

Code of Conduct Complaints made to the Standards Committee 1 October to 31 December 2008

Report of the Clerk and Monitoring Officer

For further information about this report please contact Jonathan Eatough, 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 Code of Conduct complaints received by the Standards Committee during the period 1 October to 31 December 2008.

2 Recommendations

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

3 Background

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 Fire 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.

4 Complaints Made

The latest return covered the period 1 October to 31 December 2008, during which time the Standards Committee did not receive any Code of Conduct complaints under the new system for local assessment. A return has been sent electronically to the Standards Board for England confirming this information.

According to the statistics provided on the Standards Board for England website 1,217 complaints were made from 8 May to 30 September 2008. A decision about whether to refer had not been made on 235 cases and of the other 982 cases:

- 675 related to complaints made by a member of the public;
- 423 were made by a Member;
- 52 by a council officer;
- 39 by 'other'; and
- 28 by a parish/town clerk.

The following is a split of cases by authority type:

- 789 district council;
- 197 unitary authority;
- 123 metropolitan council;
- 52 London borough; and
- 45 county council.

At the time of preparing this report statistics relating to complaints received during the most recent quarter (1 October to 31 December 2008) were not available from the Standards Board for England.

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

There are no background papers associated with this report.

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	