

Meeting: STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Agenda Item:

Date: 7 February 2008

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THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINT STATISTICS 2006/7

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1 PURPOSE

To review the Ombudsman complaint statistics for 2006/7.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

To note the report.

3 DETAILS

The Local Government Ombudsman provides end of year statistics to every local authority. These are followed by an annual letter, usually issued in June.

The Stevenage statistics for 2006/7 are set out in the Appendix to this report, though the names of the complainants have been deleted. There is also attached a sheet showing the number of complaints over the past three years and the average of local authority response times.

In his annual letter for 2006/7 he welcomed the continued reduction in complaints over the past two years. The majority of complaints were about housing matters but again the number was a reduction from previous years.

The Ombudsman noted that the response times for complaints increased from the previous year but that the average was significantly affected by a single complaint relating to housing tenancies. The Council and Stevenage Homes Limited have now put in place clearer procedures for dealing with complaints generally which should prevent delays of this length from recurring.

A number of the Ombudsman complaints relate to housing matters. With the creation of Stevenage Homes Limited most of the Council's housing functions have been deleted to Stevenage Homes Limited following its establishment in October 2006. Strictly speaking, the Ombudsman's functions do not cover housing ALMOs nor do those of the Housing Ombudsman which deals primarily with registered housing associations. However, the Ombudsman's view is that, as the housing function still rests ultimately with the Council, he will continue to raise complaints to

the Council in the usual way.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

APPENDICES

- The Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter for the year ended 31 March 2007.