

## **GUIDANCE TO ASSIST ASSESSMENT OF CASE**

### **EARLY GUIDANCE RECEIVED FROM THE STANDARDS BOARD ON THE CONDUCT OF AN ASSESSMENT**

#### **Which complaints will we refer for investigation?**

We decide that a matter should be investigated when we believe that it meets one of the following criteria:-

- It is serious enough, if proven, to justify the range of sanctions available to the Adjudication Panel for England or local Standards Committees;
- It is part of a continuing pattern of less serious misconduct that is unreasonably disrupting the business of the authority and there is no other avenue left to deal with it, short of investigation;
- In considering this, we will take into account the time that has passed since the alleged conduct has occurred.

#### **Which complaints are we unlikely to refer for investigation?**

We are unlikely to decide that a complaint should be investigated if it falls into any of the following categories:-

- We believe it to be malicious, relatively minor or tit-for-tat;
- The same, or substantially similar, complaint has already been the subject of an investigation or enquiry and there is nothing further to be gained by seeking the sanctions available to the Adjudication Panel or the local Standards Committee;
- The complaint concerns acts carried out in the Members' private life when they are not carrying out the work of the Authority or have not misused their position as a Member;
- It appears that the complaint is really about dissatisfaction with a Council decision;
- There is not enough information currently available to justify a decision to refer the matter for investigation.