

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

2009-10 Statistics Tables – Explanatory Notes and Commentary

Tables:

Attached are summary details of the complaints that the SPSO received and determined about your Council in 2009-10. Table 1 details the number of complaints (by our subject categories) received for your Council for 2008-09 and 2009-10, alongside the total of local authority complaints for these years. In previous years we have used this table to show the total of all contacts (enquiry calls and complaints) that we received about your Council. This year we have not included enquiry calls as feedback has shown that it is more meaningful for you if we concentrate on the actual complaints received. We recorded 41 complaints about the Council, compared to 58 in the previous year.

Table 2 shows the outcomes of complaints determined about your Council by the SPSO in 2009-10. Received and determined numbers do not normally tally exactly, as figures tend to include cases carried forward from the previous year.

Graph of prematurity rates: The anonymised graph shows, for each Council, the percentage of complaints that we received and determined as premature, against the national average in 2009-10 (55%). This represents a decrease on the 2008-9 average of 60%, which is to be welcomed. Figures have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage.

We consider a complaint to be premature when it reaches us before the complainant has been through the full complaints process of your 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 10 on the graph, above the average. You will see from Table 2 that the actual number of premature complaints for your Council was 27 out of a total of 45 complaints determined (60% of the total for your Council). The previous year's figure was 37 out of 59 (63% of the total for your Council). The proportion of premature complaints has therefore reduced against a reduced number of complaints determined overall, although it still represents a fairly high level of premature complaints received about your Council.

NB We do not adjust our figures to mitigate the impact of housing stock transfer. It is evident, however, that there is 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 is a disproportionately high incidence of prematurity in housing complaints.

Reported Complaints and Recommendations

We investigated and reported on two complaints about your Council in 2009-10, both of which we partially upheld. Attached is a summary sheet showing these complaints, and summarising the recommendations made. You will be aware that SPSO complaints reviewers 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 provided, please contact Annie White, SPSO Casework Knowledge Manager, on 0131 240 8843 or by emailing awhite@sps.org.uk. Statistical reports are available on the SPSO website at: <http://www.sps.org.uk/statistics/index.php>.

Table 1

Complaints Received by Subject		Aberdeen City Council	Complaints as % of total	Sector Total	Complaints as % of total
2008-09	Building Control	0	0%	27	2%
	Consumer protection	0	0%	5	0%
	Economic development	0	0%	4	0%
	Education	7	12%	89	6%
	Environmental Health & Cleansing	0	0%	69	4%
	Finance	5	9%	148	9%
	Fire & Police Boards	0	0%	1	0%
	Housing	16	28%	459	29%
	Land & Property	2	3%	32	2%
	Legal & admin	1	2%	79	5%
	National Park Authorities	0	0%	5	0%
	Other	0	0%	9	1%
	Personnel	1	2%	22	1%
	Planning	5	9%	269	17%
	Recreation & Leisure	1	2%	44	3%
	Roads & Transport	5	9%	87	5%
	Social Work	12	21%	188	12%
	Valuation Joint Boards	0	0%	24	1%
	Out of Jurisdiction or Subject Unknown	3	5%	43	3%
	Total	58		1,604	
2009-10	Building Control	0	0%	36	2%
	Consumer protection	1	2%	10	1%
	Economic development	0	0%	2	0%
	Education	2	5%	94	5%
	Environmental Health & Cleansing	0	0%	71	4%
	Finance	4	10%	143	8%
	Fire & Police Boards	0	0%	3	0%
	Housing	11	27%	432	25%
	Land & Property	2	5%	33	2%
	Legal & admin	3	7%	90	5%
	National Park Authorities	0	0%	8	0%
	Other	0	0%	11	1%
	Personnel	0	0%	24	1%
	Planning	5	12%	264	15%
	Recreation & Leisure	0	0%	73	4%
	Roads & Transport	2	5%	94	5%
	Social Work	6	15%	199	11%
	Valuation Joint Boards	0	0%	19	1%
	Subject Unknown or Out Of Jurisdiction	5	12%	128	7%
	Total	41		1,734	

Table 2

Complaints Determined By Outcome			Aberdeen City Council	
			Sector Total	
2008/09	Assessment	Premature	37	923
		Out of Jurisdiction	5	102
		Discontinued before Investigation	7	170
	Examination	Determined after detailed consideration	8	279
	Investigation	Report issued: complaint not upheld	1	25
		Report issued: complaint partially upheld	0	22
		Report issued: complaint fully upheld	0	15
		Discontinued during Investigation	1	10
		Total	59	1,549
	2009/10	Assessment	Premature	27
Out of Jurisdiction			2	118
Discontinued before Investigation			3	194
Other			1	17
Examination		Determined after detailed consideration	10	409
Investigation		Report issued: complaint not upheld	0	13
		Report issued: complaint partially upheld	2	25
		Report issued: complaint fully upheld	0	12
		Discontinued during Investigation	0	6
		Total	45	1,837

Aberdeen City Council

Published	Case Ref.	Summary	Overall Report Decision	Recommendation(s)
17/06/2009	200602882	(a) telephone calls made by Mr and Mrs C to the Council's Neighbour Complaints Unit were either not recorded or not fully recorded (upheld); (b) records of meetings held with the Council's Housing Department officials were either not recorded or not fully recorded (upheld); and (c) the Council failed to take appropriate action in response to Mr and Mrs C's complaint of anti-social behaviour (not upheld).	partially upheld	write to Mr and Mrs C, apologising for the failings identified in this report. The Council have accepted the recommendation and will act on it accordingly.
23/09/2009	200602756	(a) the CRC failed to appropriately address Mrs C's complaints (not upheld); and (b) the Council failed to take adequate steps to collaborate with the NHS to ensure that Mrs C received a full response to her complaints (upheld).	partially upheld	(i) ensure that guidance to CRC members and relevant staff clearly indicates the importance of careful drafting of the CRC minute, to ensure that a decision on each complaint considered is recorded and the basis for any recommendations is explained; (ii) apologise to Mrs C for their failure to follow-up with the NHS on the joint issues of her complaint; (iii) that guidance to CRCs and members of Council staff who support them is reviewed, to ensure that CRC minutes can fully reflect the conclusions reached and reasons for decisions made; and (iv) advise him of the development and progress of an action plan from within the working group towards a policy for managing joint complaints in partnership with the NHS. The Council have accepted the recommendations and will act on them accordingly.