CLACKMANNANSHIRE COUNCIL

Statistics Tables – Explanatory Notes and Commentary

Attached are summary details of the enquiries and complaints about your Council that the SPSO has received and determined.

The first document attached shows (in Table 1) details of total contacts (by complaint subject) received for your Council for 2006-07 and 2007-08, along with the total of local authority complaints for 2007-08. Table 2 shows the outcomes of complaints about your Council determined by the SPSO in 2007-08.

Please note that, as the notes accompanying the tables explain, we changed our incoming logging procedures in April 2007, which has implications for comparing 2007-08 complaints data with previous years. The total numbers of contacts (enquiries plus complaints) received for each year are not affected and are therefore directly comparable. However, the figures shown as 'complaints only' in Table 1 are recorded on a different basis in each year and are, therefore, not directly comparable. Similarly, the change to our logging procedure has affected comparison of cases determined between 2006-07 and 2007-08 in Table 2.

Prematurity rates

A graph is also enclosed showing for each Council the percentage of complaints that we identified as premature, and the national average for all Councils. Your Council is number 10 on that graph. We consider a complaint to be premature when it reaches us before the complainant has been through the full complaints process of the organisation concerned. Please note that the graph does not reflect the number of premature complaints that we received about your Council, but shows how your Council, proportionally, compares against the average for all Scottish local authorities. The actual number of complaints we determined as premature for your Council was 6, representing 54.5% of the total determined for the Council during the year, and proportionally a slight increase on the previous year.

Please note that no adjustments have been made in the graph to estimate the impact of housing stock transfer. It is evident, however, that there is a tendency for authorities that retain housing stock 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 with housing complaints.

The SPSO considers it important that organisations have the chance to resolve complaints through their own procedures and we are actively working with service providers with the aim of reducing the number of complaints that reach us prematurely. You will be aware that our Valuing Complaints website (http://www.valuingcomplaints.org.uk/) contains information designed to assist with such issues, and that our Outreach Team (ask@spso.org.uk) are pleased to answer enquiries about how we can support your Council.

Investigated Complaints and Recommendations

We investigated one complaint about your Council in 2007-08, which we did not uphold. We have attached a summary sheet about this complaint and the

recommendations made. As you know, where she thinks it appropriate, the Ombudsman may make recommendations even where a complaint is not upheld, if she believes that there are lessons that may be learned. You will also be aware that SPSO Complaints Investigators will be following up to find out what changes have been made as a result of recommendations.

We discontinued one complaint about your Council at the investigation stage; this complaint was not reported on.

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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@spso.org.uk. Fuller statistical reports are available on the SPSO website at: http://www.spso.org.uk/statistics/index.php.

Clackmannanshire Council

Table 1

Received by Subject	2006/7 Total Contacts	2006/7 Complaints Only	2007/8 Total Contacts	2007/8 Complaints Only	complaints as % of total	All Local Authority Complaints	complaints as % of total
Building Control	0	0	0	0	0%	20	2%
Consumer protection	0	0	0	0	0%	3	0%
Economic development	0	0	0	0	0%	4	0%
Education	2	2	0	0	0%	67	5%
Env Health & Cleansing	0	0	0	0	0%	69	5%
Finance	1	0	0	0	0%	123	9%
Fire & police boards	0	0	0	0	0%	1	0%
Housing	5	1	6	5	56%	394	30%
Land & Property	0	0	0	0	0%	31	2%
Legal & admin	0	0	1	1	11%	66	5%
National Park Authorities	0	0	0	0	0%	2	0%
Other	1	0	0	0	0%	6	0%
Personnel	0	0	0	0	0%	29	2%
Planning	3	1	1	1	11%	243	18%
Recreation & Leisure	0	0	0	0	0%	21	2%
Roads	0	0	0	0	0%	71	5%
Social Work	2	1	3	2	22%	148	11%
Valuation Joint Boards	0	0	0	0	0%	11	1%
Out of jurisdiction	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%
Subject unknown	0	0	0	0	0%	20	2%
Total	**14**	**5**	**11**	**9**		**1,329**	

Note about comparing 2007-08 complaint numbers to the previous year:
Please note that we made a change to our logging procedures in April 2007 which has implications for comparing 2007-08 complaints data with previous years. Of the total number of local authority complaints received in 2007-08, we estimate that approximately 33% could previously have been classed as enquiries. This does not affect the number of total contacts (enquiries + complaints) received.
For more information please see the full explanation at http://www.spso.org.uk/statistics.

Table 2

Complaints Determined by Outcome		2006/7	2007/8
Assessment	Premature	2	6
	Out of jurisdiction	0	0
	Discontinued or suspended before investigation	0	1
	Withdrawn / Failed to provide information before investigation	2	0
Examination	Determined after detailed consideration	0	2
Investigation	Report Issued - Not Upheld	0	1
	Report Issued - Partially Upheld	0	0
	Report Issued - Fully Upheld	0	0
	Discontinued during investigation	0	1
	Withdrawn / Failed to provide information during investigation	0	0
	Total	**4**	**11**

Note about comparing 2007-08 complaint numbers to the previous year:
Please note that we made a change to our logging procedures in April 2007 which has implications for comparing 2007-08 complaints data with previous years.
Of the total number of local authority complaints determined at the assessment stage in 2007-08, we estimate that approximately 39% could previously have been classed as enquiries. There has been no change to cases determined at examination or investigation stages.
For more information please see the full explanation at http://www.spso.org.uk/statistics.

Clackmannanshire Council

	Case Ref	Summary	Finding	Recs	Recommendation(s)
19/09/07	200601620	(a) Council 1 failed to provide Free Personal Care payments for Miss A following her move to Fife (not upheld but see recommendation); and (b) Council 1 failed to properly administer arrangements for Miss A's move (not upheld).	Not upheld	YES	The Ombudsman recommends that Council 1 and Fife Council (Council 2), as a matter of urgency, prepare and submit an appeal for determination of the ordinary residence of Miss A by the Scottish Ministers in terms of sec 28 of Circular No. SWSG 1/96. Following such a determination appropriate payments should be made to Miss A and (if necessary) Council 2 so that all parties are returned to the position they should have been in from 22 December 2005. The appropriate Council should then take ongoing responsibility for Miss A's FPC payments. Council 1 and Council 2 have both accepted this recommendation and will take the necessary steps to request a review by the Scottish Ministers.