

Update on Code of Conduct Complaints made to the Standards Committee – 8 May to 30 June 2008 and 1 July to 30 September 2008

Report of the Clerk and Monitoring Officer

For further information about this report please contact Roger Woliter, Clerk and Monitoring Officer, on 01952 383200 or Matthew Cumberbatch, Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer, on 01952 383255.

1 Purpose of Report

This report provides the Committee with details of the Code of Conduct complaints received by the Standards Committee during the periods 8 May 2008 to 30 June 2008 and 1 July to 30 September 2008.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

3 Background

From 8 May 2008 to 30 September 2008 the Standards Committee received no Code of Conduct complaints under the new system for local assessment. Two separate quarterly returns have been forwarded to the Standards Board for England.

4 Information

The new system for the local assessment of complaints alleging breaches of the Members Code of Conduct came into effect on 8 May 2008. Under Section 186 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (amending the Local Government Act 2000) there is a requirement that the Authority provide regular returns to the Standards Board for England. The returns provide information about Code of Conduct complaints received by the

Standards Committee and the outcome from each of the complaints which have been dealt with.

The first returns covered the periods 8 May 2008 to 30 June 2008 and 1 July to 30 September respectively. During those two periods the Standards Committee did not receive any Code of Conduct complaints. Returns were sent electronically to the Standards Board for England confirming this information.

A press release was issued by the Standards Board for England on 31 July 2008 stating that a total of 360 complaints had been made to Standards Committees across England from the period 8 May to 30 June 2008. The 360 complaints were received by 164 English Local Authorities. A further 279 Authorities confirmed they had no cases to report in the first few weeks. At the time of preparing this report details of complaints nationally during the most recent quarter were not available.

5 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6 Legal Comment

The legal comment is contained within the main body of this report

7 Equality Impact Assessment

Officers have considered the Service's Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments (Personnel 5 Part 2) and have decided that there are no discriminatory practices or differential impacts upon specific groups arising from this report. An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

8 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

9 Background Papers

Press Release from the Standards Board for England dated 31 July 2008 entitled "Local Authorities Tackling Complaints About Members".

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balanced Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	*
Capacity		Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings		Retained	
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	
Financial	*	Staff	
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	*