

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

FROM: The Monitoring Officer

REPORT NUMBER **G 63**

TO: STANDARDS COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING: 27 July 2007

STATISTICAL DIGEST OF COMPLAINTS TO THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

For Members to be aware of the volume and type of complaints referred to the Standards Board for England and the percentages that are referred for investigation.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the content of this report be noted.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

Not applicable to this report.

5. KEY INFORMATION

- 5.1 Appendix 1 contains statistical data from the Standards Board on the number of complaints that it has received concerning allegations of breach of the Code of Conduct for Members for the period 1 June 2006 – 31 May 2007. Appendix 2 details the outcome from consideration of those complaints filed with the Standards Board for April and May 2007.
- 5.2 Members will note that 49% of complaints concern parish/town councillors and 20% district councillors. Most complaints concerned a failure to declare a prejudicial interest and use of the councillor's position to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person. members to comply with the new provisions. Only 16% of the total number of complaints received by the Standards Board were referred for investigation. Of those, 45% concerned parish/town councillors and 32% district councillors.
- 5.3 Following investigation, there was no evidence of breach in 31% of cases, evidence of breach in 51% of cases but with a finding of no further action, 13% of cases were referred to the Adjudication Panel and 5% were referred to local Standards Committees for determination.
- 5.4 No statistical data is available on the outcome of those cases referred to the Adjudication panel and Standards Committees.

6. **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Statistical data from the Standards Board on complaints received between 1.6.07 and 31.5.07

Appendix 2 - Statistical data from the Standards Board on complaints received and investigated between 1.4.07 and 31.5.07

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS REFERRED TO:**

Statistical data published on the Standards Board for England website www.standardsbaord.gov.uk

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ANNEXURE – THE TEN GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The general principles referred to in paragraph 1(2) of the Code governing your conduct under The Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order 2001 are set out below:

Selflessness

1. Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity

2. Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity

3. Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

4. Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

Openness

5. Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal Judgement

6. Members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for Others

7. Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

Duty to Uphold the Law

8. Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Stewardship

9. Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership

10. Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.
