

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Standards Committee

17th May 2010

1. REGULATORY STATEMENT

Report of the Monitoring Officer.

RECOMMENDED

THAT Members note the contents of the report and consider any issues for the Authority.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of the report is to bring to Members' attention a recent publication by Standards for England called the "Regulatory Statement" and to enable members to consider any implications for the Authority.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Standards for England published a document called the "Regulatory Statement" in February 2010. This is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.2 The Statement explains what Standards for England hopes to achieve as a strategic regulator. The two key regulatory outcomes they seek to achieve are:
- that there are high standards of conduct among members in authorities;
 - that there is an effective and proportionate standards framework in operation.
- 3.3 As far as local authorities are concerned Standards for England wish to see them having the right people, systems, skills and knowledge to discharge their responsibilities under the standards framework.
- 3.4 The Statement states that Standards for England have adopted a

risk-based approach to their work, applying resources to those areas and activities where they are needed most. This includes identifying authorities and dealing with issues that pose the greatest risk to their regulatory outcomes.

3.5 The Statement also sets out the areas of practice of Standards for England including:

- information, guidance, advice and liaison;
- monitoring;
- relationship management;
- investigations;
- research and knowledge management

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The Standards Board for England, more recently known as Standards for England, is established by Section 57 of the Local Government Act 2000. Standards for England has overall responsibility for the effectiveness of the standards framework. Its role has continued to change and develop in recent years. Whilst its role of providing guidance to authorities continues, its role as strategic regulator appears to be gaining prominence. The Regulatory Statement reflects this changing balance.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Greater regulation is likely to require greater resources although a more proportionate standards regime may re-address the balance overall.

N SHARMA
MONITORING OFFICER