

# Item 6

## REPORT TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

30TH OCTOBER 2008

## REPORT OF SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL AND MONITORING OFFICER

### STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND - LOCAL ASSESSMENT OF COMPLAINTS - QUARTERLY STATISTICS - QUARTER 1

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Report sets out the quarterly statistics which the Standards Board for England has compiled on the local assessment of complaints. This is for the period 8th May (commencement date of local assessment) to 30th June 2008 - Quarter 1.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Standards Committee be appraised of the report.

#### 3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The Standards Board for England required Monitoring Officers of Local Authorities to complete a quarterly return on the number of complaints received. The first quarter ended 30th June 2008.
- 3.2 From the data submitted the Standards Board had been able to compile the following statistics.
- 3.3 **Quarterly return submissions:** of the 473 authorities required to submit a return, 464 authorities had submitted a return on time, this equates to 98% of authorities. 427 returns that had been completed did not contain any errors, which equates to 90% of all returns. Only 37 returns which had been submitted were incomplete or contained errors, which is only 8% of all returns. 9 authorities did not submit a return, this is only 2% of all authorities.
- 3.4 **Composition of Standards Committee:**

##### ***Size of Standards Committees:***

- The largest Standards Committee comprised 18 members
- The smallest Standard Committee comprised of only 3 members
- The average size of a Standards Committee comprised 9 members

**Independent Members:**

- The highest number of independent members was 9.
- The least number of independent members was 1
- The average number of independent members was 3

**Parish Representatives:**

- The highest number of parish representatives was 7.
- The least number of parish representatives was 1
- The average number of parish representatives was 3

**General:**

- 4 authorities reported that they did not have an independent chair.
- 3 authorities reported that the Standards Committee was made up entirely of independent members.
- All authorities with parishes had parish representation on their Standards Committees.

3.5 **Source of Complaint:** Monitoring Officers had reported a total of 321 cases to the Standards Board for England. From the statistics provided the Board has indicated that members of the public and fellow councillors still remained the prevalent sources.

3.6 **Referral Decisions:** a decision about whether to refer had not been made on 153 (48%) of cases received during the quarter. A breakdown of decisions for the other 168 cases was as follows:-

Not referred	70
Referred to Monitoring Officer for investigation	65
Referred to Monitoring Officer for alternative measures	30
Referred to the Standards Board	3

3.7 **Timeliness of Decisions:** during the quarter, the average length of time a case took from date of receipt to referral decision was 14 days; 24 cases took longer than 20 days for a referral decision to be made, which equated to 7%.

3.8 A separate report will provide data upon local assessment cases at Sedgefield Borough Council.

**4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 No specific financial implications have been identified.

**5. CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 The Standards Committee are appraised on this report.

## 6. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 All material considerations have been taken into account in the contents of this Report. In particular, risks may arise unless Members of the Council are fully appraised on standards matters.

## 7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None apply.

## 8. LIST OF APPENDICES

- 8.1 None apply.

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**Wards:** N/A

**Key Decision Validation:** N/A

### Background Papers

The Standards Board for England - Quarterly Statistics

### Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Council's Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Council's S.151 Officer or his representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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