

## 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 193 complaints about the Council, compared to 164 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 finance. Your Council was below the average for complaints about planning. We received more complaints for your Council about finance, building control and social work 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 19 on the graph, right on the average. You'll see from Table 2 that the actual number of premature complaints for your Council was 118 out of a total of 197 complaints determined (60% of the total for your Council). This was an increase on the previous year's figure of 101 out of 196 (52% 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 four complaints about your Council in 2008-09, of which we upheld one and partially upheld three. 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. We discontinued two complaints about your Council at the investigation stage. We did not report on these.

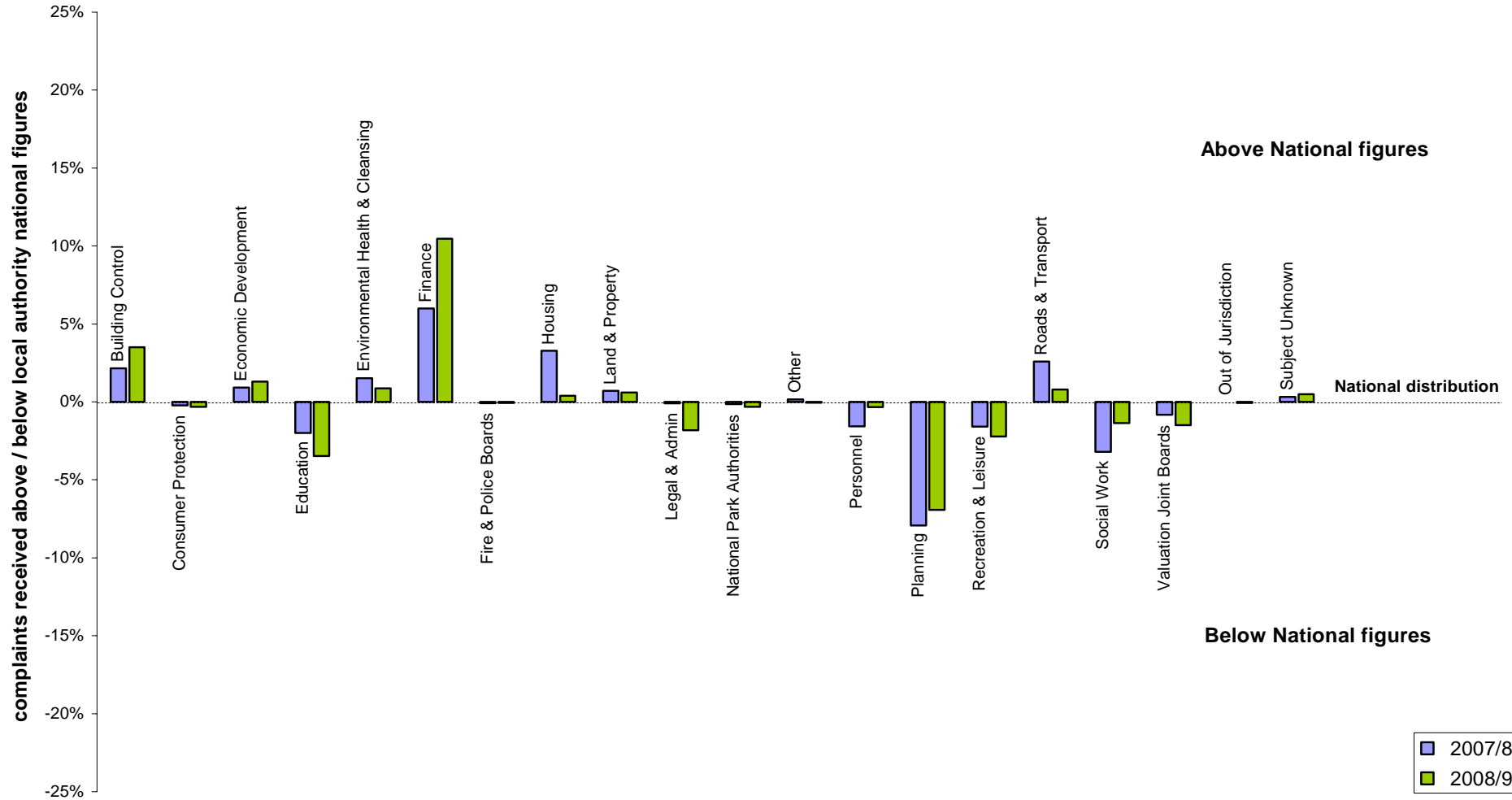
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We hope that you find this summary information useful. If you have any enquiries about the statistics, please contact Annie White, SPSO Casework Knowledge Manager, on 0131 240 8843 or email [awhite@spsso.org.uk](mailto:awhite@spsso.org.uk) . Fuller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

# The City of Edinburgh 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                 | 8              | 6               | 4%                       | 20                             | 2%              |                          | 12             | 10              | 5%                       | 27                             | 2%              |                          |
| Consumer Protection              | 0              | 0               | 0%                       | 3                              | 0%              |                          | 0              | 0               | 0%                       | 5                              | 0%              |                          |
| Economic Development             | 2              | 2               | 1%                       | 4                              | 0%              |                          | 3              | 3               | 2%                       | 4                              | 0%              |                          |
| Education                        | 5              | 5               | 3%                       | 67                             | 5%              |                          | 6              | 4               | 2%                       | 89                             | 6%              |                          |
| Environmental Health & Cleansing | 15             | 11              | 7%                       | 69                             | 5%              |                          | 12             | 10              | 5%                       | 69                             | 4%              |                          |
| Finance                          | 36             | 25              | 15%                      | 123                            | 9%              |                          | 41             | 38              | 20%                      | 148                            | 9%              |                          |
| Fire & Police Boards             | 0              | 0               | 0%                       | 1                              | 0%              |                          | 0              | 0               | 0%                       | 1                              | 0%              |                          |
| Housing                          | 69             | 54              | 33%                      | 394                            | 30%             |                          | 66             | 56              | 29%                      | 459                            | 29%             |                          |
| Land & Property                  | 6              | 5               | 3%                       | 31                             | 2%              |                          | 6              | 5               | 3%                       | 32                             | 2%              |                          |
| Legal & Admin                    | 10             | 8               | 5%                       | 66                             | 5%              |                          | 8              | 6               | 3%                       | 79                             | 5%              |                          |
| National Park Authorities        | 0              | 0               | 0%                       | 2                              | 0%              |                          | 0              | 0               | 0%                       | 5                              | 0%              |                          |
| Other                            | 1              | 1               | 1%                       | 6                              | 0%              |                          | 1              | 1               | 1%                       | 9                              | 1%              |                          |
| Personnel                        | 3              | 1               | 1%                       | 29                             | 2%              |                          | 2              | 2               | 1%                       | 22                             | 1%              |                          |
| Planning                         | 22             | 17              | 10%                      | 243                            | 18%             |                          | 24             | 19              | 10%                      | 269                            | 17%             |                          |
| Recreation & Leisure             | 1              | 0               | 0%                       | 21                             | 2%              |                          | 1              | 1               | 1%                       | 44                             | 3%              |                          |
| Roads & Transport                | 17             | 13              | 8%                       | 71                             | 5%              |                          | 14             | 12              | 6%                       | 87                             | 5%              |                          |
| Social Work                      | 19             | 13              | 8%                       | 148                            | 11%             |                          | 26             | 20              | 10%                      | 188                            | 12%             |                          |
| Valuation Joint Boards           | 0              | 0               | 0%                       | 11                             | 1%              |                          | 0              | 0               | 0%                       | 24                             | 1%              |                          |
| Out of Jurisdiction              | 1              | 0               | 0%                       | 0                              | 0%              |                          | 1              | 0               | 0%                       | 1                              | 0%              |                          |
| Subject Unknown                  | 5              | 3               | 2%                       | 20                             | 2%              |                          | 9              | 6               | 3%                       | 42                             | 3%              |                          |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>220</b>     | <b>164</b>      |                          | <b>1,329</b>                   |                 |                          | <b>232</b>     | <b>193</b>      |                          | <b>1,604</b>                   |                 |                          |

**Complaints received by subject: The City of Edinburgh Council proportions compared to the distribution of all local authority complaints received**



# The City of Edinburgh Council

Table 2

| <b>Complaints Determined by Outcome</b> |   | <i>2007/8</i>              |              | <i>2008/9</i>              |              |
|---|---|----------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------------|
|   |   | <i>All Local Authority</i> |              | <i>All Local Authority</i> |              |
| Assessment                              | Premature   | 101                        | 760          | 118                        | 923          |
|   | Out of Jurisdiction   | 12                         | 154          | 11                         | 102          |
|   | Withdrawn or failed to provide information before investigation | 28                         | 178          | 19                         | 158          |
|   | Discontinued or suspended before investigation                  | 4                          | 42           | 3                          | 12           |
| Examination                             | Determined after detailed consideration                         | 21                         | 240          | 40                         | 279          |
| Investigation                           | Report issued: not upheld                                       | 11                         | 82           | 0                          | 25           |
|   | Report issued: partially upheld                                 | 10                         | 62           | 3                          | 22           |
|   | Report issued: fully upheld                                     | 7                          | 23           | 1                          | 15           |
|   | Withdrawn or failed to provide information during investigation | 1                          | 4            | 0                          | 1            |
|   | Discontinued or suspended during investigation                  | 1                          | 13           | 2                          | 9            |
| <b>Total</b>                            |   | <b>196</b>                 | <b>1,558</b> | <b>197</b>                 | <b>1,546</b> |

**The City of Edinburgh Council**

| <b>Published</b> | <b>Case Ref.</b> | <b>Summary</b>  | <b>Decision</b>  | <b>Recommendation(s)</b>   |
|------------------|------------------|---|------------------|--|
| 21/05/08         | 200600755        | (a) failed to carry out the inspection and repairs adequately (upheld);<br>(b) failed to handle the complaint in line with the complaints procedure (not upheld); and<br>(c) intentionally withheld information which was significantly relevant to the complaint (not upheld).                             | partially upheld | The Ombudsman recommends that the Council apologise for not responding adequately to the request for an electrician in the first instance.<br>The Council have accepted the recommendation and will act on it accordingly.   |
| 20/08/08         | 200503556        | the Council did not deal appropriately, or adequately, with Mr C's enquiries and complaints regarding the use of Council land opposite his garage (upheld).   | upheld           | (i) review their procedures and practice on the investigation of complaints of abandoned vehicles to ensure that any claims that vehicles have been parked with permission are appropriately verified; and<br>(ii) apologise to Mr C for the maladministration he has been subject to. |
| 20/08/08         | 200700283        | the way in which the Council investigated Mr C's complaint was ineffective (partially upheld).  | partially upheld | (i) issue Mr C with a full formal apology for the failures identified in this report; and<br>(ii) review the handling of this case; and inform her of the action taken to ensure that a similar failing does not reoccur.  |
| 25/03/09         | 200800100        | the Council:<br>(a) have failed since March 2007 to provide Mr C with an accurate and comprehensive statement of his indebtedness for council tax (upheld); and<br>(b) failed to act on Mr C's assertions that his indebtedness for council tax for certain years has been overstated by them (not upheld). | partially upheld | The Ombudsman has no recommendations to make.  |