

THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

SUMMARY OF POINTS NOTED BY DAVID BRIDGER AT THE STANDARDS BOARD SIXTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY HELD ON 15 & 16 OCTOBER 2007

Main headings	Details noted	Points for consideration by the LBB S C
Opening Plenary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will regulation which, in particular, moves to local filters etc be passed by target date of 01-04-2008?</li> <li>Lot of questions about more work locally but no extra local resources!</li> <li>Local Government is devolving more and more to local partners and local communities</li> <li>Many Standards Committees have little or no profile with local citizens. May also need to publicise new local complaints procedure</li> <li>In 2006/07, 3,549 complaints of which 634 were investigated (55% locally); only 9 cases went on appeal to the Adjudication panel</li> <li>On a pilot test of 10 cases, on average local SCs said they would investigate 6 whereas the Standards Board only actually investigated 3</li> <li>The SB recommend local filter sub-committees for quicker initial response to a complaint + avoiding conflicts with those hearing complaints</li> <li>The SB is still there to take over cases if very serious or complex or if would cause large local disruption</li> <li>The experience of those operating local filters is that often the initial complaint does not provide enough information to decide whether to refer for investigation or not. Clock does not start running until more information received</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See Mark Bowen paper on local filters etc.</li> <li>LBB expects minimal local investigations so no separate budget.</li> <li>Might be more ethics issues but our recent programme has considered generally</li> <li>Possible future topic for the LBB SC?</li> <li>Possible risk of unnecessary investigations but LBB has very few anyway.</li> <li>See Mark Bowen paper on local filters etc.</li> <li>LBB will develop detailed procedures for SC to consider on how to operate local filter</li> </ul>
Referrals – lessons learnt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deciding if a complaint is outside SC remit – SC or Monitoring Officer – if MO, SC may want to review a selection</li> <li>SB intends to make available suggested standard letters etc. e.g. telling complainants how the complaint will be handled</li> <li>Requests for anonymity of complainant – only in exceptional circumstance</li> <li>Need access to legal services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LBB will develop detailed procedures for SC to consider on how to operate local filter</li> </ul>