



Standards Committee
17th January 2007

Report from the Borough Solicitor

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

Standards Board for England Borough Statistics

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides some of the latest statistics provided by the Standards Board for England on the number of complaints received and decisions made of allegations of misconduct by members of London Boroughs.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That members note this report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report. However, should many hearings be required, staffing resources will need to be assessed.

5.0 DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Officers believe that there are no specific diversity implications in this report.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report concerns the findings of the Standards Board for England on complaints against members of local authorities. The Standards Board for England is an independent body introduced in legislation by Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000.
- 6.2 The Standards Board is responsible for the conduct of councillors, members, and co-opted members in a large variety of local authorities including police, fire and civil defence authorities as well as London Boroughs.
- 6.3 There is no legal requirement to maintain statistics or complaints; however, the Standards Board is responsible for receiving complaints and referring them on for investigation.

7.0 DETAIL

- 7.1 The Standards Board publishes on its website a statistical breakdown of allegations received about councillors.
- 7.2 Very few allegations were received about London Boroughs when compared to other types of authority. Between 1 April and 31 October 2006 only 3% of allegations related to London Boroughs compared with 49% regarding parish/town councils and 24% regarding District Councils. This also compares favourably with statistics provided in my June 2005 report when 5% of allegations related to London Boroughs.
- 7.3 Eighty one percent of all allegations were not referred for investigation.
- 7.4 The highest percentage of allegations related to prejudicial interests (27%) and then bringing the authority into disrepute (22%).
- 7.5 In terms of final findings, the most common result was that no further action should be taken (61%). Five percent of allegations were referred to the monitoring officer. Three percent were referred to the Adjudication Panel for England. In 31% of cases there was no evidence of a breach.
- 7.6 The source of the highest percentage of allegations received came from members of the public (62%), followed by councillors (32%).

8.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Local Government Act 2000
- Standards Board for England website
www.standardsboard.co.uk

If any person has any queries on this report they should contact the report author, Pauline Zumbach, Borough Solicitor's Office, on telephone number 0208 937 1368.

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