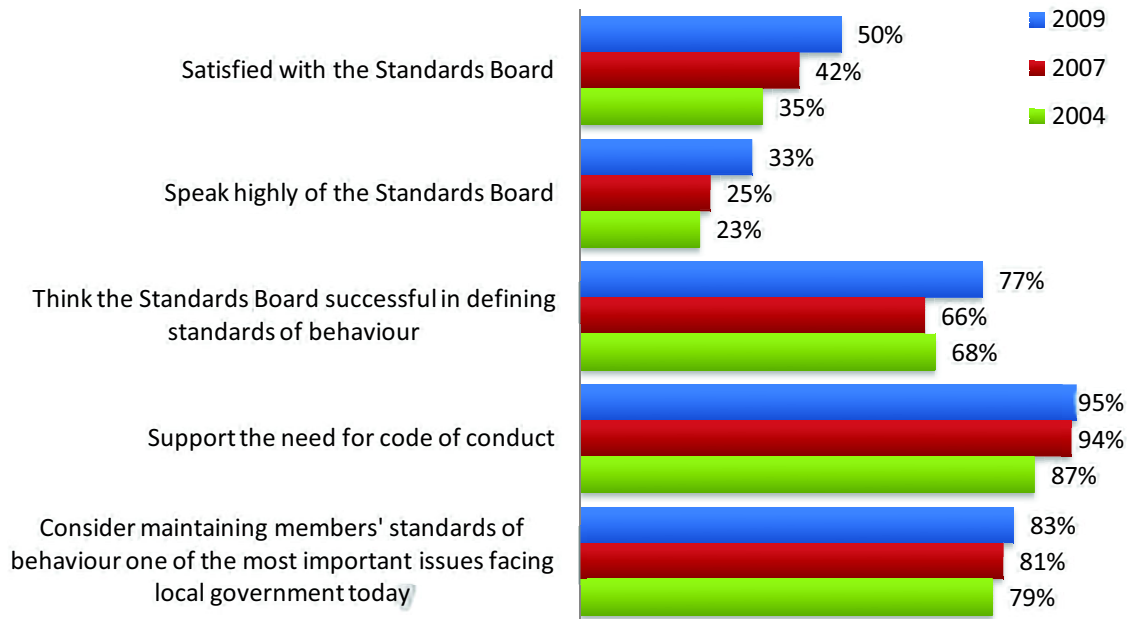
**Figure 1: Key wave on wave Indicators (%very/fairly combined)**



Base: All respondents (varies by question)

The same data, excluding 'don't knows' and 'no opinions' from the base, are shown in figure 2 for reference. Again, there are no instances of decline.

**A note regarding Figure 1 and subsequent charts of this format: Horizontal bars represent positive responses e.g. the percentage who agree with the statement or the percentage who are very/fairly satisfied. It must not be concluded that the remaining respondents gave negative responses, since the percentage not shown also includes those who are neither positive nor negative (neutral), and, unless specified, those who reply 'don't know/no opinion'.**

**Figure 2: Key wave on wave Indicators (%very/fairly combined) of base excluding don't know/ no opinion/ not provided**

Base: All respondents excluding don't know / no opinion (varies by question)

### 3.2 Satisfaction with the work of the Standards Board

46% of respondents are satisfied with the work of the Standards Board overall (comprising 11% 'very' and 35% 'fairly satisfied'). 12% are dissatisfied (comprising 3% 'very' and 8% 'fairly dissatisfied').

In 2007 38% were satisfied; 6% stating 'very' and 32% 'fairly' satisfied. 19% were dissatisfied (comprising 5% 'very' and 14% 'fairly dissatisfied').

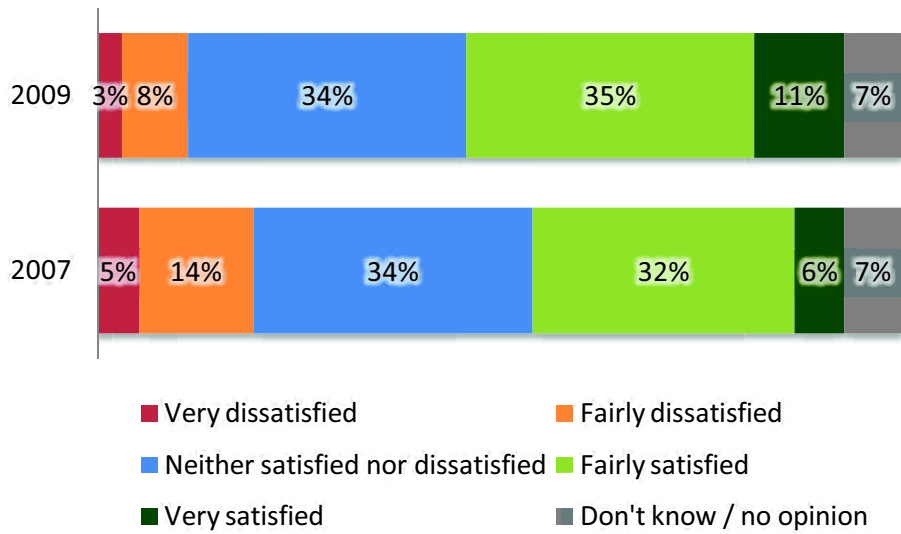
Net satisfaction (% satisfied minus % dissatisfied) is +34%, a notable improvement on 2007, when net satisfaction was +19%, and 2004, when net satisfaction was +14%.

In 2009, 26% of town and parish councils, 52% of principal authorities and 54% of police, park and fire authorities describe themselves as 'very' or 'fairly satisfied'. Satisfaction among towns and parishes is similar in 2007 (25%) while other authorities have shown significant improvement since then. In 2007, 41% of principal authorities and 47% of police, park and fire authorities described themselves as 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with the Standards Board.

Figures 3 and 4 show how satisfaction with the work of the Standards Board has progressed wave on wave.

As in 2007, 16% of town and parish stakeholders feel unable to provide a satisfaction rating, and many open-ended comments given by these respondents underline their lesser familiarity with the Standards Board than other types of authorities.

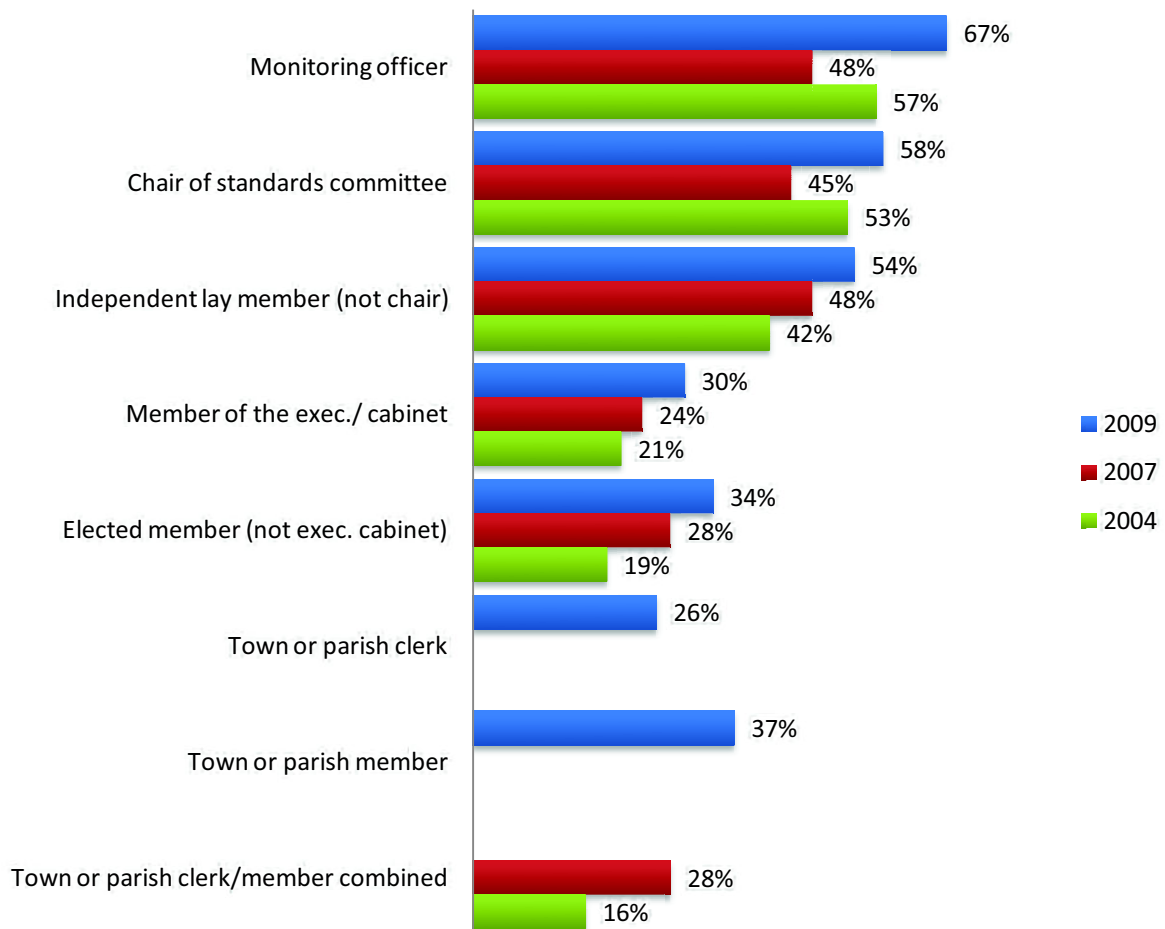
**Figure 3: Satisfaction breakdown in Waves 2 and 3**



All respondents (2007 = 1,402; 2009 = 1,973)

Base:

**Figure 4: % satisfied with the work of the Standards Board (very/fairly) by role and wave**



Base: All respondents (2009 = 1,973; 2007 = 1,402; 2004 = 1,343)

## Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

In 2007, satisfaction among monitoring officers had declined slightly such that Independent lay members replaced them as the group most satisfied with the Standards Board. This trend has not continued, and current data suggests that more than two thirds of monitoring officers are satisfied (67%), followed by 58% of chairs and 54% of independent lay members.

In 2009, the questionnaire allows a distinction to be drawn between town/ parish clerks and town/ parish members for the first time. While the average of the two shows a satisfaction level similar to the percentage for the two combined roles last wave, it is interesting to note a higher degree of satisfaction among town and parish members (37%) than among their clerks (26%).

### 3.2.1 Reasons for Satisfaction

Satisfaction is now heavily motivated by the day-to-day activities of the Standards Board and the support it provides. This includes the quality, clarity or promptness of the support and guidance provided. The following 'reasons for being satisfied with the work of the Standards Board' are typical of those given:

***"I have found their guidance helpful."***

***"I believe they communicate well, are responsive, maintain high standards and make it clear about what their role is."***

***"Helpful and well presented guidance and information. A very useful website."***

***"They listen to others' views and act on them. They provide training material and assistance."***

***"It has pioneered a mechanism;...consulted, corrected and devised new procedures...; delivered detailed advice, all pretty well to time."***

***"Information is provided on activities ...; literature offers good guidance."***

***"Guidance has mostly been clear and helpful. Where it has not, responses have been listened to and we feel that they have been taken into account."***

***"Has raised its profile and appears more accessible."***

Many others who describe themselves as 'satisfied' give reasons relating to the importance of the Code of Conduct and standards in general, and of conveying this throughout local government.

***"I consider it was necessary to bring in codes of conduct. Standards Board has endeavoured to ensure information is kept current and that regulations are applied consistently."***

***"Transparent regulation of the government officers is very important."***

***"Ethical behaviour overseen by an independent board, is a cornerstone of democracy which is essential to stem the corrosive risk of corruption."***

***"They set a benchmark standard for councillors."***

***"I think it is extremely important that the highest standards are maintained in public life. The Standards Board helps to promote and underpin such standards. When high***

***profile cases arise, we see how highly the public value ethical behaviour in politicians at all levels.***

***“They have formulated and pushed through to all councils in UK a conduct regime which should go some way to reassure the ‚cynical‘ public that they can trust and have faith in their elected councillors. Pity the same cannot be said of MPs, MEPs and members of the House of Lords.”***

Some describe their support for devolution of powers to local standards committees.

***“I approve of the recent move to make local standards boards (committees) the ‚first point of call‘. I felt it was too remote and discouraged participation.”***

***“They are producing a code which is relevant to current situations and the devolved measures should improve involvement at a local level.”***

Smaller groups of respondents reflected that the Standards Board had developed a positive role in a difficult and complex area:

***“Overall it handles a difficult and complex area in a professional and prompt way.”***

***“I am a little concerned that excessive amounts of public money are sometimes spent on the investigation of very trivial matters. But on the whole they do a good job.”***

Sound decision-making and fairness in investigations are also mentioned:

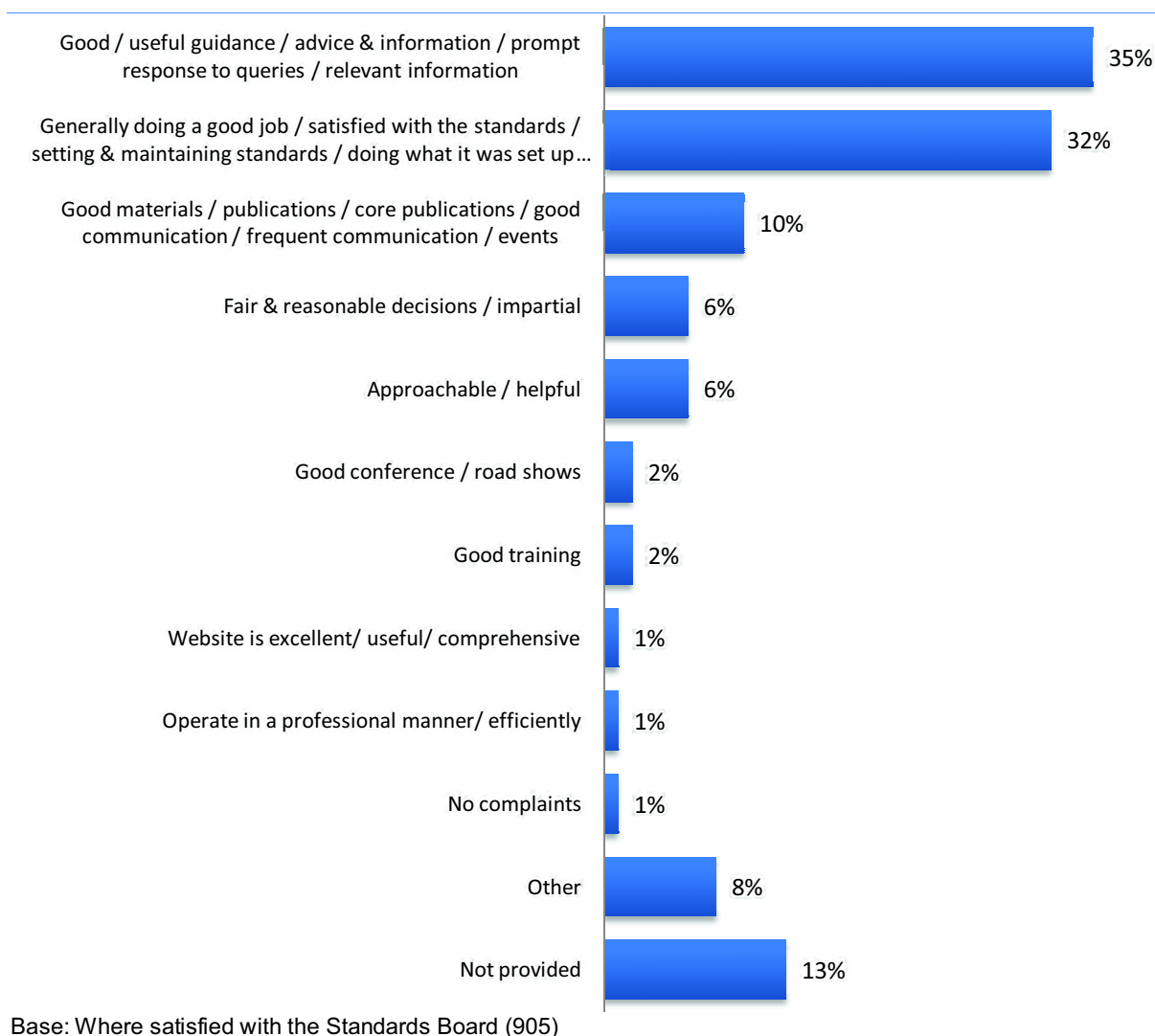
***“They deal with cases fairly quickly and appear to be logical and fair in their dealings. They appreciate the problems that councillors can cause due to their attitude.”***

***“It seems to be fair.”***

***“Have had very little contact with them but we received good support during an investigation and hearing process several years ago.”***

***“Having been involved in a situation that I believe was dealt with by the Standards Board I am very satisfied with the way it was conducted.”***

The reasons given for being satisfied were coded into broad categories and are shown in the figure to follow, to provide an indication of the relative importance of the types of feedback received:

**Figure 5: Reasons for Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England (Q3)**

### 3.2.2 Reasons for Dissatisfaction

Among those dissatisfied with the work of the Standards Board, the main gripes appear to relate to judgments and perceived inconsistency in decision-making.

***“Their decisions are not consistent and often do not reflect the gravity of the case before them.”***

***“Perverse and undemocratic decisions in respect of dual-hatted members.”***

***“In one case they found a member guilty of bullying a member of staff, but imposed no penalty. That member considers himself not guilty.”***

***“I believe that the ratio of time and money spent on preparing a case is not in direct relation to the sentences handed out. A month or two’s suspension is often not enough to be a deterrent to unacceptable behaviour.”***

A minority accuse the Standards Board of lack of action:

***“Very weak. Appear reluctant to investigate complaints.”***

***“Too often the board find a complaint justified but fail to take action.”***

***“The results of their investigations are too often spineless as they are too reluctant to make a proper judgement. This makes a mockery of the local council’s anti-bullying policies.”***

Timeliness in terms of its communications or investigations is also seen as a problem area by some:

***“The board takes too long making their minds up about what to do about a member that has been reported to them.”***

***“Timing of issue of guidance on local assessment is inadequate. They are not responding to referrals for investigation within their own timescales. They are slow to start an investigation involving high profile members with potential impact on future mayor.”***

***“Unacceptable delays in response to correspondence and delays in providing guidance in 2008 on revised methods of working.”***

Other specific criticisms relate to the wastefulness associated with vexatious or spurious complaints. This has been an ongoing theme if the open-ended feedback in all waves of the research.

***“I am amazed by the Standards Board’s inability to suggest a solution to the huge number of unsubstantiated complaints made by one individual in Somerset, at a staggering cost.”***

***“The Standards Board devotes more attention to complaint handling than it does to complaints prevention. Too much money is spent on the Annual Assembly at the expense of local and regional training. Material such as the guide for authorities seems to be produced without regard for economy.”***

***“The system is very open to abuse by incompetent lawyers and the political element.”***

One respondent suggested that an expanded advisory service might assist the prevention of unnecessary complaints, while another felt strongly that the Standards Board was too open to political influence:

***“There does not appear to be an advisory service. The only resource seems to be to make a complaint and see what happens.”***

***“The way they behave is grossly incompetent and autocratic. This is from personal experience of seeking advice over issues and having suffered at their hands for 3 years. It is also my opinion that they are subject to political manipulation.”***

Others pick out what they see as flaws in the investigatory process, including some who express dissatisfaction with the new devolved system, again linking this to perceived political manipulation at the local level.

***“The process is flawed. It does not effectively inspire confidence. The need for written evidence when there may be witnesses makes a mockery of the system. There needs to be greater clarity and accountability.”***

***“To still say that the Standards Board is responsible for the policies of the local councils is an absolute joke.”***



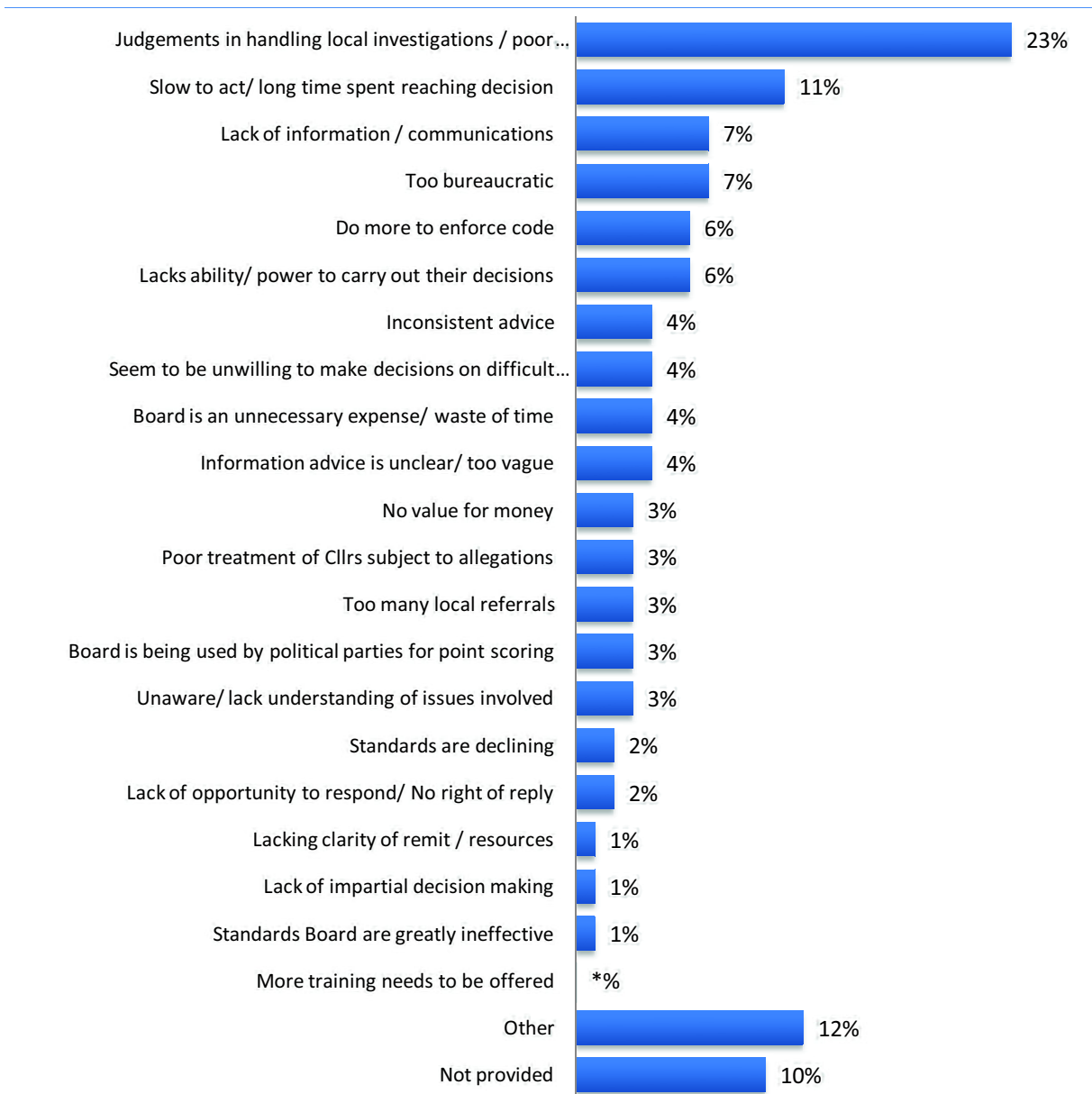
***“With the passing down of power to the District Councils there is a lack of action. Complaints are not always investigated and even when a breach is proved there is a lack of action taken.”***

***“The board will not accept complaints from the councillors instead councillors have to complain to the local authority whom may be the subject of the complaint. I have cases where the local authority has obstructed complaints.”***

***“The standards regime is being used to silence critics of the council establishment.”***

The comments were coded into broad categories and are shown below to provide a reflection of the types of feedback received:

**Figure 6: Reasons for Dissatisfaction with the Standards Board for England (Q4)**



Base: Where dissatisfied with the Standards Board (229)



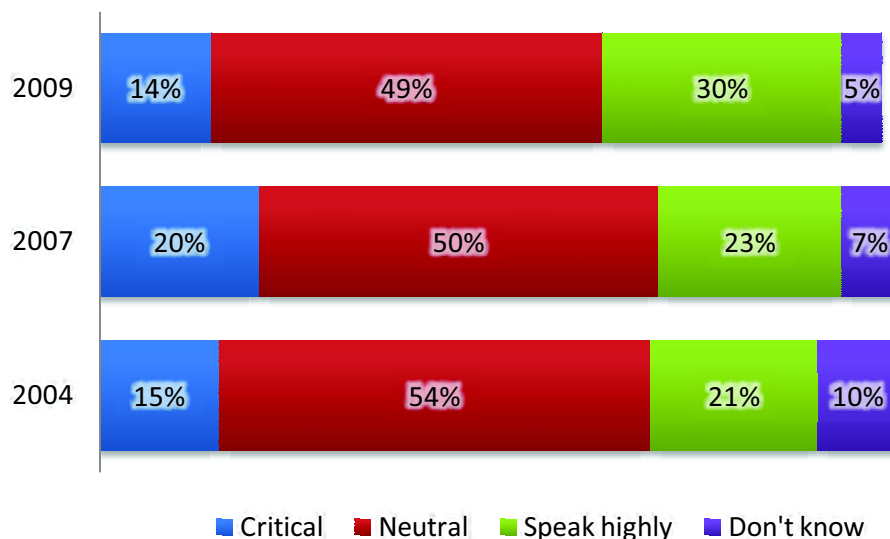
### 3.3 Advocacy

Advocacy of an organisation – often a key measure of future success – was introduced as a theme in the baseline 2004 survey and repeated in 2007 and 2009.

Between waves 1 and 2 there was a slight shift towards fewer neutral respondents and corresponding increases in both critics and advocates. In wave 3, encouragingly, the proportion of critics has decreased whilst those who would speak highly of the Standards Board have increased. In 2009, half the proportion as in 2004 responds 'don't know' (5% and 10% respectively).

Please note that charts combine those who would be critical with and without being asked, and those who would speak highly with and without being asked. Those who would speak highly of the standards board without being asked make up 7% of the 2009 sample, cf.4% in 2007 and 4% in 2004, underlining the positive shift in results.

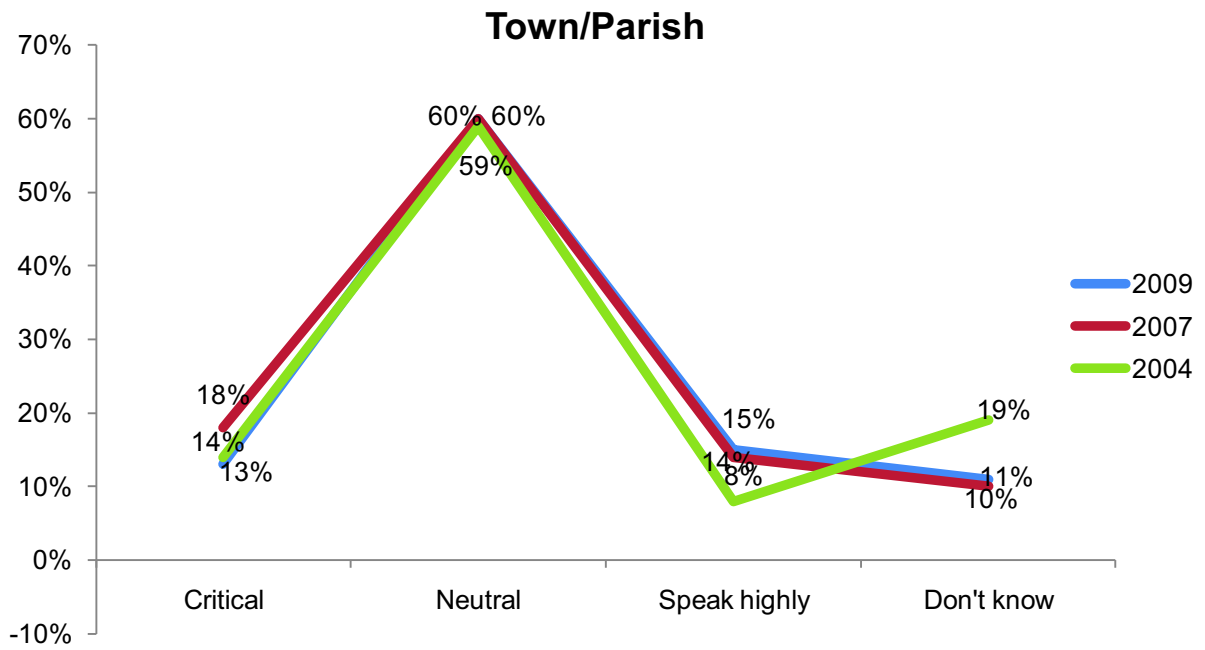
**Figure 7: Advocacy of the Standards Board by wave (Q1)**



Base: All respondents (2009 = 1,973; 2007 = 1,402; 2004 = 1,343)

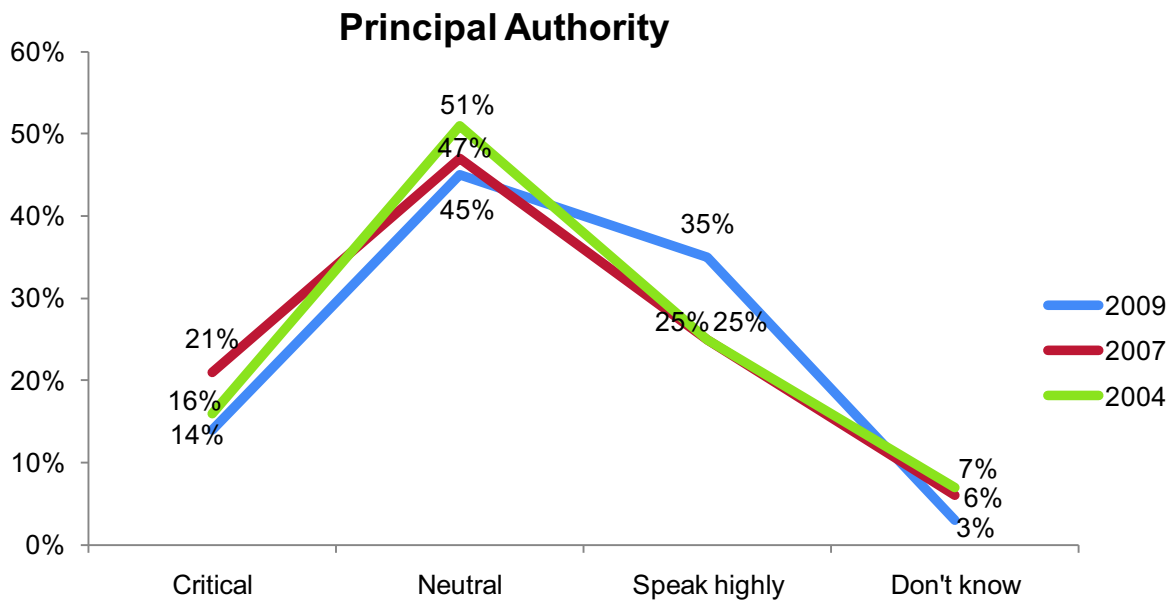
As shown in the three figures to follow, the positive shift is largely accounted for by principal authorities and police, park and fire authorities, while town and parish authorities show no significant development in terms of their advocacy. (This follows a reduction the previous wave in terms of the level of town and parish respondents who were unable to give a view).

**Figure 8: How town/parish stakeholders would speak of the Standards Board (Q1)**

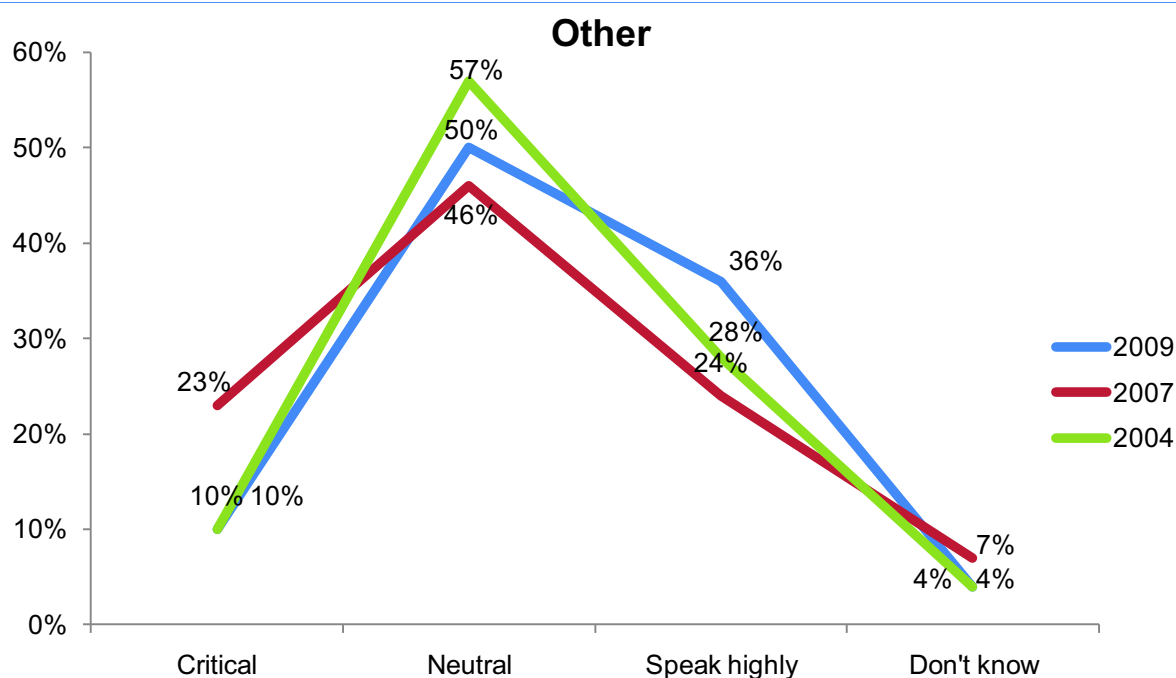


All town/ parish stakeholders in each wave

**Figure 9: How principal authority stakeholders would speak of the Standards Board (Q1)**



All principal authority stakeholders in each wave

**Figure 10: How other stakeholders would speak of the Standards Board (Q1)**

All other authority stakeholders in each wave

### 3.4 Aspects of the Standards Board's work

Respondents were asked to rate the level of success achieved by the Standards Board across ten aspects of its work, the majority of which were also assessed in previous waves of the research (unless labelled 'new' in figure 11).

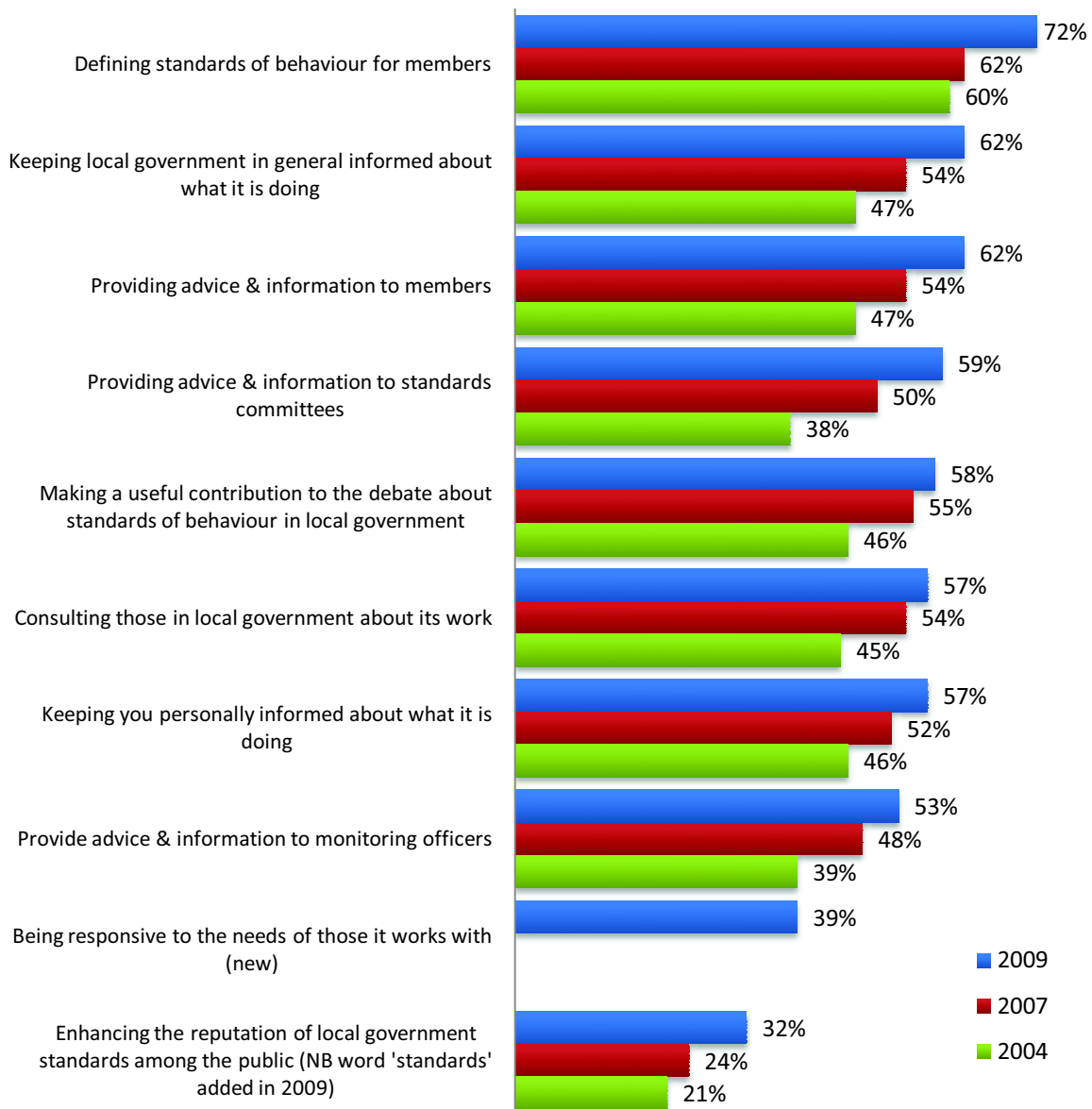
The words 'in the last year' were appended to the question this wave to reflect the growing maturity of the organisation and the need to distinguish perceptions of current success from more historical perceptions.

The proportions of those rating the Standards Board as 'very' or 'fairly successful' in each aspect are shown in figure 11, tracked against previous waves. This chart shows that the change from wave 2 to wave 3 is positive in each case. The ordering of the aspects is less insightful, due to varying proportions responding 'don't know' on each aspect (higher in respect of Standards Board support of specific job roles, such as monitoring officers, or 'those it works with'). Figure 12 provides more insight by showing how many respondents state don't know on each aspect, and is ordered on the basis of net success (% perceiving success minus % perceiving lack of success).

As shown, the Standards Board continues to be considered successful by more than half of respondents for all bar two of the aspects tested.

More than seven in ten stakeholders now consider the Standards Board successful in defining standards of behaviour for members, and more than three in five consider it successful in keeping local government in general informed about what it is doing, and providing information to members (62% in each case).

**Figure 11: Perceived success in different aspects of its work, wave on wave (%very/fairly successful) (Q5)**



Base: All respondents (2009 = 1,973; 2007 = 1,402; 2004 = 1,343)

As shown, only 39% concur with the organisation’s success on the aspect of ‘being responsive to the needs of those it works’ - tested for the first time in 2009. However, most of those who do not rate the Standards Board as successful on this aspect respond don’t know (25%) rather than unsuccessful (11%) as detailed in figure 12.

Only a third of respondents consider the Standards Board to be successful in enhancing the reputation of local government standards among the public. More here respond unsuccessful (25%) than don’t know (7%). However, even on this aspect perceptions do appear to be showing a slow upward trend since 2004.

**Figure 12: Perceived success on aspects of its work (2009) incl. detail and net rating (Q5)**

	Very unsuccessful	Fairly unsuccessful	Neither /nor	Fairly successful	Very successful	Don't know	Not provided	Net (% success - % unsuccessful)
<b>Defining standards of behaviour for members</b>	2%	7%	13%	55%	18%	4%	1%	+62%
<b>Providing advice and information to standards committees</b>	2%	4%	14%	40%	19%	20%	1%	+53%
<b>Keeping local government in general informed about what it is doing</b>	3%	9%	18%	49%	13%	8%	1%	+50%
<b>Providing advice and information to monitoring officers</b>	1%	2%	9%	33%	20%	32%	2%	+49%
<b>Providing advice and information to members</b>	4%	10%	18%	44%	17%	6%	1%	+48%
<b>Consulting those in local government about its work</b>	2%	9%	19%	46%	12%	11%	1%	+46%
<b>Making a useful contribution to the debate about standards of behaviour in local government</b>	4%	10%	20%	45%	13%	7%	2%	+44%
<b>Keeping you personally informed about what it is doing</b>	8%	12%	19%	42%	15%	3%	1%	+37%
<b>Being responsive to the needs of those it works with</b>	3%	8%	23%	32%	8%	25%	1%	+28%
<b>Enhancing the reputation of local government standards among the public</b>	7%	18%	35%	27%	5%	7%	1%	+7%
<b>Base: All wave 3 respondents (1,973)</b>								

Between 2004 and 2007, two aspects showed a decrease in net success: 'Defining standards for members' and 'Enhancing the reputation of local government among the public'. In contrast, between the 2007 and 2009 waves, all aspects show an improvement.

As shown in figure 13, wave 3 sees the first instance of positive net success in relation to 'enhancing the reputation of local government standards among the public' (from -12% to +7%). Defining standards of behaviour and providing advice and information to standards committees have also seen notable increases in net success since 2007.

**Figure 13: Net perceived success on aspects of its work wave on wave (% successful - % unsuccessful) (Q5)**

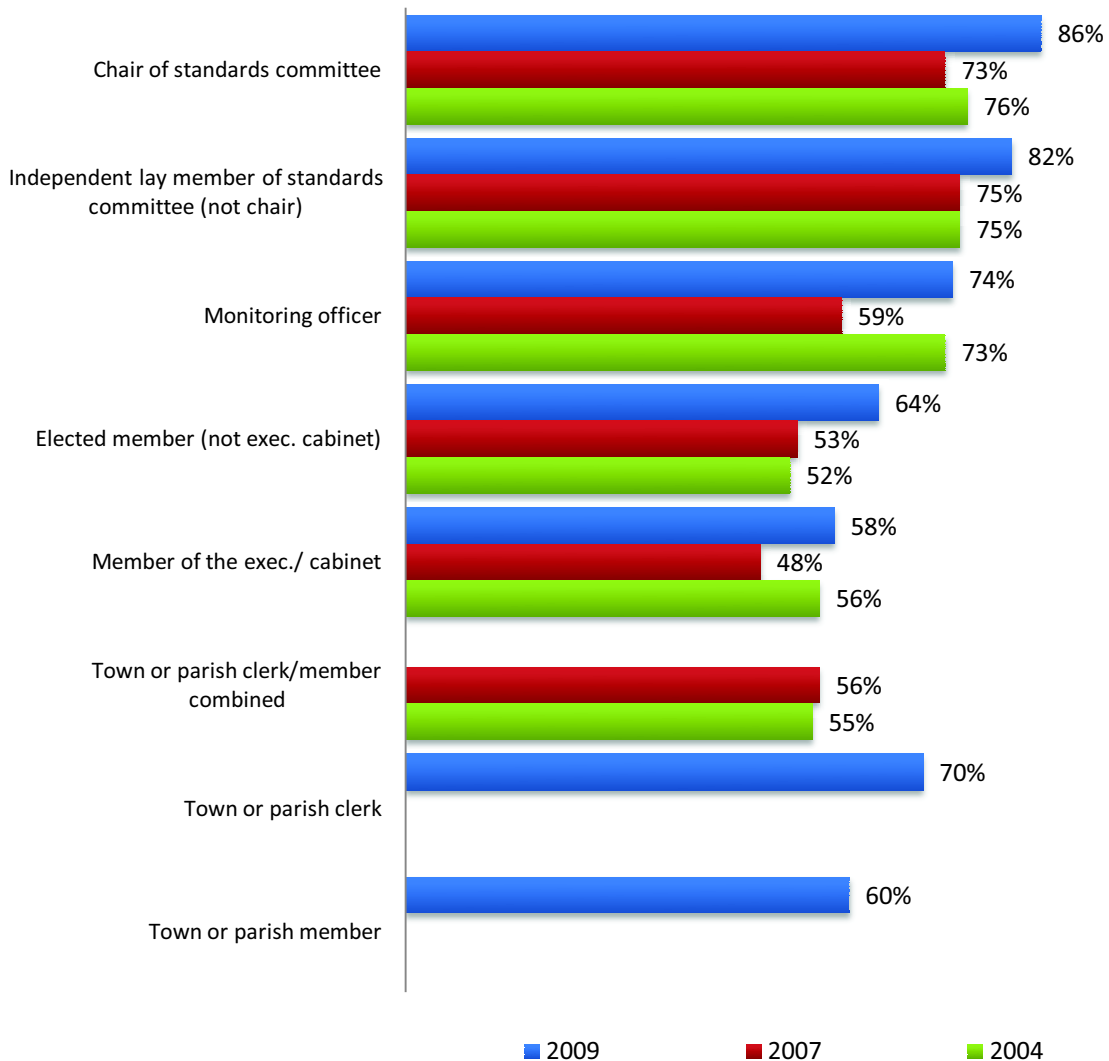
	2009 Net	2007 Net	2004 Net
<b>Defining standards of behaviour for members</b>	+62%	+43%	+48%
<b>Providing advice and information to standards committees</b>	+53%	+40%	+29%
<b>Keeping local government in general informed about what it is doing</b>	+50%	+37%	+26%
<b>Providing advice and information to monitoring officers</b>	+49%	+43%	+33%
<b>Providing advice and information to members</b>	+48%	+35%	+26%
<b>Consulting those in local government about its work</b>	+46%	+39%	+30%
<b>Making a useful contribution to the debate about standards of behaviour in local government</b>	+44%	+36%	+29%
<b>Keeping you personally informed about what it is doing</b>	+37%	+28%	+20%
<b>Being responsive to the needs of those it works with</b>	+28%	NA	NA
<b>Enhancing the reputation of local government standards among the public</b>	+7%	-12%	-7%
<b>Base: All respondents (2009 = 1,973; 2007 = 1,402; 2004 = 1,343)</b>			

### 3.4.1 Defining standards of behaviour

Between 2004 and 2007 a negative shift was seen in terms of perceptions of the Standards Board's success in defining standards, which was largely accounted for by a change in perceptions of some monitoring officers. As shown in figure 14, the negative trend has not continued and now 74% of monitoring officers consider the Standards Board successful at defining standards of behaviour. As in previous waves, the stakeholder groups most likely to consider the standards board successful on this aspect are standards committee chairs and independent members.

Town and parish stakeholder perceptions also appear to have shifted on this aspect (from under 60% perceiving the Standards Board successful on this in 2007 to over 60% in 2009).

**Figure 14: Perceived success in defining standards of behaviour, by wave and role (% very/fairly) (Q5)**



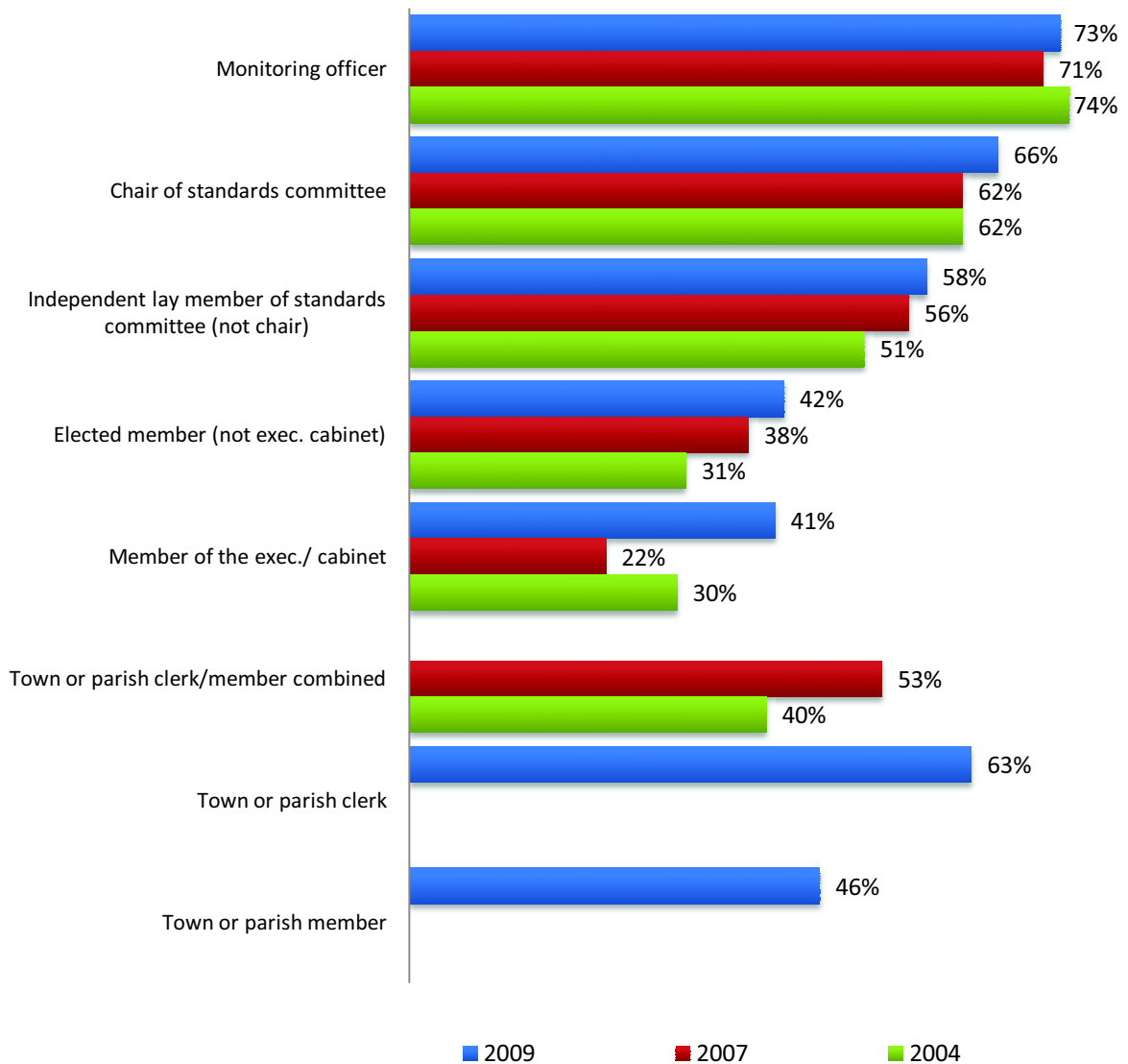
Base: All respondents (2009 = 1,973; 2007 = 1,402; 2004 = 1,343)

### 3.4.2 Consulting with local government about its work

Monitoring officers are most likely to consider the Standards Board successful in terms of consulting with local government about its work, and least likely to consider the Standards Board unsuccessful, or state don't know. As shown in figure 15, 73% of monitoring officers now respond successful here, which is at a similar level to previous years.

The most apparent increases are seen among members of the exec/cabinet and among town and parish stakeholders. In wave 3 21% of members of the exec/cabinet respond unsuccessful and 13% say don't know or do not respond on this aspect, while in wave 2 the percentages were 40% stating unsuccessful and 13% stating don't know/ not provided.

**Figure 15: Perceived success in consulting local government about its work (% very/fairly) (Q5)**



Base: All respondents (2009 = 1,973; 2007 = 1,402; 2004 = 1,343)

### 3.4.3 Being responsive to the needs of those it works with

The aspect of 'being responsive to the needs of those it works with' was introduced in the 2009 survey.

Overall, 8% respond that in this respect the Standards Board has been very successful in the last year, and 32% fairly successful. 23% state neither/nor while 8% state fairly unsuccessful and 3% very unsuccessful. A quarter (25%) respond don't know here.

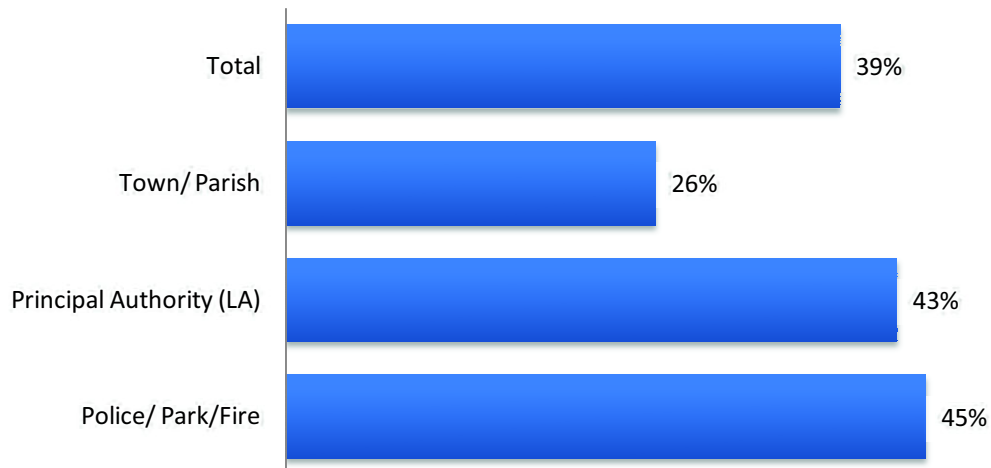
This aspect achieves a net of +28% in terms of perceived success, which is 8<sup>th</sup> place in the 11 aspects of work analysed.

Sub-group analysis shows some interesting comparisons, as illustrated in the figures to follow. Police, park and fire (45%) and principal authorities (43%) are most likely to consider the Standards Board successful at being responsive to the needs of those it



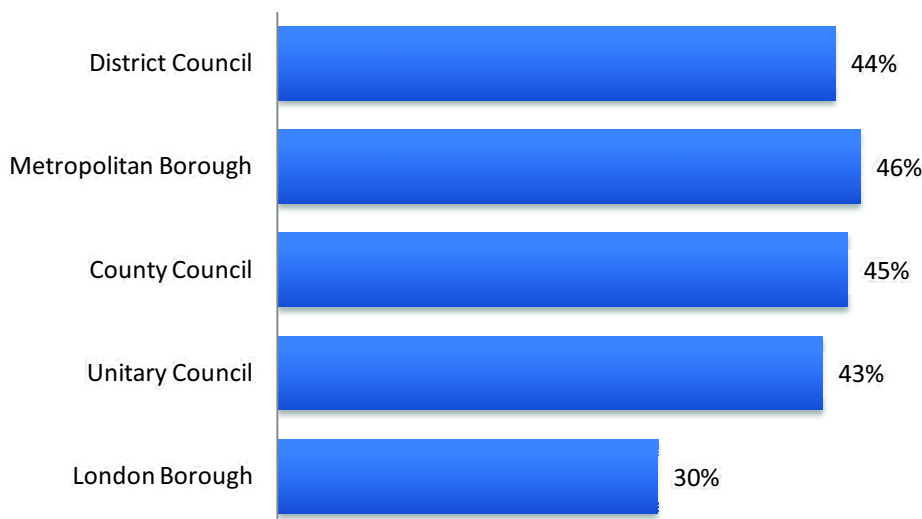
works with, while town and parish stakeholders are less likely to state successful (43% stating don't know/not provided, and 10% unsuccessful). Among principal authorities, London boroughs are less likely to respond positively on this aspect than other types (14% perceiving the Standards Board as being responsive in this way, while 27% respond don't know/not provided).

**Figure 16: Being responsive to the needs of those it works with by authority type (% very/fairly successful) (Q5)**



Base: All respondents in wave 3 (varies by row. Total row = 1,973)

**Figure 17: Being responsive to the needs of those it works with by principal authority sub-type (% very/fairly) (Q5)**



Base: All principal authorities in wave 3 (varies by type)

Perceived success in keeping respondents personally informed is looked at in more detail in section 6.1 of this report.

## 4 Attitudes to the Ethical Environment

### 4.1 Attitude Battery

Ten statements relating to the wider ethical environment were listed and respondents were required to indicate the level to which they agree or disagree with each.

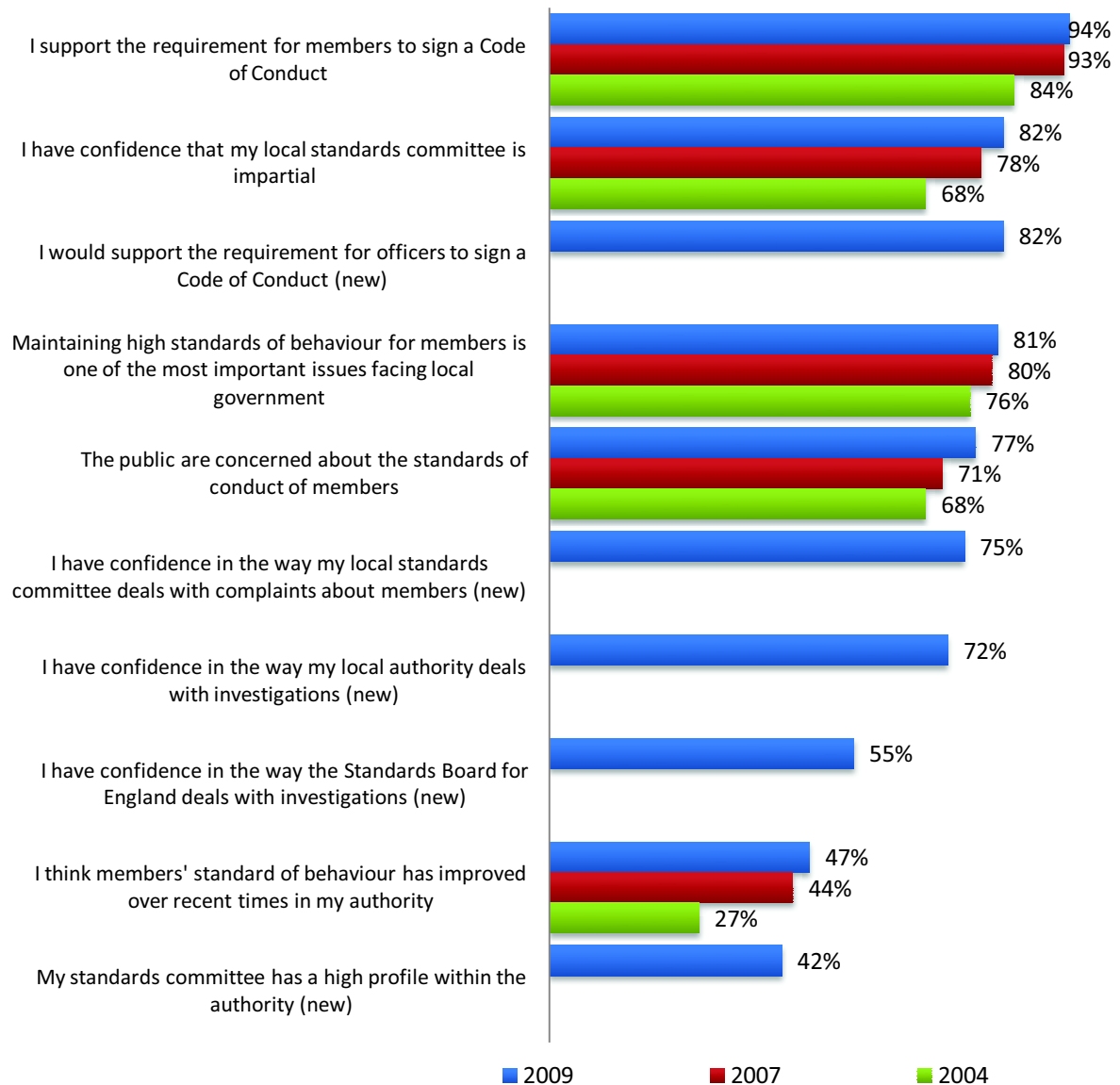
Figure 18 shows the proportions of the total sample who indicate that they agree, to a greater or lesser extent, with each statement. Aspects are listed in order from highest to lowest agreement levels (bearing in mind the total sample base includes don't know in addition to negative responses).

In terms of the five aspects assessed in previous waves, we see either stasis or positive improvement in each one. Already over 90% in 2004, 'I support the requirement for members to sign a Code of Conduct' rose to 93% in 2007 and its rise is consolidated with a percentage of 94% in 2009. It may be very difficult for support to rise significantly beyond this, and the effort required disproportionate, while there may still be room for improvement in terms of confidence in standards committees' impartiality, and public concern about the standards of conduct of members (as well as indicators lower in the table).

Of the four new aspects assessed this wave, the highest agreement levels are seen in terms of support for a requirement for officers to sign a Code of Conduct (82%) and confidence in the way standards committees deal with complaints against members (75%). Confidence in the way the local authority deals with investigations (72%) is higher than confidence in the way the Standards Board deals with investigations (55%), while the statement with which least respondents agree relates to the standards committee having a high profile within the authority (42%).

Each statement shows some variation according to authority type and in particular respondent type. A selection of these has been charted in figures 19 to 25.

**Figure 18: % who tend to or strongly agree with ten statements about the ethical environment (Q6)**



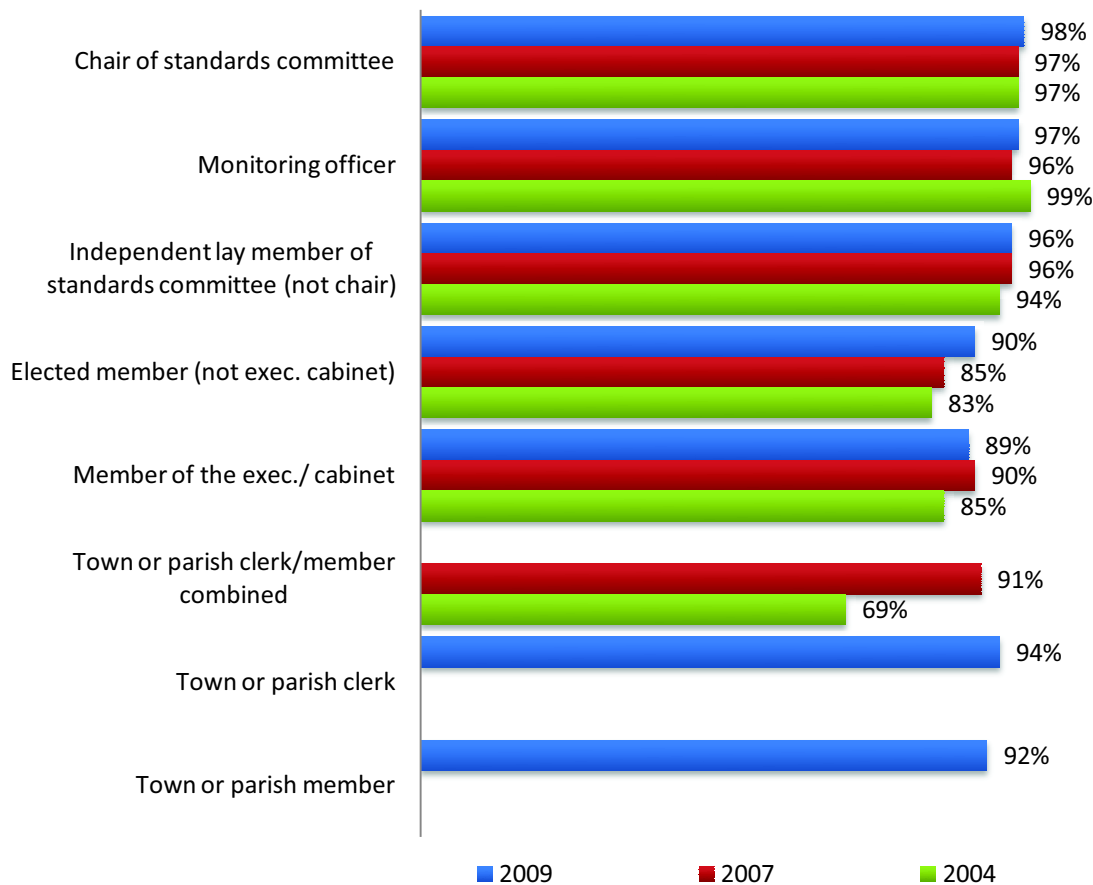
Base: All respondents (2009 = 1,973; 2007 = 1,402; 2004 = 1,343)

## 4.2 Support for the requirement to sign a code

In terms of supporting the requirement to sign the Code of Conduct for members, only small proportions disagree across all respondent types - reaching highest levels among members of the executive/cabinet (7%). Members of the executive/cabinet are the only stakeholder group among whom agreement with this statement has not increased (actually reducing slightly to 89% in wave 3, from 90% in wave 2).

The proportion of monitoring officers agreeing with this statement increased marginally from 96% last wave to 97% this wave, remaining two percentage points away from the baseline survey in 2004 when an almost universal 99% of monitoring officers agreed with this statement to at least some degree.

**Figure 19: % who tend to or strongly agree with 'I support the requirement for members to sign a Code of Conduct' (Q6)**



Base: All respondents (2009 = 1,973; 2007 = 1,402; 2004 = 1,343)

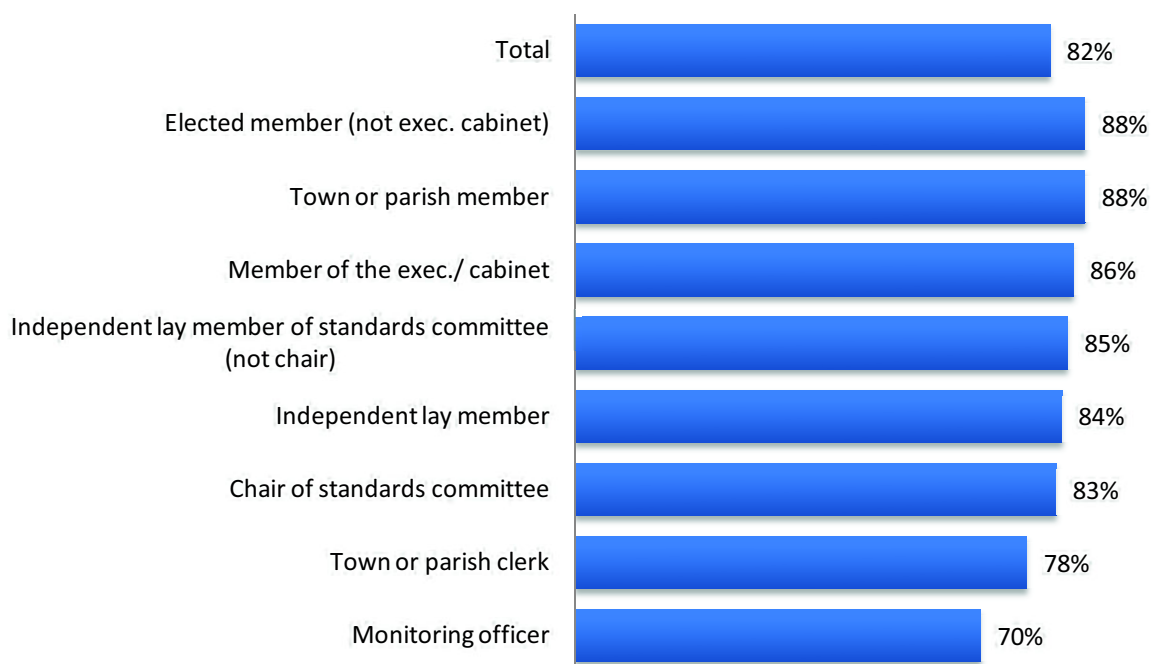
Town and parish members appear marginally more likely to support the requirement to sign a code than other elected members.

### 4.3 A code for officers

In terms of supporting a theoretical requirement for officers to sign a Code of Conduct, this is lowest among the officer stakeholders in the sample (78% of town/parish clerks and 70% of monitoring officers). It is correspondingly highest among elected members and town/parish members (88% of both stakeholder types).

This is illustrated in figure 20.

**Figure 20: % who tend to or strongly agree with 'I would support the requirement for officers to sign a Code of Conduct' (new; Q6)**



Base: All respondents in wave 3 (varies by row)

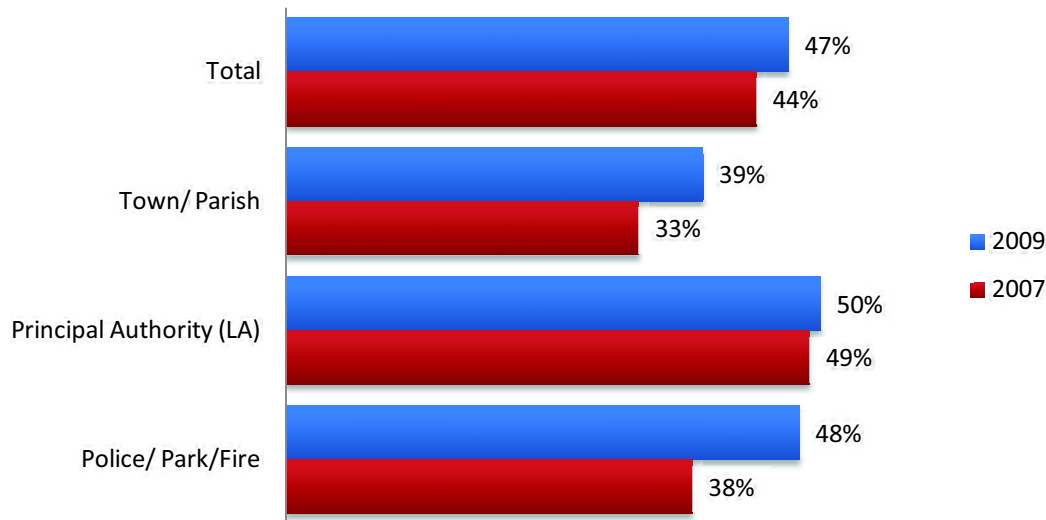
#### 4.4 Perception of change in members' behaviour

As shown in figure 21, town and parish councils remain less likely than other authorities to consider that members' standard of behaviour has improved.

A wave on wave increase of 6% among town and parish authorities is greater than the 1% increase for principal authorities but less notable than the increase among police, park and fire stakeholders (from 38% who agree in 2007 to 46% who agree in 2009).

In 2007, 21% of town and parish authorities disagreed that members' standard of behaviour had improved cf. 12% of principal authorities and 9% of police, park and fire authorities.

In 2009, 17% of town and parish authorities disagree that members' standard of behaviour has improved cf. 11% of principal authorities and 7% of police, park and fire authorities.

**Figure 21: % who tend to or strongly agree that 'members' standard of behaviour has improved over recent times in that authority by authority type' (Q6)**

Base: All respondents (varies by row)

#### 4.5 Confidence in the process

Four of the statements in the ethical environment attitude battery in 2009 concern confidence felt in different aspects of the process. Responses by stakeholder type are set out in the figures overleaf.

Among monitoring officers as among the sample as a whole, net confidence is lowest in terms of the way the Standards Board deals with investigations (+62% of monitoring officers), while it is higher in terms of the way the local authority deals with investigations (+81% of monitoring officers), and the way the local standards committee deals with complaints about members (+85% of monitoring officers). Net confidence is highest in terms of the impartiality of the standards committee (+90% of monitoring officers).

Among chairs of standards committees, net confidence is even higher in the impartiality of the standards committee (+97%). Indeed, in all waves of the tracker research, role breakdowns confirm that chairs and independent members have the most confidence in the impartiality of their local committee.

In 2009, net confidence in the way the Standards Board deals with investigations is lower among chairs (+53%) than among monitoring officers (+62%).

**Figure 22: I have confidence that my local standards committee is impartial (Q6)**

	Agree	Neither/ Nor	Disagree	Don't know/ Not provided	Net (% Agree- % Disagree)
Monitoring officer	93%	3%	3%	2%	+90%
Chair of standards committee	97%	3%	0%	0%	+97%
Town or parish clerk	58%	17%	9%	16%	+49%
Independent lay member (not chair)	94%	2%	2%	2%	+92%
Town or parish member	64%	13%	11%	13%	+53%
Member of the exec./ cabinet	77%	7%	11%	4%	+66%
Elected member (not exec. cabinet)	74%	12%	9%	5%	+65%
Total sample	82%	7%	6%	6%	+76
Base: All wave 3 respondents (varies by role)					

**Figure 23: I have confidence in the way my local standards committee deals with complaints about members (Q6)**

	Agree	Neither/ nor	Disagree	Don't know/ Not provided	Net (% Agree- % Disagree)
Monitoring officer	86%	6%	1%	7%	+85%
Chair of standards committee	95%	0%	0%	4%	+95%
Town or parish clerk	48%	19%	11%	21%	+37%
Independent lay member (not chair)	88%	13%	1%	6%	+87%
Town or parish member	57%	1%	12%	0%	+45%
Member of the exec./ cabinet	66%	20%	7%	7%	+59%
Elected member (not exec. cabinet)	64%	16%	12%	8%	+52%
Total sample	75%	10%	6%	10%	+69%
Base: All wave 3 respondents (varies by role)					

## Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

**Figure 24: I have confidence in the way my local authority deals with investigations (Q6)**

	Agree	Neither/n or	Disagree	Don't know/ Not provided	Net (% Agree- Disagree)
Monitoring officer	81%	6%	0%	13%	+81%
Chair of standards committee	90%	10%	1%	4%	+89%
Town or parish clerk	48%	20%	12%	20%	+36%
Independent lay member (not chair)	83%	7%	1%	8%	+82%
Town or parish member	50%	19%	13%	18%	+37%
Member of the exec./ cabinet	66%	18%	7%	10%	+59%
Elected member (not exec. cabinet)	66%	13%	14%	7%	+52%
Total sample	72%	11%	6%	11%	+66%
Base: All wave 3 respondents (varies by role)					

**Figure 25: I have confidence in the way the Standards Board for England deals with investigations (Q6)**

	Agree	Neither/n or	Disagree	Don't know/ Not provided	Net (% Agree- Disagree)
Monitoring officer	69%	16%	7%	8%	+62%
Chair of standards committee	62%	19%	9%	10%	+53%
Town or parish clerk	44%	25%	10%	23%	+34%
Independent lay member (not chair)	64%	17%	5%	15%	+59%
Town or parish member	42%	19%	14%	25%	+28%
Member of the exec./ cabinet	42%	30%	14%	13%	+28%
Elected member (not exec. cabinet)	48%	17%	20%	15%	+28%
Total sample	55%	19%	11%	15%	+44%
Base: All wave 3 respondents (varies by role)					



#### 4.6 A comparison between stakeholder and public confidence

Two questions were asked concerning confidence in the way breaches of the codes are dealt with. Identical questions were asked of the public in the Cardiff University/BMG study on *Public Trust in Local Government*, (consisting of over 1,800 face to face interviews across 9 case study authorities). These surveys were both conducted at the start of 2009, and while differing methodologies were applied, it may be useful to compare the feedback from each group.

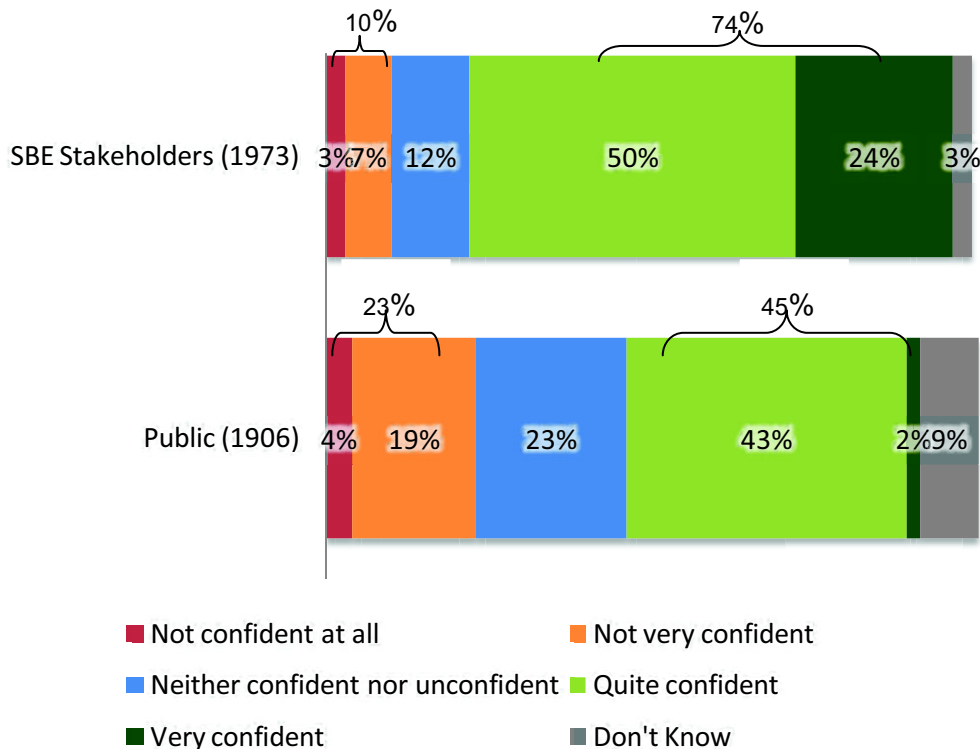
##### 4.6.1 Confidence in uncovering a breach

The chart below summarises the results when respondents were asked to rate their confidence in the local authority uncovering a breach of standards in behaviour by a councillor in the authority.

As shown, similar proportions of each sample fall within the most cynical response type (3% of stakeholders and 4% of the public responding 'not confident at all'). However, overall the public have less confidence than stakeholders, with 19% not very confident, and 32% either neutral or unsure, cf. only 7% of the Standards Board stakeholders not very confident and 15% neutral or unsure.

Under half (45%) of the public are quite or very confident, cf. almost three quarters (74%) of stakeholders.

**Figure 26: Rating of confidence in the respondent's local authority uncovering a breach of standards in behaviour Q7**



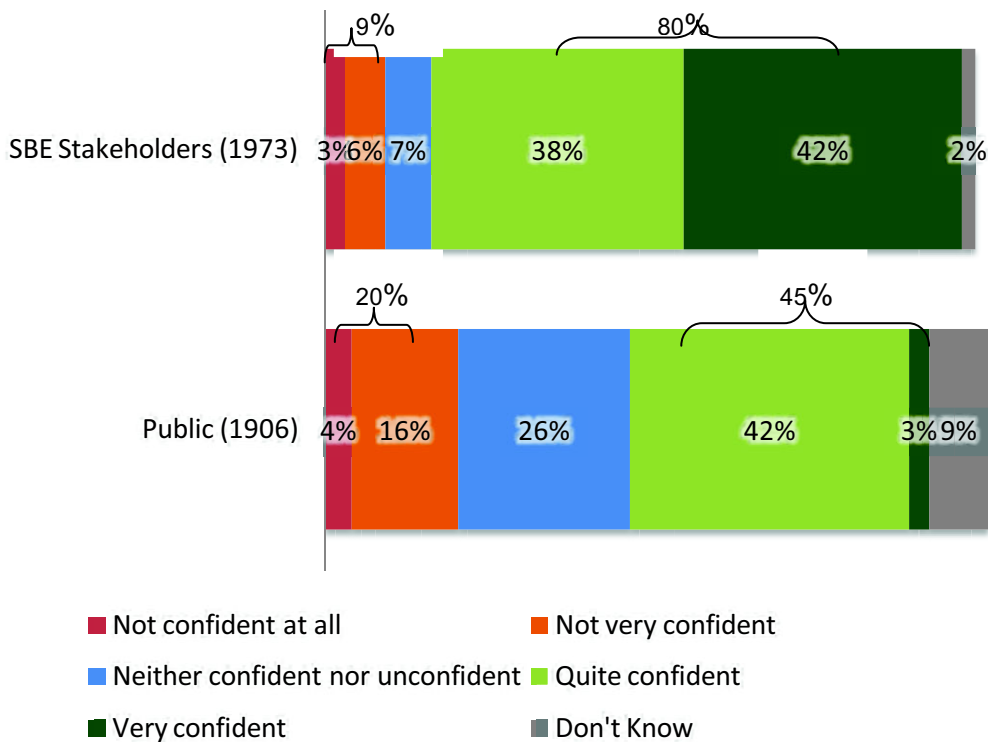
**4.6.2 Confidence in dealing appropriately with a breach**

The chart below summarises the results when respondents were asked to rate their confidence in the local authority dealing appropriately with a breach of standards in behaviour by a councillor in the authority.

As shown, the confidence of stakeholders increases to 80% (from 74% confident in the uncovering of a breach), while the proportion not confident decreases by 1% (9%, cf. 10% in relation to uncovering a breach).

Among the public there is also a suggestion that confidence is slightly higher than in terms of uncovering a breach (20% are not confident, cf. 23% in terms of dealing appropriately with a breach).

**Figure 27: Rating of confidence in the respondent's local authority dealing appropriately with a breach of standards in behaviour Q8**



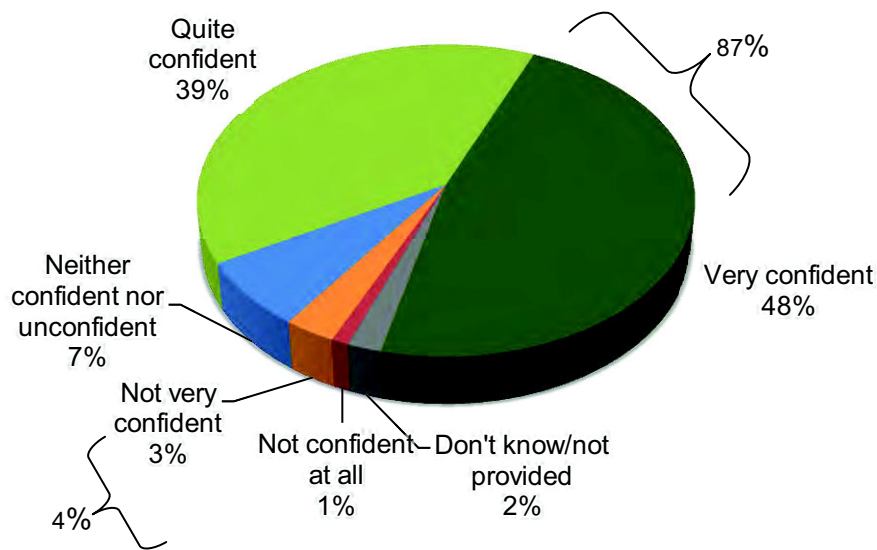
Base: All respondents (shown in brackets).

Public data source: *Public Perceptions of Ethics in Local Government survey*, Cardiff University, 2009

**4.6.3 Stakeholder confidence in their authority upholding ethical standards**

Stakeholders were also asked to rate their confidence in their authority's commitment to upholding ethical standards. Overall, 89% are quite or very confident in this respect and only 4% are not very or not at all confident. Neutral respondents account for less than 1 in 10 of the sample, 7% stating neither confident nor unconfident.

**Figure 28: Stakeholder confidence in their authority's commitment to upholding ethical standards (Q9)**



Base: All wave 3 respondents (1,973)

Stakeholders in town and parish authorities are more likely than others to be either neutral (14% stating neither/nor) or not confident (9% either not very or not at all confident). An assessment by individual role shows independent lay members and monitoring officers to be the most confident in their authority's commitment to upholding ethical standards (94% confident in each case).

## 5 Changes to the Ethical Framework

### 5.1 Keeping stakeholders informed and supported through the changes

At the start of a third section to the questionnaire, the following outline was provided relating to the move towards a more devolved system of operation:

**Since May 2008 there has been a shift towards local ownership of the Standards Framework.**

**Standards committees are now the bedrock of a devolved system, being proactive in championing high standards at the local level. In addition, allegations of misconduct are in the first instance considered at a local level and more cases are being dealt with at a local level than previously.**

The 2004 and 2007 waves of this research assessed awareness of the changes and preparedness for the changes. Awareness in 2007 varied from 99% of monitoring officers to 69% members of the executive/cabinet and 68% of elected members. 68% of monitoring officers and 63% of local standards committees were deemed to be prepared for the changes at that stage.

In wave 3 the theme is re-assessed from the current vantage point, and investigated in more detail.

Firstly respondents were asked to rate the success of the Standards Board on four different issues, thinking about the last year, as the ethical framework has devolved.

Figure 29 shows the perceived performance on each aspect, ordered from highest to lowest net success rating (% successful minus % unsuccessful). As shown, greatest net success is perceived in terms of keeping local government informed about changes to authorities' role in investigations (+64%), followed by conveying the message about the new ethical framework effectively (+57). The net rating is +56% for providing support and guidance to assist authorities in their new role within the new framework, whilst the net rating is +50% for keeping local government informed about the Standards Board's new role as a strategic regulator.

**Figure 29: Rating of how successful the Standards Board for England has been in each aspect relating to the changes to the ethical framework (Q10)**

	Very unsuccessful	Fairly unsuccessful	Neither	Fairly successful	Very successful	Summary: Successful	Summary: Not successful	Don't know/Not provided	NET (% successf. - % unsuccessful)
Keeping local government informed about changes in relation to authorities' role in investigations	1%	6%	14%	50%	21%	71%	7%	9%	+64%
Conveying the message about the new ethical framework effectively	2%	8%	17%	53%	14%	67%	10%	6%	+57%
Providing support and guidance to assist authorities in their new role within the new framework	1%	6%	16%	44%	19%	63%	7%	15%	+56%
Keeping local government informed about the Standards Board for England's new role as strategic regulator	2%	7%	20%	43%	16%	59%	9%	12%	+50%
Base: All respondents in wave 3 (1,973)									

## 5.2 Support and bedding in of the changes

Respondents were asked to rate their agreement or disagreement with three new statements about the changes.

As shown, net agreement is highest (+65%) in terms of the statement 'improving members' standard of behaviour is now a local issue'. Net agreement is at a similar level in terms of support for the devolution of the ethical framework (+62%).

Net agreement is slightly lower, but still over +50% in terms of 'The new ethical framework is firmly embedded in local government' (+52%).

**Figure 30: Rating of agreement with the specified changes in ethical framework (Q11)**

	Strongly disagree	Tend to disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to agree	Strongly agree	Summary Agree	Summary Disagree	Don't know	NET agreement
Improving members' standard of behaviour is now a local issue (new)	2%	6%	14%	43%	31%	74%	9%	3%	+65%
I support the devolution of the ethical framework (new)	3%	6%	14%	35%	37%	72%	10%	4%	+62%
The new ethical framework is now firmly embedded in local government (new)	2%	7%	23%	45%	16%	61%	9%	7%	+52%
Base: All respondents in wave 3(1,973)									

### Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

Variations are interesting in terms of authority and respondent type.

For example, as shown in figure 30, 72% of respondents in total agree that they support the devolution of the ethical framework. This varies from 60% of town and parish stakeholders to 75% of principal authority stakeholders and 82% of police/park/fire authority stakeholders. Across respondent roles, support ranges from 59% of town/parish clerks and 65% of monitoring officers to 88% of chairs and 84% of other independent lay members.

Across the total sample 61% agree that the new ethical framework is now firmly embedded in local government. This varies from 51% of town and parish respondents to 65% of principal authority respondents and 64% of police, park and fire authority respondents.

Preparedness for the changes in 2007 also showed notable variation between town and parish councils and other authorities.

## 6 Information Provision

### 6.1 Informing Stakeholders Personally

Past waves of this research have proven a correlation between perceived success in terms of being kept informed by the Standards Board for England and perceived success on other key indicators, including support for the need to sign a Code of Conduct and overall satisfaction with the work of the Standards Board.

Analysis of one of the success ratings at question 5 shows that monitoring officers are most likely to consider the Standards Board for England successful in keeping them personally informed. Monitoring officers give the Standards Board a net rating of +82% successful on this aspect, as shown below. The next highest success rating in being kept personally informed is generated by responses from standards committee chairs (+57%).

**Figure 31: Perceived success in keeping you personally informed about what it is doing by role wave 3 (Q5)**

	Successful	Un-successful	Don't know/ Not provided	Net (% success. - % unsuccessf)
Monitoring officer	86%	4%	1%	+82%
Chair of standards committee	69%	12%	1%	+57%
Town or parish clerk	62%	12%	5%	+50%
Independent lay member (not chair)	62%	17%	2%	+45%
Town or parish member	37%	31%	8%	+6%
Member of the exec./ cabinet	31%	34%	9%	-3%
Elected member (not exec. cabinet)	35%	38%	7%	-3%
Total sample	57%	20%	4%	+37%
<b>Base: All wave 3 respondents (varies by role)</b>				

Two types of stakeholder respond unsuccessful in higher proportions than successful. These are members of the executive/ cabinet and elected members (not executive cabinet), with net ratings of -3% in each case. Nevertheless, those giving a rating of successful account for 31% of members of the exec./cabinet in 2009, compared with only 16% in 2007. A smaller increase was also seen among elected members (from 31% in 2007 to 35% in 2009).

When asked how they felt the Standards Board could improve its communications with stakeholders, responses suggest a continued mix in attitudes between those happy to receive information via the monitoring officer or town clerk, and others who seek more direct communications. An excel file of respondents' open-ended suggestions on improvement to communication channels and formats is also available.

## 6.2 How well the Standards Board is seen to have provided key information types, and the perceived future importance of each type

A range of topic areas were listed and respondents asked to indicate the level of success achieved by the Standards Board in keeping them informed on each.

The list of topic areas is shown below in order of highest to lowest net ratings, where nets reflect % responding 'well informed by the Standards Board' on this topic minus % responding 'not well informed by the Standards Board' on this topic.

The highest net rating is given on the topic of the Code of Conduct (+77%) followed by the local standards framework (+58%), while the lowest (with a rating less than half that of any other) is for case law examples (+17%).

**Figure 32: Rating of how well the Standards Board for England has kept the respondent informed regarding the specified issues (Q12)**

	Not at all	Not very well	Fairly well	Very well	Summary well	Summary not well	Don't know/ Not provided	Net well
<b>The Code of Conduct</b>	3%	7%	46%	42%	87%	10%	3%	+77%
<b>The local standards framework</b>	5%	13%	49%	27%	76%	18%	6%	+58%
<b>Good practice guidance</b>	7%	15%	52%	21%	73%	21%	6%	+52%
<b>Members' responsibilities for ensuring high standards of conduct</b>	4%	17%	50%	23%	73%	22%	5%	+51%
<b>Local authority responsibilities in ensuring high standards of conduct</b>	5%	17%	49%	22%	72%	21%	7%	+51%
<b>New developments in relation to standards of behaviour</b>	8%	19%	49%	18%	67%	26%	6%	+41%
<b>Case law examples</b>	14%	23%	41%	13%	54%	37%	9%	+17%
<b>Base: All respondents (1,973)</b>								

The same topic areas were listed and respondents were asked to indicate the level of importance they would attribute to the Standards Board keeping them informed on each, going forward.

The list of topic areas is again shown below in order of highest to lowest net ratings, where nets reflect the percentage responding 'important for the Standards Board to keep me informed on this topic' minus % responding 'not important for the Standards Board to keep me informed on this topic'.

The table shows some differences in the order compared with the perceived success table above, although it is reassuring that the aspect considered most important is



also top in terms of keeping stakeholders informed. Likewise, the aspect considered least important is also the aspect on which stakeholders consider themselves least well informed (case law examples).

All scores for importance are higher than in terms of being kept informed. This is inevitable, but it is still a worthwhile objective for the Standards Board to aim to close the gap between the two.

The highest net importance rating is given on the topic of the Code of Conduct (+94%) followed by good practice guidance (+92%) and new developments in relation to standards of behaviour (+92%).

**Figure 33: Rating of how important it is for the Standards Board for England to keep the respondent informed regarding the specified issues (Q13)**

	Not at all	Not very	Fairly important	Very important	Summary: important	Summary: not important	Don't know/Not provided	Net well
<b>The Code of Conduct</b>	1%	2%	21%	75%	96%	2%	2%	+94%
<b>Good practice guidance</b>	1%	2%	27%	67%	95%	3%	3%	+92%
<b>New developments in relation to standards of behaviour</b>	1%	2%	28%	66%	95%	3%	2%	+92%
<b>Members' responsibilities for ensuring high standards of conduct</b>	1%	3%	27%	67%	94%	4%	2%	+90%
<b>The local standards framework</b>	1%	3%	31%	62%	93%	4%	3%	+89%
<b>Local authority responsibilities in ensuring high standards of conduct</b>	1%	4%	31%	62%	93%	5%	2%	+88%
<b>Case law examples</b>	2%	9%	36%	50%	86%	11%	3%	+75%
<b>Base: All respondents (1,973)</b>								

**6.2.1 Differences in future perceived importance and success in being kept informed**

In terms of the order of topics (relative to each other), the most significant mismatch, or difference between importance and success in informing stakeholders, is in relation to new developments in terms of members' standard of behaviour (joint second in net importance cf. sixth in terms of net success in being informed). At the other end of the scale, while the local standards framework is in the top two in terms of being kept informed, it slips to top five in terms of perceived importance going forward (albeit still a high +90%), while not as low as case law examples (+75%).

Mismatches can also be looked at in terms of percentage points difference in net ratings. In this respect, case law examples show the largest difference (+17% on success in informing cf. +75% in perceived importance). In contrast the Code of Conduct shows the least difference (+77% on success in informing cf. +94% in perceived importance). This is summarised in figure 34.

Please note that mismatches do not suggest that the communications policy has been wrong in the last year, but rather give an indication of how requirements will change in the coming year since the importance ratings relate to perceived importance 'going forward' and not importance over the past year.

**Figure 34: Net ratings: informed / importance comparisons in wave 3 (Q12/13)**

Topic	Net rating: Kept informed in last year	Net rating: Important going forward	Difference (Important in future minus informed)
Case law examples	+17%	+75%	-58%
New developments in relation to standards of behaviour	+41%	+92%	-51%
Good practice guidance	+52%	+92%	-40%
Members' responsibilities for ensuring high standards of conduct	+51%	+90%	-39%
Local authority responsibilities in ensuring high standards of conduct	+51%	+88%	-37%
The local standards framework	+58%	+89%	-31%
The Code of Conduct	+77%	+94%	-17%

## 6.2.2 Wave on wave comparisons

Six of the seven types of information were analysed in the same way in the 2004 and 2007 waves of this research. Grouped responses and net success/ importance for each type of information across both waves are tabulated for comparative purposes in Appendix 3.

Similarly to in 2009, good practice guidance, new developments in relation to standards of behaviour and the Code of Conduct all rated +92% in terms of net importance in 2007, from just over 80% in 2004. Identically to in 2009, local authority and member responsibilities in ensuring high standards of conduct rated +88% and +89% net importance in 2007 respectively, from +74% and +78% in 2004.

In terms of being kept informed, a net +65% considered that the Standards Board kept them informed on the Code of Conduct in 2004, decreasing slightly to 62% in 2007 but now increasing to +77% in 2009.

Net success in keeping stakeholders informed on case law examples stood at -14% in 2004, while net importance was +64%. In 2007, net importance grew to +77% and the mismatch between demand and supply of information in this area appeared on the way to being rectified, with +20% considering themselves informed in this area by the Standards Board. In 2009, the gap remains a similar size as in 2007, with net importance at +75% and net informed at +17%.

## 6.3 Future topics of interest

Respondents were asked to consider information they might like to receive in the future. Their perceived usefulness ratings are shown below (from highest to lowest in net terms).

Good practice for standards committees is the most popular, followed by sanctions guidance and alternative action, all of which are considered to be useful in future by more than 70%, and more than +60% in net terms. Further information on carrying out an investigation is considered useful in future by 70% (net +56%) and monitoring/benchmarking data by 63% (net +45%).

**Figure 35: Rating of how useful the respondent would find it to receive information on the specified topics (Q24)**

	Not at all useful	Not very useful	Fairly useful	Very useful	Summary Useful	Summary Not useful	Don't know/ Not provided	Net Useful
<b>Good practice for standards committees</b>	4%	5%	30%	50%	80%	9%	11%	+71%
<b>Sanctions guidance</b>	3%	6%	29%	47%	76%	10%	14%	+66%
<b>Alternative action</b>	3%	7%	29%	44%	73%	10%	17%	+63%
<b>Further information on carrying out an investigation</b>	5%	9%	34%	35%	70%	14%	16%	+56%
<b>Monitoring / benchmarking data</b>	5%	13%	35%	28%	63%	18%	19%	+45%
<b>Base: All respondents (1,973)</b>								

### Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

Variations by respondent role and authority type are provided in the data tables accompanying this report.

Sixty-eight respondents also mentioned other further topics of interest. A full listing of these is available, examples including:

***More guidance regarding conflicts of interest;***

***Advice for dual-hatted councillors / members;***

***Publicity role of standard committees;***

***Information about other authorities' standards committees practice e.g. how many pay independent members and at what level;***

***Information on innovative practices by standard boards;***

***Guidance on the way forward if investigation indicates no breach, or evidence to support allegation;***

***Notifying members of complaints made;***

***Complaints page needs to be put on the standards boards website;***

***Dealing with appeals to adjudication panel***

***Guidance on reviews of local assessment;***

Further feedback on topics of information, including ratings and opinions of specific publications, is provided in section 7 of this report.

## 7 Published Information and Guidance

### 7.1 Overall Satisfaction

Respondents rated their satisfaction with published information and guidance provided by the Standards Board.

As shown below, in 2009 only 8% describe themselves as very or fairly dissatisfied in this respect, and 31% are either neutral or unsure, while 61% are very or fairly satisfied.

**Figure 36: Overall rating of the published information and guidance provided by the Standards Board, by wave (Q18)**



Base: All respondents (2009 = 1,973; 2007 = 1,402; 2004 = 1,343)

The proportion satisfied minus the proportion dissatisfied is therefore +53% in 2009, which is a notable improvement on the 2007 net of +43%, and continues a clear positive trend on this aspect (net satisfaction being +36% in 2004).

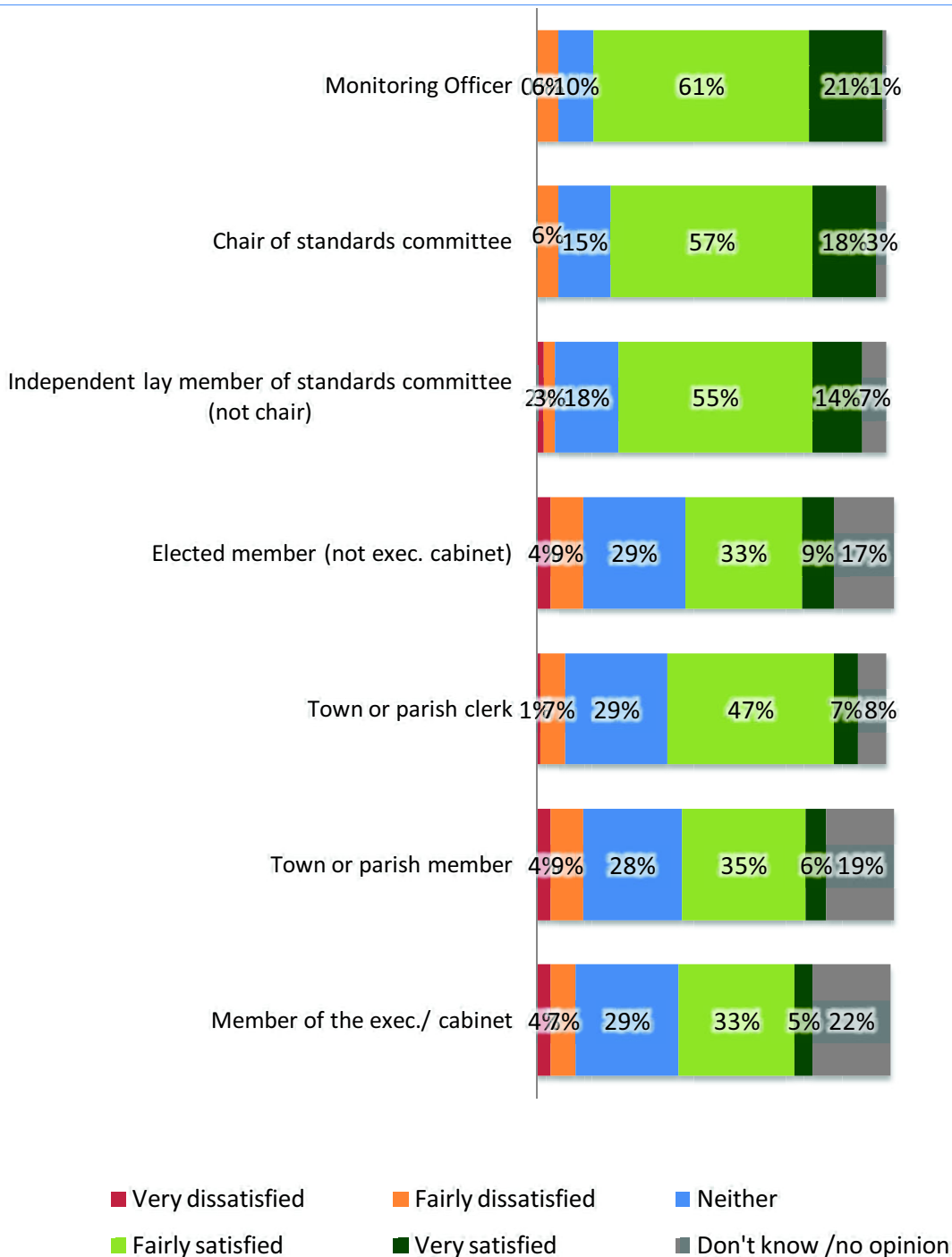
There are some variations in satisfaction levels by subgroup, as detailed fully in the data tables.

A large majority of 82% of monitoring officers are satisfied with published information and guidance, cf. a smaller majority of 55% of town and parish clerks. While the proportion of monitoring officers satisfied has increased on last wave (then 75%) satisfaction among town and parish clerks remains stable (55%).

Elected members and members of the executive/cabinet are the most likely to be dissatisfied, (proportions 13% and 11% respectively).

Figure 37 shows responses by stakeholder type in order from most to least satisfied.

**Figure 37: Overall rating of the published information and guidance provided by the Standards Board for England, by role in wave 3 (Q18)**



Base: All respondents in wave 3 (varies by respondent role)

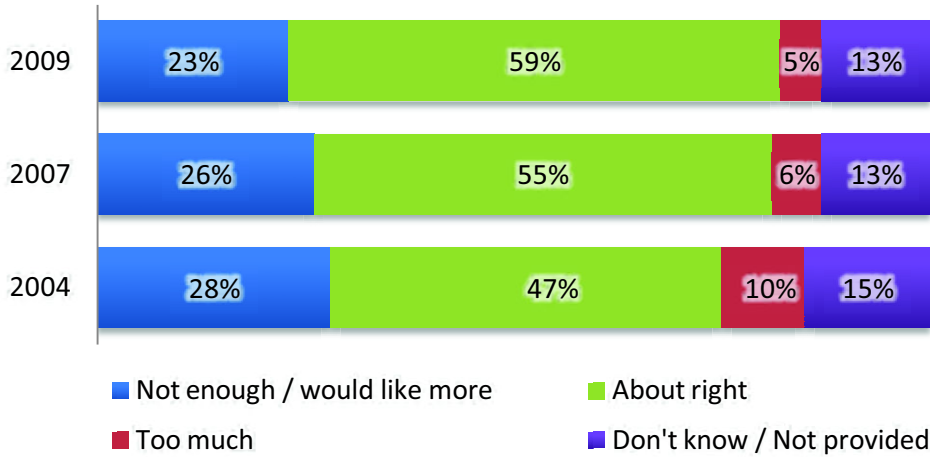
## 7.2 Views on the Amount and Frequency of Information and Guidance

In 2009, as in all previous waves, the largest proportion considers that the amount of published information and guidance they receive from the Standards Board is about right (59%, cf. 55% in 2007 and 47% in 2004).

Between 2004 and 2007 the proportion of respondents who consider that they receive too much information decreased by 4%, and the proportion who consider that they receive information too frequently reduced by 6%.

Encouragingly, this trend has continued in the latest wave of findings, albeit very gradually, with 23% now considering that they would like more information, and only 5% stating that they receive too much.

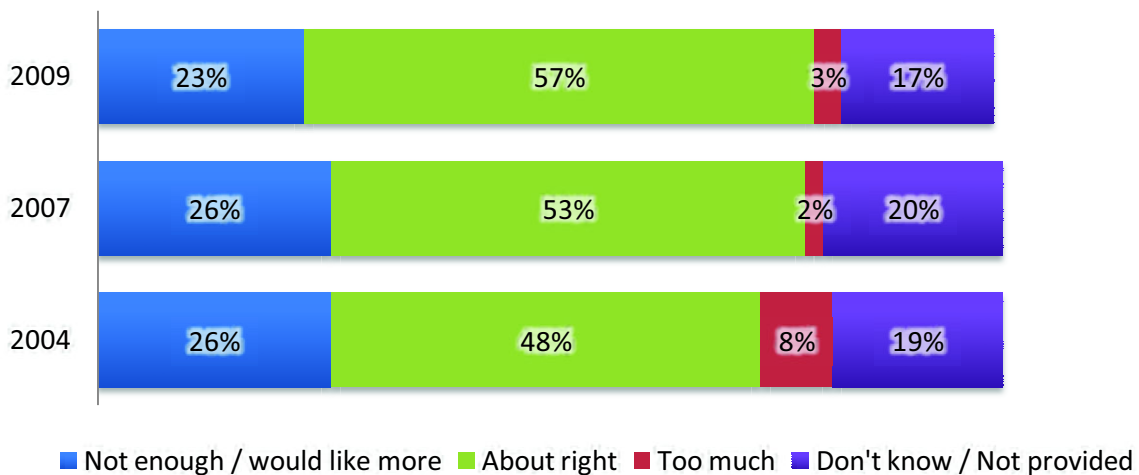
**Figure 38: Rating of the amount of published information and guidance the respondent receives from the Standards Board for England by wave (Q14)**



Base: All respondents (2009 = 1,973; 2007 = 1,402; 2004 = 1,343)

Feedback in terms of frequency of receipt of information is very similar. Now, 23% consider that they would like more frequent receipt of information from the Standards Board, and only 3% state that they receive too frequent information.

**Figure 39: Rating of the frequency of published information and guidance the respondent receives from the Standards Board for England by wave (Q15)**



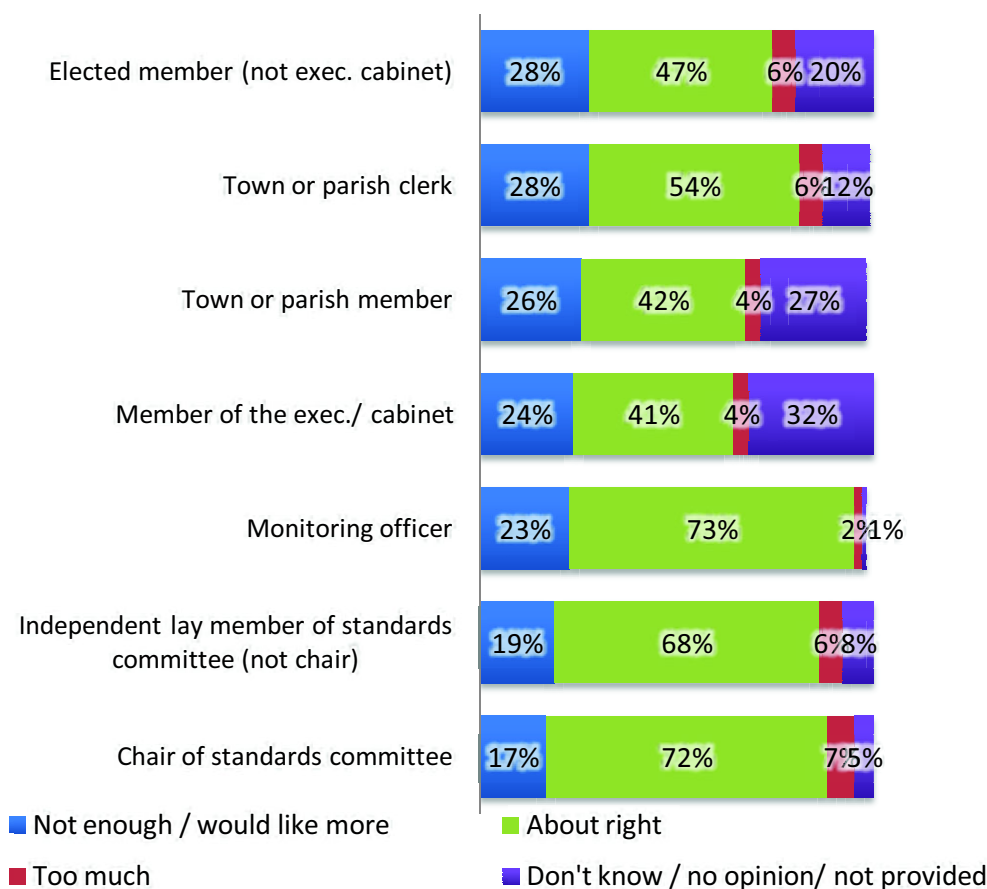
Base: All respondents (2009 = 1,973; 2007 = 1,402; 2004 = 1,343)

Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

Figure 40 shows grouped responses on amount of information received by stakeholder role. Those most likely to be seeking a greater amount of information from the Standards Board are listed first. Elected members and town and parish clerks are most likely, closely followed by town or parish members.

Overall, 27% of respondents from town and parish authorities and 23% of respondents from principal authorities are seeking more information; cf. only 16% of police, park and fire stakeholders.

**Figure 40: Rating of the amount of published information and guidance the respondent receives from the Standards Board for England in wave 3 by role (Q14)**



Base: All respondents in wave 3 (varies by respondent role)

In 2004 28% of town and parish clerks/members felt that they received too much information from the Standards Board for England. In 2007 only 6% considered this. This remains at a similarly low level in 2009 (6% of clerks, 4% of members).

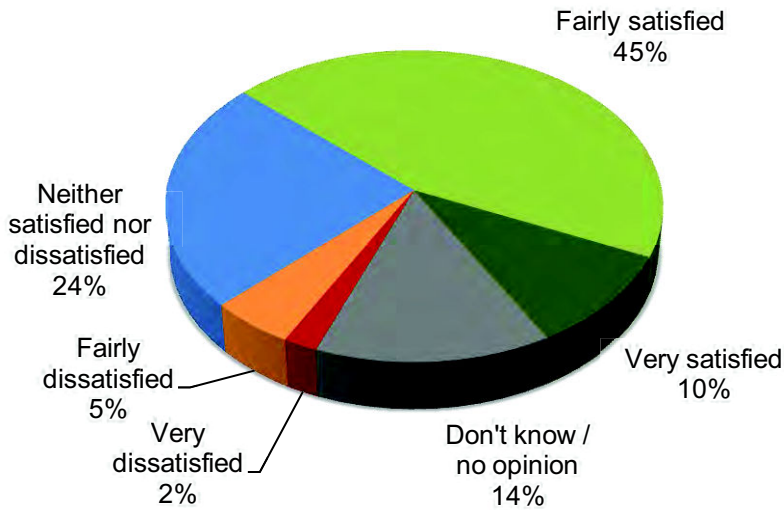
**7.3 Views on Topics and Formats**

In 2009, respondents were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the topics covered and the formats used by the Standards Board for England. Overall, net satisfaction with the topics covered is +48% (55% satisfied minus 7% dissatisfied). Net satisfaction with formats is a similar +46% (53% satisfied minus 7% dissatisfied).



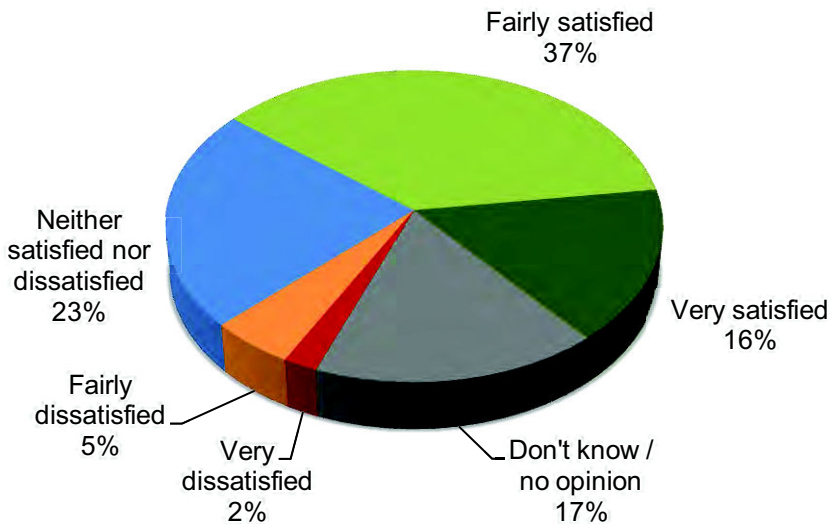
The results are shown in more detail in the following figures, and by respondent role and other variables in the data tables.

**Figure 41: Rating of the topics covered by the published information and guidance the respondent receives from the Standards Board in wave 3 (Q16)**



Base: All respondents in wave 3 (1,973)

**Figure 42: Rating of the formats used by the Standards Board for England to publish information and guidance in wave 3 (Q17)**



Base: All respondents in wave 3 (1,973)

### 7.4 Views on Publications

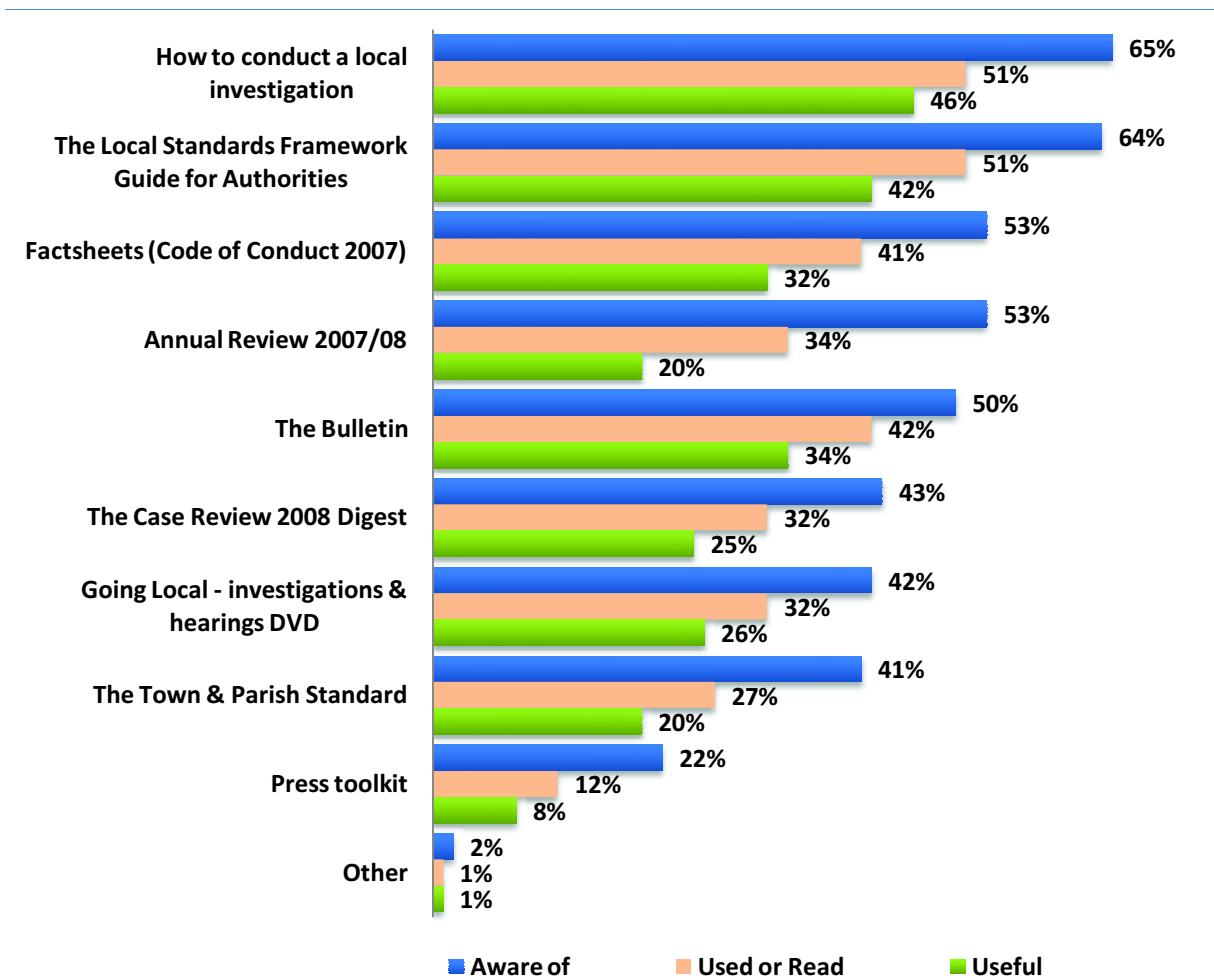
Awareness levels, readership and perceived usefulness of a range of specific media published or disseminated by the Standards Board for England were tested. Figure 4 summarises the proportions responding yes in terms of awareness of the publication, usage of the publication and whether they consider the publication useful.

The sample base in each case is all respondents. The data tables may be consulted for detail on percentages responding 'used/read' where they are aware of a specific publication, and percentages considering a specific publication useful where they have used this publication.

8% of respondents were not aware of any of the media listed (rising to 12% of town/parish respondents).

This figure presents the media in order from highest to lowest % 'aware of' ('very' or 'fairly').

**Figure 43: Views on selected publications: Awareness/readership/perceived usefulness across the total sample, (% responding yes in each case) (Q19-21)**



Base: All wave 3 respondents (1,973).

Note % useful is NOT based only on all users, but all respondents, including those who have not used/unaware of this publication. Likewise % used/read is NOT based on all aware but all respondents, including those unaware of this publication.

### 7.4.1 Awareness

Of the media listed, *How to conduct a local investigation* achieves the highest ratings in terms of awareness (65%) as it did in wave 2 (67%). *The Local Standards Framework Guide for Authorities* now enjoys a similar profile (64% aware), followed by Factsheets and the *Annual Review 2007/8* (each 53%).

The *Bulletin* is the only publication that has been listed in all three waves of the survey. Awareness has not grown this wave and even seems to have declined slightly at 50%, cf. 55% aware of the *Bulletin* in 2007 (after 40% in 2004).

The *Town and Parish Standard* was least known last wave and continues to be near the bottom of the table, but the *Press toolkit*, assessed for the first time this wave, is lower, with 22% awareness, perhaps reflecting its status a less established format.

### 7.4.2 Used or read

As shown in figure 43, just over half of all respondents have used or read *How to conduct a local investigation* and *The Local Standards Framework Guide for Authorities* (51% in each case). At the other end of the scale, just 12% have to date used the *Press toolkit*.

### 7.4.3 Useful

As shown in figure 43, a little under half of all respondents (46%), consider *How to conduct a local investigation* as very or quite useful. This is a very significant 90% of all those who have used or read this (using the basic calculation:  $46\%/51\% \times 100$ , or see data tables). By means of comparison, 68% of users of the press toolkit consider it useful, and 75% of users of the *Town and Parish Standard*.

There are significant variations on all three aspects by respondent and authority type, which can be seen in the cross tabulated data. For example, 26% of town and parish clerks have used/read the *Local Standards Framework Guide for Authorities*, (or 59% of those aware) cf. 89% of monitoring officers and 71% of committee chairs (95% and 87% of those aware respectively). In contrast, 53% of town and parish clerks have read the *Town and Parish Standard*, cf. 27% of monitoring officers and 19% of committee chairs.

## 7.5 Ratings on aspects of the Standards Board's published information and guidance

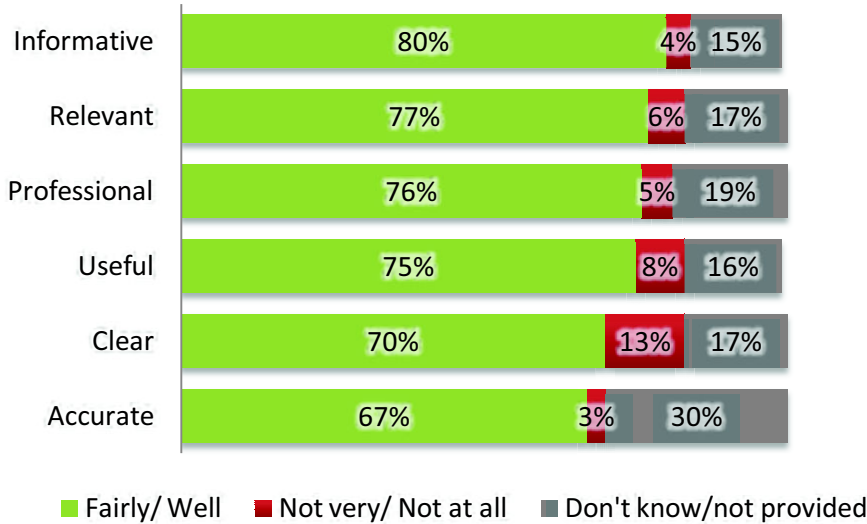
Respondents were again asked to indicate the degree to which, in their opinion the Standards Board's published information and guidance is informative, accurate, relevant, clear, useful and professional.

At least two in three respond positively on each aspect tested, from 80% who say that the published information and guidance is very or fairly informative, to 67% who consider it fairly or very accurate. In 2007 these percentages were 78% and 66% respectively.

Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

As in 2004, clarity is the area which receives most criticism. 13% consider information as not very or not at all clear (14% in 2007).

**Figure 44: Rating of the information and guidance published by the Standards Board on specified aspects in wave 3 (Q22)**



Base: All wave 3 respondents (1,973)

More concise, summarised or easily searchable media are again themes in some stakeholders' suggestions on how communications can improve (See verbatim comments file. Please note that comments stressing a need for more concise documents are most typical of town and parish stakeholders.)

Figure 45 shows net ratings (% very/fairly minus % not very/not at all) for each aspect of the Standards Board's published information and guidance across all three waves. The base in each case contains valid ratings only i.e. excluding don't know responses.

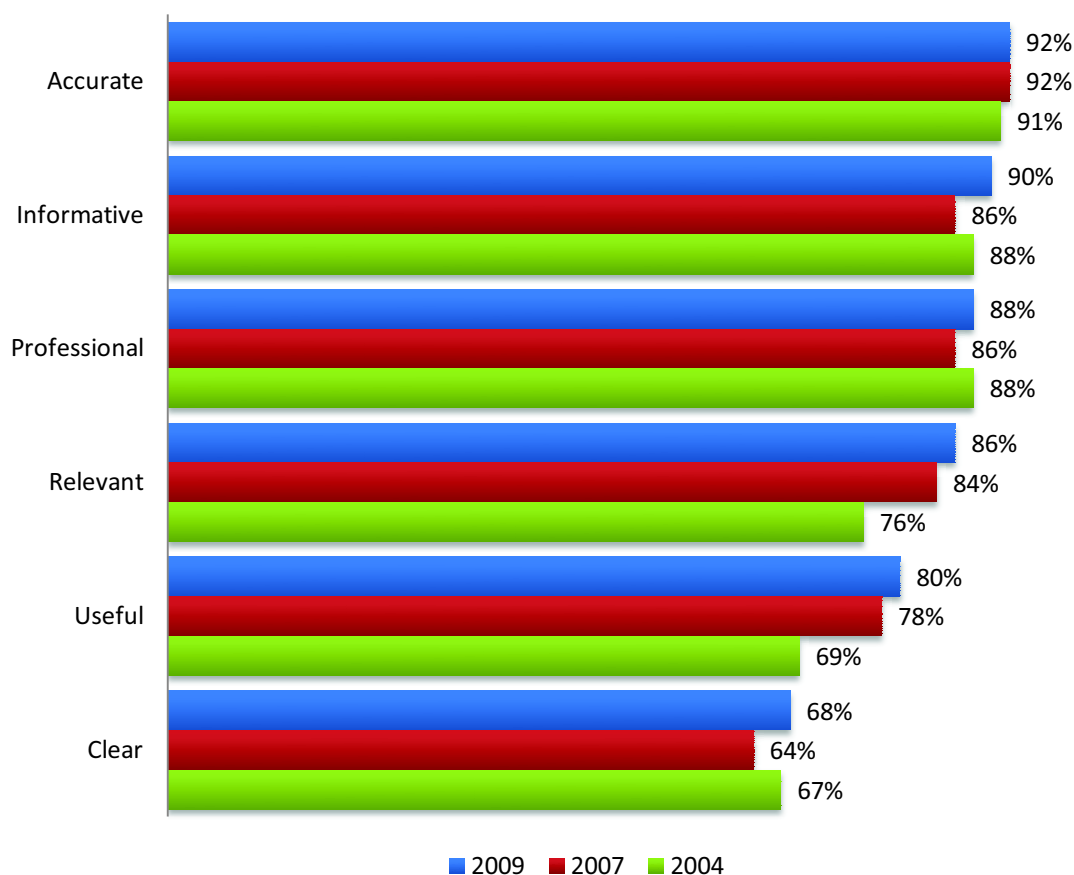
In no aspect does the perceived standard seem to have dropped, and while there are no very dramatic improvements, some aspects which seemed to have dropped slightly last wave are now at least back to 2004 levels.

Perceptions of relevance and usefulness appear to be showing strongest improvement since 2004. Net positive responses for usefulness have risen from +69% to +80% since 2004, and net relevance has risen from +76% to +86%.

In wave 3, 96% of monitoring officers describe the published information as very or fairly useful and only 4% give a negative response (net +92% useful).

Elected members and members of the exec./cabinet are most likely to state not very or not at all useful (19% and 16% respectively).

**Figure 45: Net ratings (% very/fairly - % not very/not at all) of the information and guidance published by the Standards Board for England, on specified aspects by wave (Q22)**



Base: All valid responses in each wave (excluding don't know/not provided, varying by wave and aspect)

## 7.6 The Local Standards Framework Guide for Authorities

The following introduction was given to a page of the questionnaire dedicated to this specific format:

***The Local Standards Framework Guide for Authorities* is a lever arch file containing removable sections on a number of standards related issues. Toolkit sections contain template letters, flowcharts and other documents which aim to provide practical assistance to users. The Guide is also available on the Standards Board for England website.**

As shown in figure 43 (section 7.4), 64% of stakeholders are aware of this format, and 51% of the total sample have used or read it.

The eight key sections of *The Local Standards Framework Guide for Authorities* were listed and respondents who had used or read the guide were asked to rate each one.

The results, listed in order of net usefulness in figure 46, indicate that the local assessment of complaints section is considered most useful, while the local

### Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

investigations and other action toolkit is considered less useful among all those who have used this format.

Local assessment of complaints and the role and make-up of standards committees are most widely used, with only 10% of those using the guide not able to rate these.

At least two thirds of users consider each aspect to be useful. Where invalid responses (such as not used) are excluded from the base, this percentage rises to a minimum of 93% for the two sections at the lower end of the table, to 97% and 98% for the two sections at the upper end.

**Figure 46: Rating of usefulness of each of the specified sections of The Local Standards Framework Guide for Authorities (Q23)**

	Useful	Not useful	Not aware of/ not used	Not provided	Net useful
Local assessment of complaints	88%	2%	4%	6%	+86%
The role and make-up of standards committees	87%	3%	4%	6%	+84%
Standards committee determinations	82%	3%	10%	6%	+79%
How to conduct an investigation	80%	3%	10%	7%	+77%
Local investigations and other action	79%	4%	10%	8%	+75%
Local assessment of complaints toolkit	72%	5%	16%	8%	+67%
Standards committee determinations toolkit	67%	5%	19%	8%	+62%
Local investigations and other action toolkit	66%	5%	20%	9%	+61%
<b>Base: All users/ past users of the Local Standards Framework Guide (1004)</b>					

## 8 The Standards Board for England Website

### 8.1 Frequency of visit

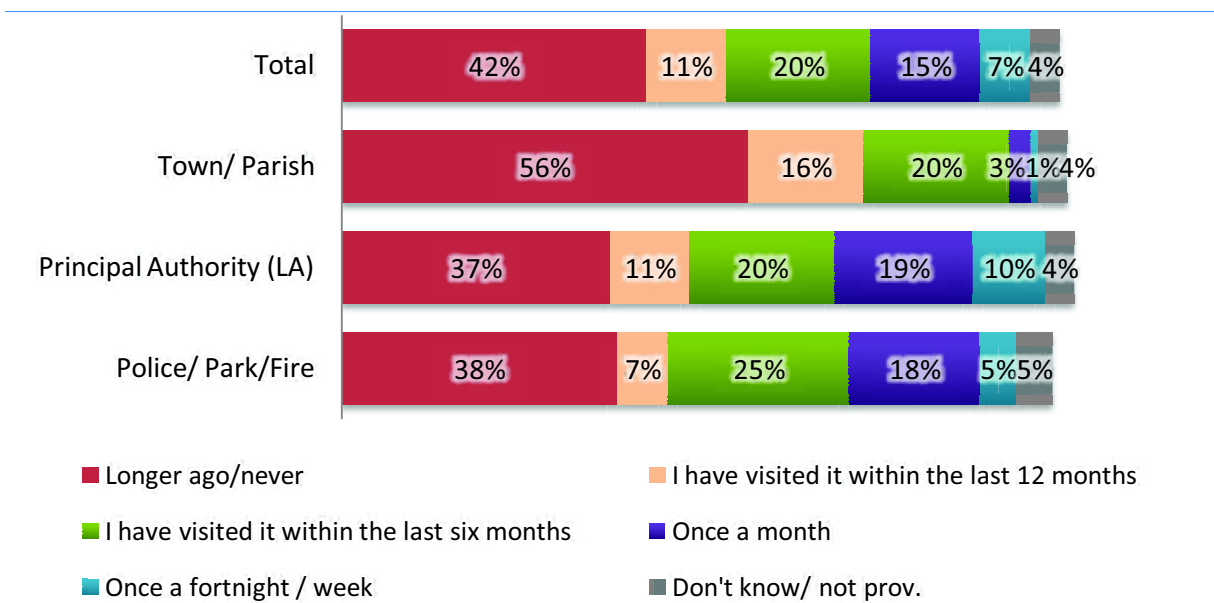
In 2007, website usage showed a strong increase on 2004, with ‘usage over the last 12 months’ reaching 44% of town/parish stakeholders and 62% of all other stakeholders (57% overall).

In 2009, the pattern of visits to the website remains very similar to in 2007, with 58% having visited the website in the last year.

A small minority are frequent users. In total 7% say that they visit the site weekly or fortnightly, a further 15% say that they visit the site monthly, 20% that they have visited it once in the last 6 months, and 11% once within the last 12 months. 42% had never visited the site, while 4% did not answer.

These proportions are all very similar to results in 2007, when 8% stated that they visited the website at least fortnightly, and a further 15% monthly.

**Figure 47: Frequency with which the respondent visits the Standards Board for England website (Q25)**



Base: All respondents (1,973)

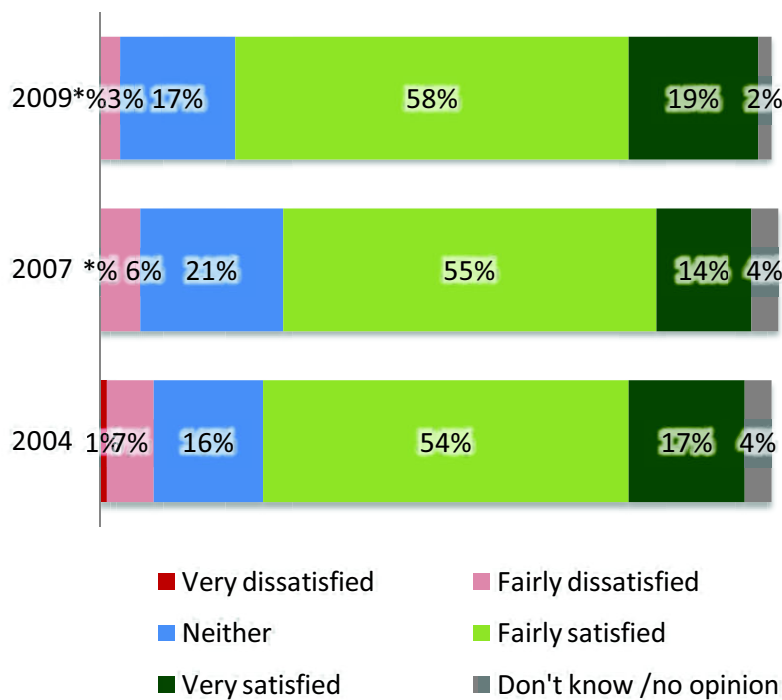
Principal authority stakeholders are again the most frequent users, 29% visiting on at least a monthly basis, as in 2007. Police, park and fire authorities are as likely as principal authorities to have used the site at some point (only 37% and 38% stating never or longer than a year ago in each case) but town and parish councils are less likely, 56% confirming that they have never visited the site.

## 8.2 Satisfaction

Satisfaction with the website among those who have used it has grown year on year. As shown, 77% of users are now satisfied, cf. 69% in 2007 and 71% in 2004.

Satisfaction has risen this wave at the expense of previously very negative as well as fairly negative and neutral responses to the website. Only 4% are now dissatisfied with the site, from 6% in 2007 and 8% in 2004. Nevertheless, suggestions for the website still come through the open-ended feedback on communications collected at the end of the questionnaire (See excel file of verbatim responses).

**Figure 48: Overall rating of satisfaction with the Standards Board for England website by wave (Q27)**



Base: All website users in each wave (2009 = 1,073; 2007 = 772; 2004 = 458)

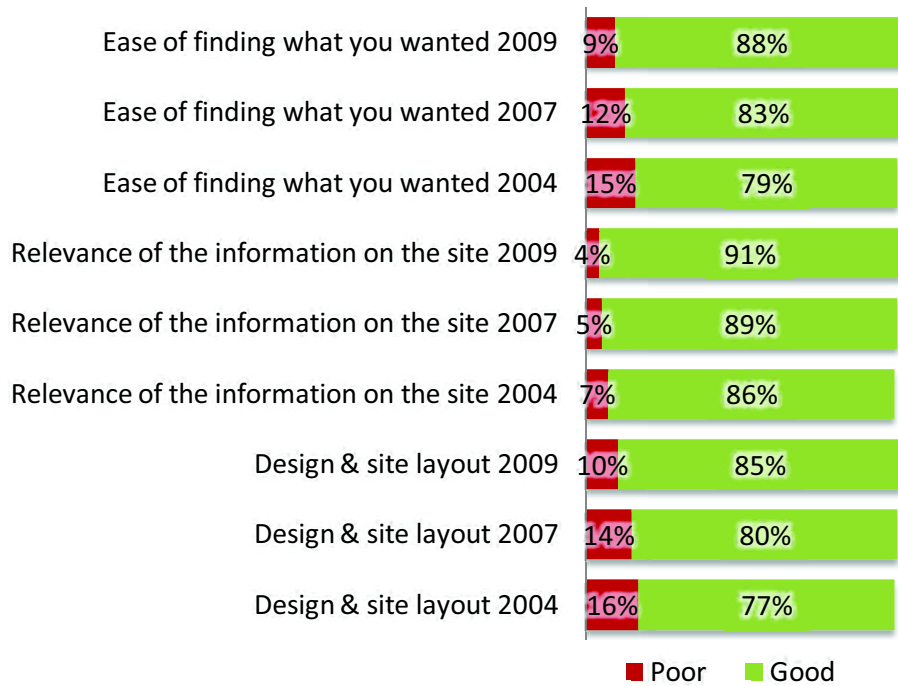
## 8.3 Views on aspects of the Website

Attitudes in relation to a number of aspects of the site were tested in both 2004 and 2007. As shown in Figure 49, there are more positive and fewer negative evaluations across all aspects in 2009, continuing the gradual positive trend from 2007.

Relevance of information continues to be viewed most highly (+87%), followed by ease of finding the information required (+79%) and then design and layout (+75%). In 2007 these nets were +84%, +71% and +66% respectively.



**Figure 49: Rating of the Standards Board for England website in terms of the specified aspects by wave (Q26)**



Base: All respondents who have visited the website in past year by wave (Poor and Good responses only shown)

## 9 Contacting the Standards Board for England

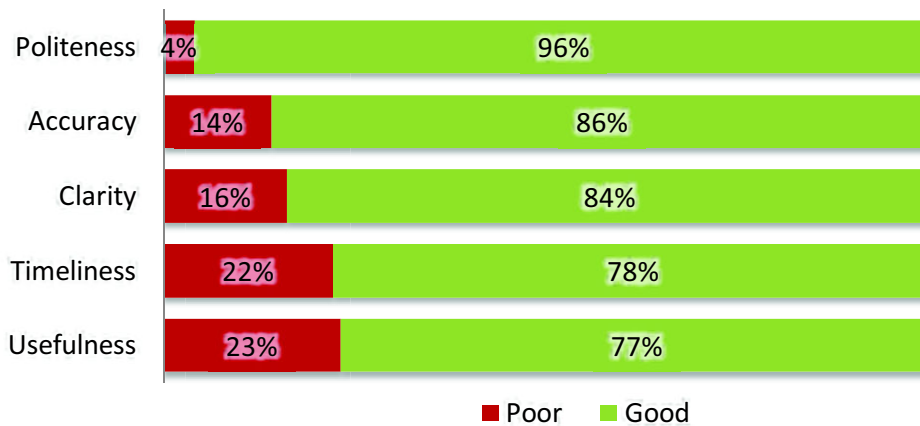
Respondents were asked to evaluate the most recent time that they had contacted the Standards Board not in relation to an investigation, by letter, by email and by telephone.

A number of aspects were prompted, and for all three channels of communication, politeness and clarity achieved highest evaluations.

### 9.1 By Letter

As shown below, less than a quarter of stakeholders able to give a valid response here rated response by letter from the Standards Board as poor on any criteria. Only 4% rate responses by letter as poor in terms of politeness, while 22% and 23% considered their letter response poor in terms of timeliness and usefulness respectively.

**Figure 50: Rating of the response in terms of the specified criteria, the last time the respondent contacted the Standards Board for England by letter in wave 3 (Q28)**



Sample base: All providing a valid response (excluding don't know/NA, varies by row)

In terms of change from previous waves, a positive improvement is seen on all criteria with the exception of timeliness, which has dropped slightly from net +58% to net +56%. The most notable improvement is in perceived accuracy (from +60% to +72%).

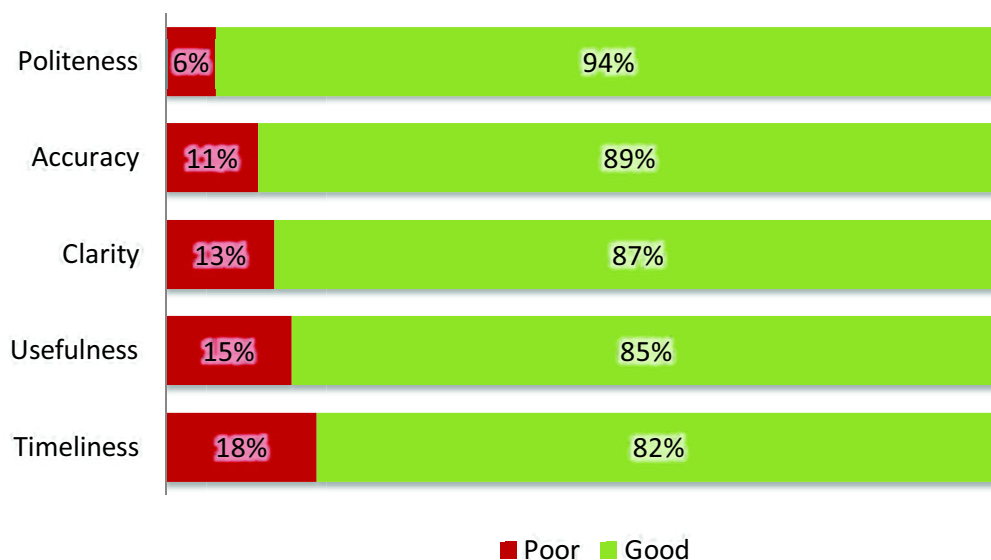
**Figure 51: Nets (% good - % poor) for contact by letter, wave on wave**

	Net 2009	Net 2007	Net 2004
Politeness	<b>+92%</b>	+90%	+88%
Accuracy	<b>+72%</b>	+60%	+56%
Clarity	<b>+68%</b>	+62%	+66%
Timeliness	<b>+56%</b>	+58%	+50%
Usefulness	<b>+54%</b>	+44%	+34%

## 9.2 By Email

Thinking about the last time they contacted the Standards Board by email, clarity, accuracy, timeliness and usefulness all score more highly than by letter, while politeness does not. In all criteria, fewer than one in five respondents rates their response by email as poor.

**Figure 52: Rating of the response in terms of the specified criteria, the last time the respondent contacted the Standards Board for England by email in wave 3 (Q29)**



Sample base: All providing a valid response (excluding don't know/NA, varies by row)

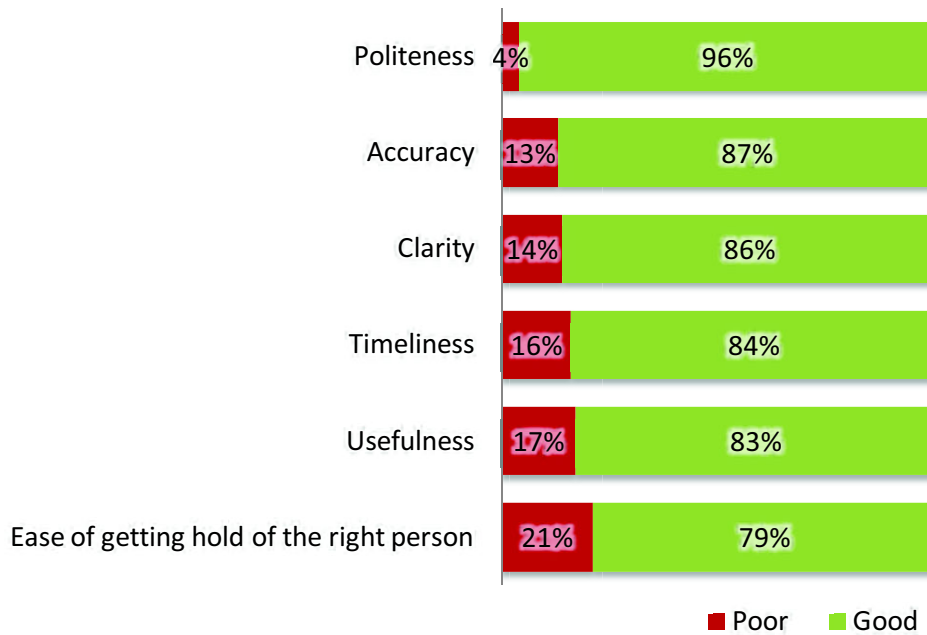
In terms of change from previous waves, a positive improvement is seen on accuracy and usefulness in particular, while politeness, clarity and timeliness are all in line with 2007 feedback.

**Figure 53: Nets (% good - % poor) for contact by email, wave on wave**

	Net 2009	Net 2007	Net 2004
Politeness	<b>+88%</b>	+88%	+90%
Accuracy	<b>+78%</b>	+74%	+74%
Clarity	<b>+74%</b>	+74%	+72%
Usefulness	<b>+70%</b>	+60%	+60%
Timeliness	<b>+64%</b>	+64%	+56%

## 9.3 By Telephone

In terms of telephone contact, politeness no longer achieves a lower score than by letter or email, as it did in previous waves. Only 4% rate the response as poor in this respect. Only 'ease of getting hold of the right person' is rated as poor by more than one in five applicable respondents (21%).

**Figure 54: Rating of the response in terms of the specified criteria, the last time the respondent contacted the Standards Board for England by telephone in wave 3(Q30)**

Sample base: All providing a valid response (excluding don't know/NA, varies by row)

While net ratings for clarity showed a downturn in 2007 (+62% in 2004; +60% in 2007), the rating has risen in 2009, to +72%.

Perceptions of usefulness of contact made by telephone remain stable (increasing from +58% in 2004 to +66% in 2007, and staying at +66% in 2009).

While 'ease of getting hold of the right person' remained static between waves 1 and 2, (+64% in both waves), it appears to have declined in its net rating in 2009 (with a +58% net rating as 'good').

## 10 The Standards Board for England Investigative Function

Respondents were asked to think about investigations handled by the Standards Board i.e. not dealt with locally. The wave 3 survey assessed their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction in relation to three aspects of the investigation process and associated interactions.

Responses are detailed in figure 55. As shown, professionalism achieves the highest net satisfaction rating (+31%) and the investigative function as a whole achieves a net satisfaction rating of +21%. Some way behind these aspects in terms of ratings is 'the speed with which investigations are undertaken..', with net satisfaction of +8%.

Proportions of respondents giving a response of don't know or not applicable are similar for all three aspects (43%-46%), while over half of respondents consider themselves in a position to rate the investigative function.

**Figure 55: Rating of satisfaction with how the Standards Board for England handles the specified aspects of an investigation in wave 3 (Q33)**

	Very dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Neither	Fairly satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know or N/A or Not provided	Summary Satisfied	Summary Dissatisfied	Net Satisfied
<b>The professionalism with which investigations are undertaken by Standards Board for England</b>	2%	4%	11%	24%	14%	46%	37%	6%	+31%
<b>The Standards Board for England's investigative function as a whole</b>	4%	6%	16%	23%	8%	43%	31%	10%	+21%
<b>The speed with which investigations are undertaken by Standards Board for England</b>	6%	10%	14%	18%	5%	46%	24%	16%	+8%
<b>Base: All respondents in wave 3 (1,973)</b>									

When those not providing a valid rating are removed from the base, professionalism achieves a net satisfaction rating of +58%, the investigative function as a whole achieves a net satisfaction rating of +38% and 'the speed with which investigations are undertaken..', generates a net satisfaction rating of +14%.

The speed in which investigations are undertaken is not a new area of concern. In 2007, respondents rating the way that investigations as a whole at that stage were undertaken generated a net satisfaction of -12% in terms of 'how quickly the investigation was undertaken'.

## 11 Appendix 1 Questionnaire



### STAKEHOLDER TRACKER 2009:

#### *SATISFACTION WITH THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND AND ATTITUDES TO THE ETHICAL ENVIRONMENT*

#### **SURVEY OF AUTHORITIES**

Please read these instructions carefully before completing the questionnaire:

- Please read each question carefully. Most questions require you to tick () a box or boxes to indicate the answer or answers you want to give. Other questions ask you to write in your answer.
- The survey should take no longer than 20 minutes to complete.
- If you have any questions about completing this questionnaire, please contact your Monitoring Officer or Ceri Matthias, at BMG Research on 0121 333 6006.
- Once you have completed the questionnaire, please return it in the pre-addressed envelope supplied as soon as possible, or by latest **Monday 9th March 2009**. If you cannot find or did not receive the pre-paid envelope, you can post the questionnaire back to us at the following address, you do not need a stamp:

BMG Research  
FREEPOST RLRL-JAZJ-UCAC  
Birmingham  
B7 4AX

**<BMG REF>**

<b>OVERALL ATTITUDES TO THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND</b>
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**PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED**

- Q1. Which of these phrases best describes the way you would speak of the Standards Board for England to other people in local government?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

- I would be critical of the Standards Board without being asked  1  
 I would be critical of the Standards Board if I were asked  2  
 I would be neutral towards the Standards Board  3  
 I would speak highly of the Standards Board if I were asked  4  
 I would speak highly of the Standards Board without being asked  5  
 Don't know/ no opinion  6

- Q2. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the work of the Standards Board for England?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

- Very satisfied  5 GO TO Q3  
 Fairly satisfied  4 GO TO Q3  
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  3 GO TO Q5  
 Fairly dissatisfied  2 GO TO Q4  
 Very dissatisfied  1 GO TO Q4  
 Don't know/ No opinion  6 GO TO Q5

**IF YOU ARE SATISFIED IN Q2 ABOVE PLEASE ANSWER Q3. IF YOU ARE DISSATISFIED PLEASE ANSWER Q4. OTHERWISE, PLEASE GO TO Q5.**

- Q3. Why do you say you are satisfied with the work of the Standards Board for England?  
PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW.

- Q4. Why do you say you are dissatisfied with the work of the Standards Board for England? PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW.

[2] BMG\_7166



Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

Q5. **ALL ANSWER**

Thinking now about different aspects of the Standards Board for England's work, how successful or unsuccessful do you think the Standards Board has been in each of the following areas in the last year?

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Very successful	Fairly successful	Neither successful nor unsuccessful	Fairly unsuccessful	Very unsuccessful	Don't know
Consulting those in local government about its work	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Defining standards of behaviour for members	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Enhancing the reputation of local government standards among the public	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Keeping local government in general informed about what it is doing	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Keeping you personally informed about what it is doing	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Making a useful contribution to the debate about standards of behaviour in local government	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Providing advice and information to members	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Providing advice and information to monitoring officers	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Providing advice and information to standards committees	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Being responsive to the needs of those it works with	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

[3] BMG\_7166



ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ETHICAL ENVIRONMENT
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Q6. Please indicate how far you agree or disagree with each of the following statements...  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I have confidence that my local standards committee is impartial	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
I have confidence in the way my local standards committee deals with complaints about members	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
I have confidence in the way my local authority deals with investigations	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
I have confidence in the way the Standards Board for England deals with investigations	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
<hr/>						
I support the requirement for members to sign a Code of Conduct	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
I would support the requirement for officers to sign a Code of Conduct	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
<hr/>						
I think members' standard of behaviour has improved over recent times in my authority	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Maintaining high standards of behaviour for members is one of the most important issues facing local government	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
The public are concerned about the standards of conduct of members	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
My standards committee has a high profile within the authority	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

[4] BMG\_7166

Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

Q7. If there was a breach of standards in behaviour by a councillor of your local authority, how confident, or not, are you that the local authority would uncover this?

**PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY**

Very confident  5

Quite confident  4

Neither confident nor unconfident  3

Not very confident  2

Not confident at all  1

Don't know  6

Q8. If a breach of standards in behaviour is uncovered, how confident, or not, are you that the councillor involved would be dealt with appropriately?

**PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY**

Very confident  5

Quite confident  4

Neither confident nor unconfident  3

Not very confident  2

Not confident at all  1

Don't know  6

Q9. In general, how confident, or not, are you in your authority's commitment to upholding ethical standards?

**PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY**

Very confident  5

Quite confident  4

Neither confident nor unconfident  3

Not very confident  2

Not confident at all  1

Don't know  6

<b>CHANGES TO THE ETHICAL FRAMEWORK</b>
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Since May 2008 there has been a shift towards local ownership of the Standards Framework.

Standards committees are now the bedrock of a devolved system, being proactive in championing high standards at the local level. In addition, allegations of misconduct are in the first instance considered at a local level and more cases are being dealt with at a local level than previously.

**Q10. ALL ANSWER**

Thinking about changes which have taken place in the last year as the ethical framework has been devolved, how successful or unsuccessful do you think the Standards Board for England has been in each of the following areas?

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Very successful	Fairly successful	Neither successful nor unsuccessful	Fairly unsuccessful	Very unsuccessful	Don't know
Conveying the message about the new ethical framework effectively	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Keeping local government informed about changes in relation to authorities' role in investigations	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Providing support and guidance to assist authorities in their new role with the new framework	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Keeping local government informed about the Standards Board for England's new role as a strategic regulator	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

**Q11. Please indicate how far you agree or disagree with each of the following statements...**

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Improving members' standard of behaviour is now a local issue	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
The new ethical framework is now firmly embedded in local government	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
I support the devolution of the ethical framework	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

[8] BMG\_7166

<b>INFORMATION PROVISION</b>
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Q12. How well do you think the Standards Board for England has kept you informed, if at all, about the following?

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Very well	Fairly well	Not very well	Not at all	Don't know
Case law examples	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Good practice guidance	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
New developments in relation to standards of behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
The Code of Conduct	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
The local standards framework	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Local authority responsibilities in ensuring high standards of conduct	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Members' responsibilities for ensuring high standards of conduct	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Q13. And how important, if at all, do you feel it is for the Standards Board for England to keep you informed about the following, going forward?

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know
Case law examples	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Good practice guidance	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
New developments in relation to standards of behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
The Code of Conduct	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
The local standards framework	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Local authority responsibilities in ensuring high standards of conduct	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Members' responsibilities for ensuring high standards of conduct	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

[7] BMG\_7166



<b>PUBLISHED INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE</b>
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We are interested in your experiences of, and views about, the particular ways in which the Standards Board for England provides advice, information and guidance to you.

This section focuses on the information and guidance that have been published by the Standards Board for England. Subsequent sections will ask you about the Standards Board's website and your experiences of contacting the Standards Board.

Q14. Overall, how would you rate the amount of published information and guidance you receive from the Standards Board for England?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY IN COLUMN Q14

Q15. Overall, how would you rate the frequency of the published information and guidance you receive from the Standards Board for England?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY IN COLUMN Q15

	Q14. Amount	Q15. Frequency
Too much	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
About right	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Not enough / would like more	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Don't know / No opinion	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

Q16. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the topics covered by the information and guidance provided by the Standards Board for England?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY IN COLUMN Q16

Q17. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the formats (electronic/paper) used by the Standards Board for England to provide information and guidance?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY IN COLUMN Q17

	Q16. Topics Covered	Q17. Formats
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Fairly satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Fairly dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Very dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Don't know / No opinion	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

Q18. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with published information and guidance provided by the Standards Board for England?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Fairly satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Fairly dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Very dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Don't know / No opinion	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

[8] BMG\_7166

Stakeholder Tracker 2009 (Satisfaction with the Standards Board for England and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)

- Q19. The list below shows a range of information and guidance published by the Standards Board for England. Which, if any, are you aware of?  
PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY IN COLUMN Q19
- Q20. Which, if any, of these have you personally used or read?  
PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY IN COLUMN Q20
- Q21. And which of these have you found useful?  
PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY IN COLUMN Q21

	Q19. Aware of?	Q20. Used or Read?	Q21. Useful?
<i>How to conduct a local investigation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
<i>The Case Review 2008 Digest</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
<i>Factsheets (Code of Conduct 2007)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<i>The Town and Parish Standard</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
<i>Annual Review 2007/08</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<i>Going Local - investigations and hearings (DVD)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
<i>The Bulletin</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
<i>Press toolkit</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
<i>The Local Standards Framework Guide for Authorities</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
Other (please write in below and tick boxes to right as appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/> 95	<input type="checkbox"/> 95	<input type="checkbox"/> 95
	None <input type="checkbox"/> 96	<input type="checkbox"/> 96	<input type="checkbox"/> 96

- Q22. Thinking about all the Standards Board for England's published information and guidance, to what extent would you say it is...  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Don't know
Informative	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Accurate	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Relevant	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Clear	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Useful	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Professional	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

[9] BMG\_7166

*The Local Standards Framework Guide for Authorities* is a lever arch file containing removable sections on a number of standards related issues. Toolkit sections contain template letters, flowcharts and other documents which aim to provide practical assistance to users. The Guide is also available on the Standards Board for England website.

**IF YOU HAVE USED OR READ THE LOCAL STANDARDS FRAMEWORK GUIDE FOR AUTHORITIES (YOU TICKED BOX 9 IN COLUMN Q20) PLEASE ANSWER Q23.**

**IF YOU HAVE NOT USED OR READ THE LOCAL STANDARDS FRAMEWORK GUIDE PLEASE GO TO Q24.**

Q23. The eight sections of the Local Standards Framework Guide are listed below. For each one, please indicate whether you consider this useful or not useful?

**PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY ON EACH ROW**

	Useful	Not useful	Not aware of/ not used
<i>The role and make-up of standards committees</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<i>Local assessment of complaints</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<i>Local assessment of complaints toolkit</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<i>Local investigations and other action</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<i>How to conduct an investigation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<i>Local investigations and other action toolkit</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<i>Standards committee determinations</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<i>Standards committee determinations toolkit</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

[10] BMG\_7166



Q24. Thinking about information you might like to receive in the future, how useful or not useful would you consider information on the following topics ... PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Very useful	Fairly useful	Not very useful	Not at all useful	Don't know
Further information on carrying out an investigation	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Good practice for standards committees	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Alternative action	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Sanctions guidance	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Monitoring/ benchmarking data	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Other (please write in below and tick a box to right as appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

**THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND'S WEBSITE**

Q25. Approximately how frequently, if at all, do you visit the Standards Board for England's website? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

- Once a week 7 GO TO Q26
- Once a fortnight 6 GO TO Q26
- Once a month 5 GO TO Q26
- I have visited it within the last six months 4 GO TO Q26
- I have visited it within the last 12 months 3 GO TO Q26
- I have visited it longer ago than this 2 GO TO Q28
- I have never visited the Standards Board's website 1 GO TO Q28
- Don't know 7 GO TO Q28

**PLEASE ONLY ANSWER QUESTIONS 26-27 IF YOU HAVE VISITED THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND'S WEBSITE AT LEAST ONCE IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS. OTHERWISE GO TO QUESTION 28**

Q26. How good or poor would you rate the Standards Board for England's website on each of the following aspects? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know
Ease of finding what you wanted	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Relevance of the information on the site	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Design and site layout	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Q27. And overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the Standards Board for England's website? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

- Very satisfied 5
- Fairly satisfied 4
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 3
- Fairly dissatisfied 2
- Very dissatisfied 1
- Don't know/ No opinion 6

[11] BMG\_7188



<b>CONTACTING THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND</b>
---

**ALL ANSWER**

The following questions ask about different ways you may have contacted the Standards Board for England. For each type of contact we are interested in your ratings for the LAST time you made contact.

If you have not contacted the Standards Board for England in one of the following ways please tick not applicable and move to the next question.

**Please note that these questions 28- 32 do not refer to contact in relation to a Standards Board investigation.**

- Q28. Thinking about the last time you contacted the Standards Board for England (not related to an investigation) by writing a letter. How good or poor would you rate the response in terms of ...  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know / not applicable
Timeliness	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Usefulness	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Accuracy	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Clarity	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Politeness	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

- Q29. Thinking about the last time you contacted the Standards Board for England (not related to an investigation) by sending an email. How good or poor would you rate the response in terms of ...  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know / not applicable
Timeliness	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Usefulness	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Accuracy	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Clarity	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Politeness	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

- Q30. Thinking about the last time you contacted the Standards Board for England (not related to an investigation) by telephone. How good or poor would you rate the contact in terms of ...  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know / not applicable
Ease of getting hold of the right person	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Timeliness	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Usefulness	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Accuracy	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Clarity	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Politeness	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

[12] BMG\_7168

**ALL PLEASE ANSWER**

Q31. How can the Standards Board for England improve the way it communicates with you in the future in terms of the *topics it provides information on*, if at all?

PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Q32. How can the Standards Board for England improve the way it communicates with you in the future in terms of its *methods of communication and formats of advice*, if at all?

PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

**STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND INVESTIGATIVE FUNCTION**

**ALL ANSWER**

Q33. Thinking about the investigations handled by the Standards Board, (i.e. not dealt with locally), how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following?

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH ROW

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't Know/ N/A
The professionalism with which investigations are undertaken by the Standards Board for England	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
The speed with which investigations are undertaken by the Standards Board for England	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
The Standards Board for England's investigative function as a whole	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

[13] BMG\_7168

<b>YOUR AUTHORITY</b>
-----------------------

Below are some questions about you and your authority. These questions are for analysis only. As with all your views this information is confidential and your responses will remain anonymous, in accordance with the Market Research Society's code of conduct.

- Q34. What is your position within your authority? If you are a member of more than one authority please respond for the authority which received/ sent you this questionnaire  
**PLEASE TICK ONE ONLY**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Leader of the council <input type="checkbox"/> 1                     | Monitoring officer<br>(Tick and go to Q37) <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Member of the executive/cabinet <input type="checkbox"/> 2           | Town or parish clerk <input type="checkbox"/> 6                       |
| Elected member<br>(not executive cabinet) <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Town or parish member <input type="checkbox"/> 7                      |
| Independent lay member <input type="checkbox"/> 4                    | Other<br>(Tick and write in below) <input type="checkbox"/> 95        |

--

- Q35. Are you a member of your authority's standards committee?  
**PLEASE TICK ONE ONLY**

- Yes (tick and go to Q36)  1                      No (tick and go to Q37)  2

- Q36. What is your role on the standards committee in your authority?  
**PLEASE TICK ONE ONLY**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Chair of standards committee <input type="checkbox"/> 1             | Independent lay member of standards<br>committee (not chair) <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| Elected member of standards<br>committee <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Other (Tick and write in below) <input type="checkbox"/> 95                             |

--

- Q37. Which political party controls your authority?  
**PLEASE TICK ONE ONLY**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Labour <input type="checkbox"/> 1             | Other arrangement<br>(Please tick and write in below) <input type="checkbox"/> 95 |
| Conservative <input type="checkbox"/> 2       |   |
| Liberal Democrat <input type="checkbox"/> 3   |   |
| No overall control <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |   |

- Q38. And, if you are an elected member, which political party, if any, do you represent?  
**PLEASE TICK ONE ONLY. IF NOT AN ELECTED MEMBER PLEASE GO TO Q39 .**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Labour <input type="checkbox"/> 1                              | Other<br>(Please tick and write in below) <input type="checkbox"/> 95 |
| Conservative <input type="checkbox"/> 2                        |   |
| Liberal Democrat <input type="checkbox"/> 3                    |   |
| Don't represent any political party <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |   |



DEMOGRAPHICS	
Q39.	Please write in your age.  <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-left: 40px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 25px; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <span>YEARS</span> </div>
Q40.	What is your gender?  <div style="margin-left: 40px;"> Male <input type="checkbox"/> 1  Female <input type="checkbox"/> 2 </div>
Q41.	<b>IF YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL/ AUTHORITY</b> How long have you been a member? <b>PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY</b>  <div style="margin-left: 40px;"> 0-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 1  3-5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 2  6-10 years <input type="checkbox"/> 3  11-15 years <input type="checkbox"/> 4  16+ years <input type="checkbox"/> 5  Does not apply <input type="checkbox"/> 6 </div>
Q42.	<b>IF YOU ARE AN OFFICER OF THE COUNCIL/ AUTHORITY</b> In total, how long have you been working in local government? <b>PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY</b>  <div style="margin-left: 40px;"> 0-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 1  3-5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 2  6-10 years <input type="checkbox"/> 3  11-15 years <input type="checkbox"/> 4  16+ years <input type="checkbox"/> 5  Does not apply <input type="checkbox"/> 6 </div>
Q43.	<b>ALL PLEASE ANSWER</b> Thinking about the Code of Conduct for members, which, if any, of the following applies to you? <b>PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY</b>  <div style="margin-left: 40px;"> I have made an allegation about a member <input type="checkbox"/> 1  I have had an allegation made against me <input type="checkbox"/> 2  I know of someone else in my authority who has made an allegation about a member <input type="checkbox"/> 3  I know of a member in my authority who has had an allegation made against them <input type="checkbox"/> 4  None of the above <input type="checkbox"/> 5 </div>
<b>THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.</b>  Please return it in the reply paid envelope by latest Monday 9th March 2009	
[15] BMG_7168	

## 12 Appendix 2 Respondent Profile

### Respondent Profile

The table below compares the 2009 respondent base (post-weighting) to the 2007 and 2004 respondent bases. As shown, subgroups are broadly comparative. The role breakdown gives only an approximate idea, due to subgroup classification differences, but identical subsets give an indication that more independent members are represented in 2007, and slightly more non-independent members were represented in 2004.

**Figure 56: Wave on wave respondent profiling**

Category	2004 (where avail) %	2007 %	2009 %	% above or below 2007
<b>Type</b>				
Town/Parish	27	24	24	0
Principal authority (LA)	63	68	65	-3
Other (police/park/fire)	10	12	12	0
<b>Authority (Principal Subset)</b>				
District	40	41	41	0
Metropolitan	6	6	5	-1
County	5	6	7	1
Unitary	7	8	7	-1
London borough	4	4	5	1
	(total = 63%)	(68%)	(65%)	
<b>Role (Identical subgroups only)</b>				
Town/parish clerk/ member	25	21	14 C 9M	2
Monitoring officer	20	17	15	-2
Independent member of standards committee (not chair)	5	19	20	0
Chair of standards committee	7	14	13	-1
Member of the Executive/Cabinet	17	7	5	-2
Leader of the council	4	1	2	1
<b>Authority Control</b>				
Labour	19	13	12	-1
Conservative	29	36	48	12
Lib Dem	9	11	10	-1
No overall control	22	17	13	-4
<b>Age</b>				
Under 45	14	10	10	0
45 to 54	28	23	21	-2
55 to 64	31	36	36	0
65+	20	25	27	2
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	64	68	62	-6
Female	31	30	35	5
Not stated	4	2	3	1

## 13 Appendix 3 Additional Charts

Figure 57: Perceived success in providing key information types in 2004 and 2007

Net success in 'keeping you informed' on...  
2004 and 2007

	% unsucc 04	% success 04	NET 04	% unsucc 07	% success 07	NET 07
Case law examples	49	35	-14	36	56	+20
Good practice guidance	26	64	+38	25	70	+55
New developments in relation to standards of behaviour	35	52	+17	31	62	+31
The code of conduct	79	15	+65	17	79	+62
Changes to the statutory framework i.e. recent Government papers (named)	n/a	n/a	n/a	29	64	+35
Local authority responsibilities in ensuring high standards of conduct*	31	57	+26	28	65	+37
Members responsibilities for ensuring high standards of conduct*	26	64	+38	27	67	+40

\* Wording in 2004: The ethical responsibilities of authorities and The ethical responsibilities of members

Figure 58: Perceived importance of key information types in 2004 and 2007

Net importance attributed to...  
2004 and 2007

	% not imp 04	% imp 04	NET 04	% not imp 07	% imp 07	NET 07
Case law examples	14	78	+64	10	87	+77
Good practice guidance	6	89	+83	3	95	+92
New developments in relation to standards of behaviour	7	88	+81	3	95	+92
The code of conduct	7	90	+83	3	95	+92
The impact of changes to the code	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	95	+92
Changes to the statutory framework i.e. recent Government papers (named)	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	91	+85
Local authority responsibilities in ensuring high standards of conduct*	10	84	+74	5	93	+88
Members responsibilities for ensuring high standards of conduct*	86	8	+78	5	94	+89

\* Wording in 2004: The ethical responsibilities of authorities and The ethical responsibilities of members



**Because people matter, we listen.**

With some 20 years' experience, BMG Research has established a strong reputation for delivering high quality research and consultancy.

Our business is about understanding people; because they matter. Finding out what they really need; from the type of information they use to the type of services they require. In short, finding out about the kind of world people want to live in tomorrow.

BMG serves both the social public sector and the commercial private sector, providing market and customer insight which is vital in the development of plans, the support of campaigns and the evaluation of performance.

Innovation and development is very much at the heart of our business, and considerable attention is paid to the utilisation of technologies such as portals and information systems to ensure that market and customer intelligence is widely shared.





**STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10****SEPTEMBER**

- Review of the operation of the local assessment process
- Consideration of revised Planning code of conduct

**DECEMBER**

- Visit by Members from other authorities' Standards Committees
- Consideration of approaches Standards Committee could take to proactively raise the issue of Standards within the Council

**MARCH**

- Work Programme for 2010/11
- Canvass Member opinion on what Members are looking for Standards Committee to do/ any areas where Standards Committee should be more active

**TO BE ALLOCATED TO SUITABLE AVAILABLE DATES, DEPENDENT ON AGENDA**

- Compulsory Code of Conduct Training for all Members
- CRB checks
- Revised Code of Conduct (when amended by legislation)
- Mock complaints training
- Training DVD on Code of Conduct

