

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

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 62 complaints about the Council, compared to 47 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 planning. Your Council was below the average for complaints about housing and social work. We did, however, receive more complaints for your Council about housing and planning, and fewer complaints about legal & administrative matters, 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 25 on the graph, below the average. You'll see from Table 2 that the actual number of premature complaints for your Council was 27 out of a total of 54 complaints determined (50% of the total for your Council). This was an increase on the previous year's figure of 18 out of 53 (34% 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 two complaints about your Council in 2008-09, both of which we partially upheld. 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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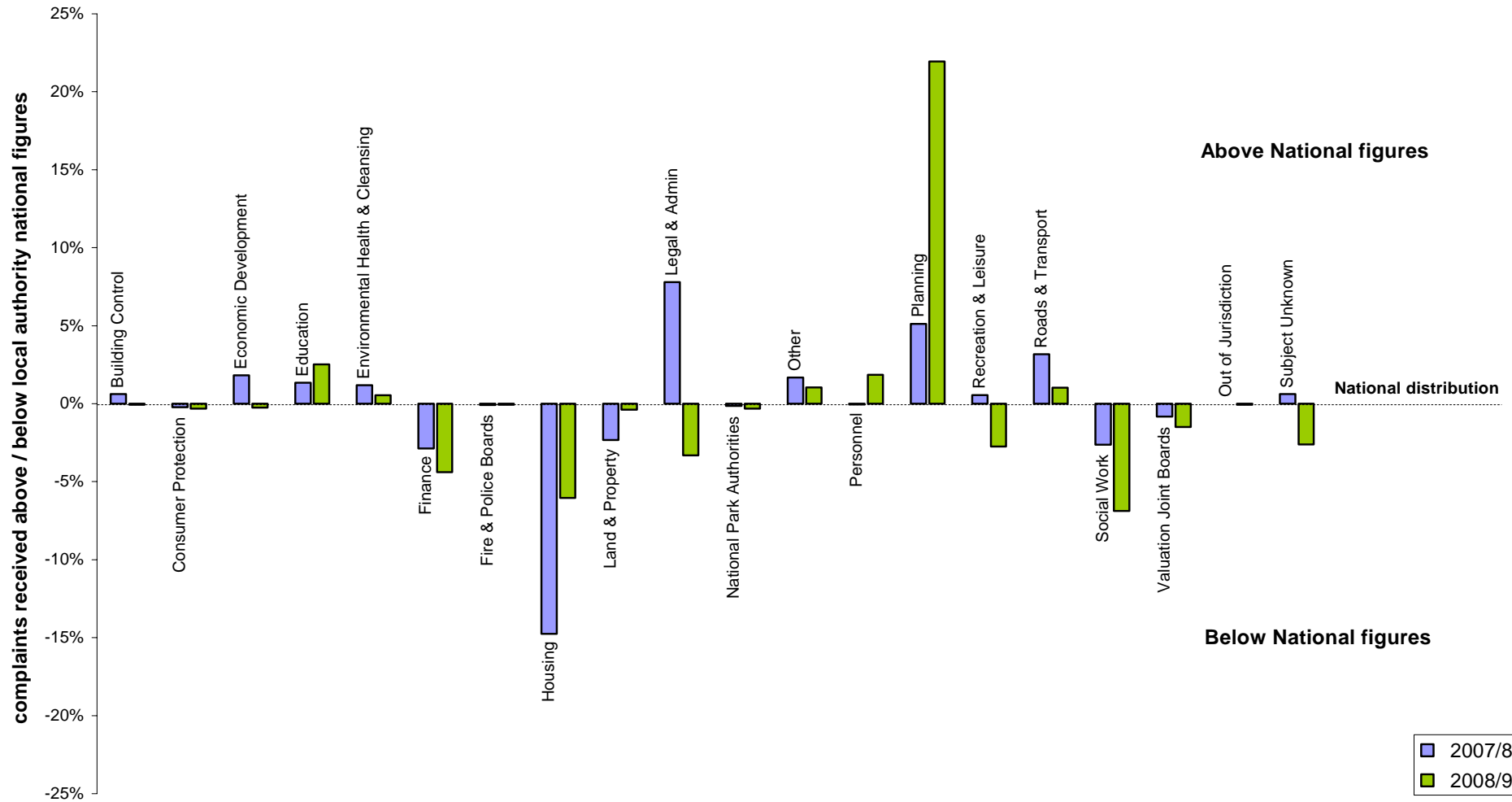
We hope that you find this summary information useful. If you have any enquiries about the statistics, please contact Annie White, SPSO Casework Knowledge Manager, on 0131 240 8843 or email awhite@spsso.org.uk. Fuller statistical reports are available on our website at: <http://www.spsso.org.uk/statistics/index.php>.

Perth and Kinross 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	1	1	2%	20	2%		1	1	2%	27	2%	
Consumer Protection	0	0	0%	3	0%		0	0	0%	5	0%	
Economic Development	1	1	2%	4	0%		0	0	0%	4	0%	
Education	3	3	6%	67	5%		5	5	8%	89	6%	
Environmental Health & Cleansing	3	3	6%	69	5%		3	3	5%	69	4%	
Finance	4	3	6%	123	9%		3	3	5%	148	9%	
Fire & Police Boards	0	0	0%	1	0%		0	0	0%	1	0%	
Housing	9	7	15%	394	30%		14	14	23%	459	29%	
Land & Property	0	0	0%	31	2%		1	1	2%	32	2%	
Legal & Admin	6	6	13%	66	5%		1	1	2%	79	5%	
National Park Authorities	0	0	0%	2	0%		0	0	0%	5	0%	
Other	2	1	2%	6	0%		1	1	2%	9	1%	
Personnel	3	1	2%	29	2%		4	2	3%	22	1%	
Planning	15	11	23%	243	18%		29	24	39%	269	17%	
Recreation & Leisure	1	1	2%	21	2%		0	0	0%	44	3%	
Roads & Transport	4	4	9%	71	5%		4	4	6%	87	5%	
Social Work	6	4	9%	148	11%		4	3	5%	188	12%	
Valuation Joint Boards	0	0	0%	11	1%		0	0	0%	24	1%	
Out of Jurisdiction	0	0	0%	0	0%		0	0	0%	1	0%	
Subject Unknown	1	1	2%	20	2%		1	0	0%	42	3%	
Total	59	47		1,329			71	62		1,604		

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



Perth and Kinross Council

Table 2

Complaints Determined by Outcome		2007/8		2008/9	
			<i>All Local Authority</i>		<i>All Local Authority</i>
Assessment	Premature	18	760	27	923
	Out of Jurisdiction	9	154	4	102
	Withdrawn or failed to provide information before investigation	4	178	6	158
	Discontinued or suspended before investigation	3	42	0	12
Examination	Determined after detailed consideration	13	240	15	279
Investigation	Report issued: not upheld	2	82	0	25
	Report issued: partially upheld	4	62	2	22
	Report issued: fully upheld	0	23	0	15
	Withdrawn or failed to provide information during investigation	0	4	0	1
	Discontinued or suspended during investigation	0	13	0	9
Total		53	1,558	54	1,546

Perth and Kinross Council

Published	Case Ref.	Summary	Decision	Recommendation(s)
19/11/08	200602790	the Council: (a) failed to respond in a timely manner to correspondence from Mr and Mrs C and their solicitors and to include them in relevant meetings (partially upheld); and (b) failed efficiently to handle arrangements for Mr and Mrs C's temporary decant to enable demolition of their home, remediation of the land, and a replacement house to be constructed (partially upheld to the extent that the Council could have acted earlier to confirm decant arrangements).	partially upheld	review the circumstances of this complaint to ascertain whether guidelines should be produced for dealing with future similar circumstances. The Council have accepted the recommendation and have started a process of review.
19/11/08	200603334	the Council: (a) wrongly considered that the Decking was permitted development which did not require planning permission (upheld); (b) inappropriately failed to take enforcement action against the owners of the property (the Owners) (not upheld); and (c) took an unnecessary length of time to respond to Mr C's complaints (upheld).	partially upheld	take steps to ensure that: (i) planning officers obtain enough information about a proposed structure to be able to give specific advice rather than standard advice which may not be appropriate to the proposed structure; and (ii) they respond to complaints in a timely manner and according to their complaints procedure. The Council have accepted the recommendations and will act on them accordingly.