

2008-9 Statistics Tables – Explanatory Notes and Commentary

Tables: Attached are summary details of the contacts and complaints about your Council that the SPSO received and determined in 2008-09. Table 1 details total contacts (by our subject categories) received for your Council for 2007-08 and 2008-09, alongside the total of local authority complaints for these years. We recorded 57 complaints about the Council, compared to 48 in the previous year. Table 2 shows the outcomes of complaints determined by the SPSO in 2008-09.

Graphs: The first graph provides a visual representation of the information from the right side of Table 1. You'll see that in 2008-09 your Council was above the national average in terms of complaints about housing. We received more complaints for your Council about social work and fewer complaints about environmental health & cleansing than in the previous year.

The second graph shows for each Council the percentage of complaints that we received and determined as premature, against the national average in 2008-9 (60%). We consider a complaint to be premature when it reaches us before the complainant has been through the full complaints process of the organisation. The graph does not reflect the number of premature complaints that we received about your Council, but shows how your Council, proportionately, compares against the average for Scottish local authorities. Your Council is number 15 on the graph, just above the average. You'll see from Table 2 that the actual number of premature complaints for your Council was 37 out of a total of 61 complaints determined (61% of the total for your Council). This was an increase on the previous year's figure of 25 out of 50 (50% of the total for your Council).

NB We don't adjust any of our figures to mitigate the impact of housing stock transfer. It's evident, however, that there's a tendency for authorities that retain housing stock to receive more complaints and to fall higher within the prematurity graph than those that have undertaken stock transfer. This is to be expected given that housing complaints are usually the largest category of complaint and that there's a disproportionately high incidence of prematurity with housing complaints.

Complaints and Recommendations Reported to Parliament

We reported on three complaints about your Council in 2008-09, of which we upheld two and did not uphold one. Attached is a summary sheet showing these complaints, and summarising the recommendations made. As you are no doubt aware, SPSO Complaints Investigators follow up to find out what changes have been made as a result of recommendations

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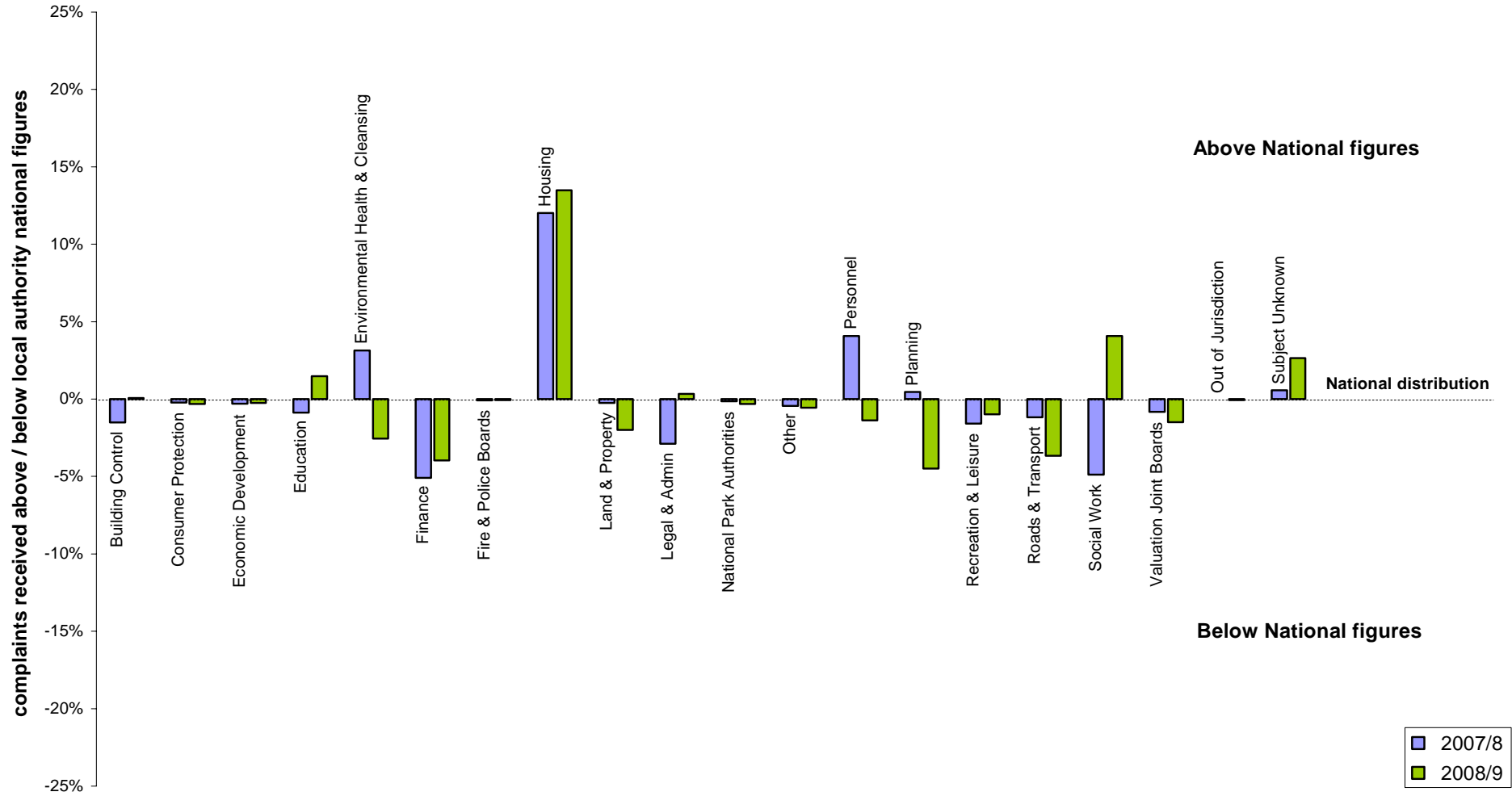
We hope that you find this summary information useful. If you have any enquiries about the statistics, please contact Annie White, SPSO Casework Knowledge Manager, on 0131 240 8843 or email awhite@spsso.org.uk. Fuller statistical reports are available on our website at: <http://www.spsso.org.uk/statistics/index.php>.

Renfrewshire Council

Table 1

Received by Subject	2007/8			All Local Authority Complaints			2008/9			All Local Authority Complaints		
	Total Contacts	Complaints Only	complaints as % of total	Total Contacts	Complaints Only	complaints as % of total	Total Contacts	Complaints Only	complaints as % of total	Total Contacts	Complaints Only	complaints as % of total
Building Control	0	0	0%	20	2%		1	1	2%	27	2%	
Consumer Protection	0	0	0%	3	0%		0	0	0%	5	0%	
Economic Development	0	0	0%	4	0%		0	0	0%	4	0%	
Education	3	2	4%	67	5%		5	4	7%	89	6%	
Environmental Health & Cleansing	4	4	8%	69	5%		1	1	2%	69	4%	
Finance	4	2	4%	123	9%		3	3	5%	148	9%	
Fire & Police Boards	0	0	0%	1	0%		0	0	0%	1	0%	
Housing	23	20	42%	394	30%		25	24	42%	459	29%	
Land & Property	1	1	2%	31	2%		0	0	0%	32	2%	
Legal & Admin	2	1	2%	66	5%		3	3	5%	79	5%	
National Park Authorities	0	0	0%	2	0%		0	0	0%	5	0%	
Other	1	0	0%	6	0%		0	0	0%	9	1%	
Personnel	5	3	6%	29	2%		0	0	0%	22	1%	
Planning	14	9	19%	243	18%		7	7	12%	269	17%	
Recreation & Leisure	0	0	0%	21	2%		1	1	2%	44	3%	
Roads & Transport	4	2	4%	71	5%		1	1	2%	87	5%	
Social Work	4	3	6%	148	11%		10	9	16%	188	12%	
Valuation Joint Boards	0	0	0%	11	1%		0	0	0%	24	1%	
Out of Jurisdiction	0	0	0%	0	0%		1	0	0%	1	0%	
Subject Unknown	2	1	2%	20	2%		3	3	5%	42	3%	
Total	67	48		1,329			61	57		1,604		

Complaints received by subject: Renfrewshire Council proportions compared to the distribution of all local authority complaints received



Renfrewshire Council

Table 2

Complaints Determined by Outcome		2007/8		2008/9	
		<i>All Local Authority</i>		<i>All Local Authority</i>	
Assessment	Premature	25	760	37	923
	Out of Jurisdiction	9	154	3	102
	Withdrawn or failed to provide information before investigation	6	178	6	158
	Discontinued or suspended before investigation	1	42	0	12
Examination	Determined after detailed consideration	6	240	12	279
Investigation	Report issued: not upheld	1	82	1	25
	Report issued: partially upheld	1	62	0	22
	Report issued: fully upheld	0	23	2	15
	Withdrawn or failed to provide information during investigation	0	4	0	1
	Discontinued or suspended during investigation	1	13	0	9
Total		50	1,558	61	1,546

Renfrewshire Council

Published	Case Ref.	Summary	Decision	Recommendation(s)
17/09/08	200700850	(a) the closing date for applications to be received by the Council was not included on the application form (upheld); (b) Mrs C was not subsequently informed, in her dealings with the Council, of the deadline for submitting the application (upheld); (c) Mrs C submitted all the information initially requested but was then asked for additional information (upheld); and (d) the Council should have awarded Mr C an EMA for the academic year 2005/06 (upheld).	upheld	increase their offer of a £500 ex-gratia payment to £840, to reflect the basic allowance and bonus payment Mr C would have been entitled to had his application been accepted. The Ombudsman asks that the Council notify her when the recommendation has been implemented. The Council have accepted the recommendation and will act on it accordingly.
17/09/08	200502776	in taking enforcement action against Mr C, the Council treated him unfairly when compared with their treatment of other businesses on the Estate (not upheld).	not upheld	The Ombudsman has no recommendations to make.
21/01/09	200701327	Council 1 failed to carry out Ms C's social work case transfer in: (a) accordance with their own procedures (upheld); and (b) a timely manner (upheld).	upheld	(i) introduce procedures to ensure that any requests for action on a service user's case file are proactively pursued to completion; and (ii) formally apologise to Ms C for the anxiety and disruption caused by their handling of her social work case transfer. Council 1 have accepted the recommendations and will act on them accordingly.