



promoting better local government

Local Government Association

*From the Chief Executive
Sir Brian Briscoe*

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Sir Alistair Graham
Committee on Standards in Public Life
35 Great Smith Street
LONDON
SW1P 3BQ

8 February 2005

Dear *Alistair,*

The Committee's 10th Report

Thank you for the copy of the Committee's Tenth Report.

The Committee's recommendations in relation to the ethical framework in local government are extremely welcome, as they mirror, to a very large degree, the Association's own preferred approach to the maintenance of standards in local government. This approach places emphasis on local responsibility for the ethical health of each local authority; and the resolution of most cases at local level, which would require a substantial role for local standards committees. In that model, the Standards Board would concentrate on dealing with only the most serious cases; providing guidance to local committees and act as a regulator of the system.

The Committee's recommendations in relations to changes to the code of conduct, particularly addressing the present restrictions on councillors representing their constituents; and the distinction between private conduct and conduct in an official capacity, reflect wide-spread concern amongst local authority members. It is particularly helpful that the Committee recognises that the statutory framework requires change and has recommended a timetable to Government to put this right.

Finally, the endorsement of the findings of the Committee's Third Report that the vast majority of councillors and officers observe high standards of conduct is a welcome boost to local democracy.

We will be seeking to persuade Ministers to act on the Committee's recommendations.

Yours sincerely

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