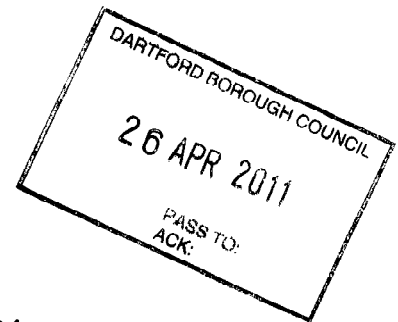


Local Government OMBUDSMAN

April 2011

To Chief Executives of Local Authorities
and other bodies within jurisdiction



Our ref: PC/5/2/1/RPR

If telephoning please contact: **Lesley Pettigrew** on 020 7217 4694
or, if using email, send to: l.pettigrew@lgo.org.uk

Dear Chief Executive

Local Government Ombudsman – provisional complaint statistics

I enclose our provisional end-of-year statistics for your council, together with notes to aid interpretation. The final statistics will be incorporated into your council's Annual Review Letter from the Ombudsman.

The main Local Authority Report, together with detailed printouts, will help you check the accuracy of the statistics and may also be of use in any more detailed analysis you wish to do. These detailed lists include complainants' personal information, which is confidential and so will not form part of the published statistics.

I should draw to your attention that we have a new complaint-recording system, and the headings for the complaint category groups have changed.

We are aiming to issue our Annual Review Letters to all councils by late June so if there are any factual inaccuracies in the provisional statistics please get back to us no later than **13 May 2011**. Your contact is **Lesley Pettigrew**, whose telephone number and email address are given above.

I am sending a copy of this letter and enclosures to your Ombudsman link officer.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nigel Karney".

Nigel Karney
Deputy Chief Executive and Secretary

cc: Council's Ombudsman link officer
Enc: Local authority report and detailed printouts
Explanatory notes

10th Floor
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP

T: 020 7217 4620
F: 020 7217 4621
DX: DX 149243 Victoria 13
W: www.lgo.org.uk
Advice Team: 0300 061 0614

Jane Martin
Acting Chairman
Nigel Karney
Secretary

Local Government Ombudsman provisional statistics 2010/11

The deadline for queries on these figures is

Friday 13 May 2011

Your contact for queries is:

Lesley Pettigrew

Tel: 020 7217 4694

Email: l.pettigrew@lgo.org.uk

List of enclosures:

- **Notes to aid interpretation of figures.**
- **Provisional Local Authority Report** – the final version of this will form part of the Annual Review to your Authority in June.
- **Complaints forwarded** – printout of new complaints forwarded to our investigative team in the year 2010/11, broken down by service area (*see note 1 attached*).
- **Decisions** – printout of complaints on which the LGO made decisions in the year 2010/11, broken down by type of decision (*see note 2 attached*).
- **Response times** – printout of complaints on which we made enquiries to your Authority during 2010/11, showing response times (*see notes 3 and 4 attached*).

Notes to assist interpretation of the statistics 2010/11

Table 1. LGO Advice Team: Enquiries and complaints received

This information shows the number of enquiries and complaints received by the LGO, broken down by service area and in total. It also shows how these were dealt with, as follows.

Premature complaints: The LGO does not normally consider a complaint unless a council has first had an opportunity to deal with that complaint itself. So if someone complains to the LGO without having taken the matter up with a council, the LGO will either refer it back to the council as a 'premature complaint' to see if the council can itself resolve the matter, or give advice to the enquirer that their complaint is premature.

Advice given: These are enquiries where the LGO Advice Team has given advice on why the LGO would not be able to consider the complaint, other than the complaint is premature. For example, the complaint may clearly be outside the LGO's jurisdiction.

Forwarded to the investigative team (resubmitted premature and new): These are new cases forwarded to the Investigative Team for further consideration and cases where the complainant has resubmitted their complaint to the LGO after it has been put to the council.

Service areas: We have changed our category system, so these are slightly different from previous years.

Table 2. Investigative Team: Decisions

This information records the number of decisions made by the LGO Investigative Team, broken down by outcome, within the period given. **This number will not be the same as the number of complaints forwarded from the LGO Advice Team** because some complaints decided in 2010/11 will already have been in hand at the beginning of the year, and some forwarded to the Investigative Team during 2010/11 will still be in hand at the end of the year. Below we set out a key explaining the outcome categories.

MI reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration causing injustice.

LS (local settlements): decisions by letter discontinuing our investigation because action has been agreed by the authority and accepted by the LGO as a satisfactory outcome for the complainant.

M reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration but causing no injustice to the complainant.

NM reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding no maladministration by the council.

No mal: decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation because we have found no, or insufficient, evidence of maladministration.

turn over page

Omb disc: decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation in which we have exercised the LGO's general discretion not to pursue the complaint. This can be for a variety of reasons, but the most common is that we have found no or insufficient injustice to warrant pursuing the matter further.

Outside jurisdiction: these are cases that were outside the LGO's jurisdiction.

Table 3. Response times

These figures record the average time the council takes to respond to our first enquiries on a complaint. We measure this in calendar days from the date we send our letter/fax/email to the date that we receive a substantive response from the council. The council's figures may differ somewhat, since they are likely to be recorded from the date the council receives our letter until the despatch of its response.

Table 4. Average local authority response times 2010/11

This table gives comparative figures for average response times by authorities in England, by type of authority, within three time bands.

LGO Advice Team

Enquiries and complaints received

	Benefits & Tax	Corporate & Other Services	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	Highways & Transport	Housing	Other	Planning & Development	Total
Formal/informal premature complaints	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	3
Advice given	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	3
Forwarded in investigative team (resubmitted)	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	3
Forwarded to investigative team (new)	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	3
Total	3	2	2	0	4	1	0	12

Investigative Team

Decisions	MI reps	LS	M reps	NM reps	No mal	Omb disc	Outside jurisdiction	Total
2010 / 2011	0	1	0	0	4	0	2	7

Average local authority resp times 01/04/2010 to 31/03/2011

Response times	FIRST ENQUIRIES	
	No. of First Enquiries	Avg no. of days to respond
1/04/2010 / 31/03/2011	3	25.7
2009 / 2010	1	12.0
2008 / 2009	3	22.0

Types of authority	<= 28 days %	29 - 35 days %	> = 36 days %
District councils	65	23	12
Unitary authorities	59	28	13
Metropolitan authorities	64	19	17
County councils	66	17	17
London boroughs	64	30	6
National parks authorities	75	25	0

Complaints forwarded by main service area 01/04/2010 to 31/03/2011: Dartford BC

Ref no	Date rcvd by LGO	Date forwarded to Teams	Surname	Decision Date	Detailed Category
Benefits & Tax					
10 001 274	23/06/2010	23/06/201	Holden	28/10/2010	Housing benefit
Group total: 1					
Corporate & Other services					
10 012 335	01/12/2010	01/12/201	Tibby	24/01/2011	Elections and electoral register
09 011 127	12/03/2010	19/07/201	Clarke	06/09/2010	Licensing
Group total: 2					
Environmental services & Public protec					
10 008 805	30/09/2010	30/09/201	Green	02/11/2010	Environmental health
Group total: 1					
Housing					
10 011 387	01/10/2010	27/10/201	Wood	10/01/2011	Housing repairs
10 014 338	04/03/2011	04/03/201	Stevenson	Still open	Housing repairs
10 017 612	18/01/2011	18/01/201	Wilson	Still open	Managing tenancies
Group total: 3					
Grand total: 7					

Decisions - 01/04/2010 to 31/03/2011: Dartford BC

LS (Local Settlements)

10 001 274	23/06/2010	Holden	28/10/2010
------------	------------	--------	------------

Group total: 1

No mal (No or insufficient evidence of maladministration)

10 012 335	01/12/2010	Tibby	24/01/2011	Benefits & Tax
10 008 805	30/09/2010	Green	02/11/2010	Housing benefit
10 011 387	01/10/2010	Wood	10/01/2011	
09 009 500	25/09/2009	Pelican Fabrications	09/08/2010	

Group total: 4

Outside jurisdiction

09 017 187	04/03/2010	Griffin	22/04/2010	Corporate & Other services
09 011 127	12/03/2010	Clarke	06/09/2010	Corporate & Other services

Group total: 2

Grand total: 7

Response times to first enquiry letters: 01/04/2010 to 31/03/2011: Dartford BC

Ref no	Date revd by LGO	Surname	Date enquiry sent to Council	Date response received	Time taken (calendar days)	Detailed Category
--------	------------------	---------	------------------------------	------------------------	----------------------------	-------------------

Benefits & Tax

10 001 274	23/06/2010	Holden	16/07/2010	09/08/2010	24	Housing benefit
Group total:		1	Average no. of days to respond for Group: 24.0			

Housing

10 011 387	01/10/2010	Wood	05/11/2010	30/11/2010	25	Housing repairs
10 017 612	18/01/2011	Wilson	01/02/2011	01/03/2011	28	Managing tenancies
Group total:		2	Average no. of days to respond for Group: 26.5			

Grand total: 3

Average no. of days to respond: 25.7