



ISLINGTON

Law and Public Services
Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD

Report of : Director of Law and Public Services

Meeting of		Agenda Item	Ward(s)
Standards	8 th December 2003		

Delete as appropriate	Exempt	Non-exempt
-----------------------	--------	------------

If exempt under paragraph 10.4, category (1-15) of the Access to Information rules give reasons. Because:

Subject: STANDARDS AND ETHICS INDICATORS

1. Synopsis

This report sets out a series of indicators which will help give members an indication of the health of the authority in relation to Standards and Ethics.

2. Recommendation

That the Committee consider the indicators for the third quarter, July to September 2003, and comment as appropriate.

3. Background

3.1 This report pulls together existing information which will help give members an indication of the health of the authority in relation to Standards and Ethics.

3.2 The information and indicators for the period July to September 2003 are set out below:

District Audit Public Interest Reports

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
January – March	April – June	July – September
0	0	0

Objections to the Council's Accounts

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
January – March	April – June	July – September
1	Objection from Q1 withdrawn	0

Referrals to and Investigations undertaken by the Standards Board for England

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
January – March	April – June	July – September
5	3	0

Number of Whistleblowing Incidents reported

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
January – March	April – June	July – September
0	2	0

Number of challenges to procurements

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
January – March	April – June	July – September
0	0	0

Industrial Action taken or notified

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
January – March	April – June	July – September
2 schools, - 30 staff	9 schools – 228 staff 108 social workers	Ongoing action as part of Unison claim 1 school – 10 staff Housing and Social Services - 83 staff

Number of Employment Tribunals received

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
January – March	April – June	July – September
12 new cases	10 new cases	8 new cases
13 for same period last year	5 for same period last year	1 for same period last year

Outstanding Cases

The number of outstanding tribunal cases as at 30th September was 25. These figures do not include the multiple cases set out below.

Three sets of multiple cases have been brought against the Council: There are 38 part-timer pension claims, 48 home-carer equal pay claims, 42 school cleaners, 61 municipal cleaners and 12 kitchen assistants have appealed the decision of the Tribunal in the equal pay case which the Council won. The total number of cases at 30 September 2003 was 28.

Comments of the Director of Law and Public Services

The level of ET claims does not give rise to any specific concerns and it is not possible to identify any particular department where the practice is poor. Nor does it highlight any trends in respect of types of claims. The total number of tribunal cases brought last year was 39.

Number of New Ombudsman complaints received

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
	January – March	April – June	July – September
	41	38	30
- Benefit	21	9	7
- Other housing	16	25	14
- Environment & Conservation	3	1	1
- Finance	1	1	5
- Social Services	-	1	3
- Education	-	1	-

Number of Ombudsman complaints settled

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
	January – March	April – June	July – September
	46	51	36
Total number where compensation paid	26	30	15
- Benefit	20	20	10
- Other Housing	6	7	5
- Education	-	1	-
- Environment & Conservation	-	2	-

Ombudsman maladministration cases

There were no maladministration reports issued against the Council by the Ombudsman during this third quarter.

Highlights from the 2002/03 complaints annual report

- The total number of complaints to the Council was just over 8,000 – this is similar to the number recorded for 2001/02 – however it is suspected there was under recording of benefit complaints in 2001/02
- There was a 47% reduction in the number of Ombudsman complaints against the Council – down from 504 in 2001/02 to 266 in 2002/03
- Corporately 59% of complaints were responded to in the new reduced (10 working days) timescale. (This rose to 78% if benefit complaint replies are excluded). The Council's target for this year is to achieve 85% within timescale.

4. Benchmarking Information

- 4.1 No other London Borough's Standards Committee receive a report on Standards and Ethics indicators. All boroughs do collect this data but it is not collected corporately and reported to one single committee.
- 4.2 Attached as Appendices A and B are returns submitted by the London Boroughs of Redbridge and Barking and Dagenham who have collected together the information for comparison purposes.

5. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendation

These indicators are provided at the request of the committee to help give the committee an indication of the health of the authority in relation to Standards and Ethics.

Background papers:

Statistics provided by the relevant departments.

Final Report Clearance

Signed by

.....
Director of Law and Public Services

.....
Date

Received by

.....
Head of Scrutiny and Democratic Services

.....
Date

Report author : John Lynch
Tel : 020-7527 3002
Fax : 020-7527 3092
E-mail : john.lynch@islington.gov.uk