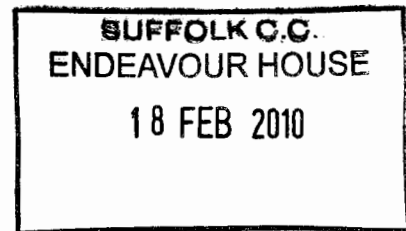


Standards for England

Mr Eric Whitfield
Monitoring Officer
Suffolk County Council
Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP1 2BX



16 February 2010

Dear Mr Whitfield,

Thank you for your letter of 27 January. Glenys Stacey has asked me to reply to you on her behalf.

Firstly I'd like to apologise for the delay in my response, and secondly I'd like to thank you for taking the time to write to Standards for England, your standards committees' suggestions are gratefully received.

It is Standards for England's view, based on the monitoring data we collect and feedback we receive, that the local standards framework is working well on the whole. However, we are well aware that it is not perfect and improvements can be made to make the framework more effective and proportionate. To this end we have recently undertaken a review of the framework. The results of the review have informed a number of recommendations for improvements which we are making to our sponsoring department, Communities and Local Government (CLG).

We share your standards committees' concerns about the proportionality of the framework in relation to the assessment of less serious complaints and as a result this was one area that the review focused on. Our recommendations to CLG are currently being finalized and I will ensure your standards committees' suggestions are considered during this process. Once we have sent our recommendations to CLG, full details of our proposals will be available on our website and we would very much welcome any feedback you or your committee might have.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "N. Ainscough", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Natalie Ainscough
Secretariat Officer