



Standards Committee – 5 January 2009

Member's Attendance at Committee – 2008/09

Purpose of report

This is the third report that has been submitted to the Standards Committee relating to elected member's attendance at meetings. Data relating to attendance has been analysed for the period May to November 2008 and is presented in analysis that is included as appendices to this report.

Recommendations

That the Standards Committee

- (1) notes the contents of this report.
- (2) request the Assistant Director of Legal and Constitutional Services to forward a copy of this report to each of the group leaders so that they are aware of member's attendance at Council and committees.

Resource and legal considerations

Financial

None arising from this report.

Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Staffing

None arising from this report.

Citizen impact

None arising from this report.

Community Safety

None arising from this report.

Environmental impact

None arising from this report.

Performance and risk management issues

Risk Management

None arising from this report.

Performance Management

None arising from this report.

Equality implications

None arising from this report.

Consultation

None arising from this report.

Background papers

All published

Signed:

**Assistant Director of Legal
and Constitutional Services**

Date: 10 December 2008

Contact officer

Bhupinder Gill

Assistant Director of Legal
and Constitutional Services

☎ 01922 654820 ✉ gillb@walsall.gov.uk

Prior to the Local Government Act, 2000, members received allowances on an “attendance basis” which meant that they were paid an allowance based on the number of meetings they attended during a four week period. Those rules were changed by national legislation save that, should a member be absent from meetings of the authority for a period of six months, they could be suspended from the Council and their allowance stopped.

Following the change in entitlement all local authority members are paid an allowance that takes no account of attendance at meetings into consideration. However, members still have a duty to represent their constituents and to attend meetings of Council and other fora.

Analysis has been undertaken of member's attendance at committees of the council from the start of the municipal year to November 2008 which covers a six month period.

Types of meetings and fora

Council meets on an eight week cycle and has three types of meetings; the annual meeting, ordinary meetings and extraordinary meetings which are conducted in accordance with Council Procedure Rules as included within the Constitution.

Scrutiny and Performance Panels, the authority has five such panels which meet on a six weekly cycle; Children's and Young People, Neighbourhood, Health Social Care and Inclusion, Regeneration and Corporate.

Cabinet (or the “Executive”), meets every four weeks and consists of ten Executive members appointed by Council.

Certain functions, such as planning, licensing, personnel, health and safety and elections are delegated to Committees such as;

- Audit Committee (meeting every six weeks)
- Appointments Board (adhoc)
- Development Control Committee (meeting every three weeks)
- Employment Appeals Committee
- LEA Government Appointment Panel (meeting every six weeks)
- Licensing and Safety Committee (meeting every six weeks)
- Standards Committee (meeting every quarter)

The analysis in Appendix 1 is split by Committee and provides a brief overview of the Committee including the number of meetings that are held each year followed by the breakdown of member's current attendance levels.

Member's attendance at Committees – 2008/09

(1) Council

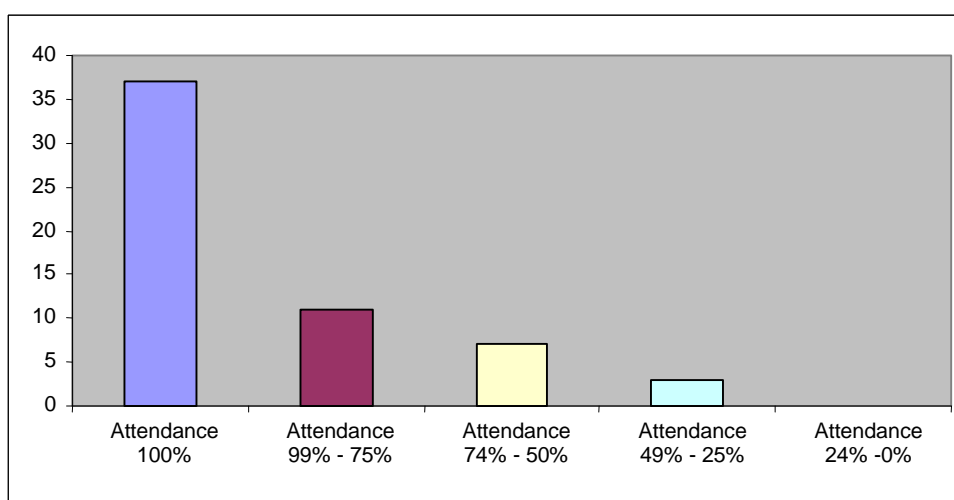
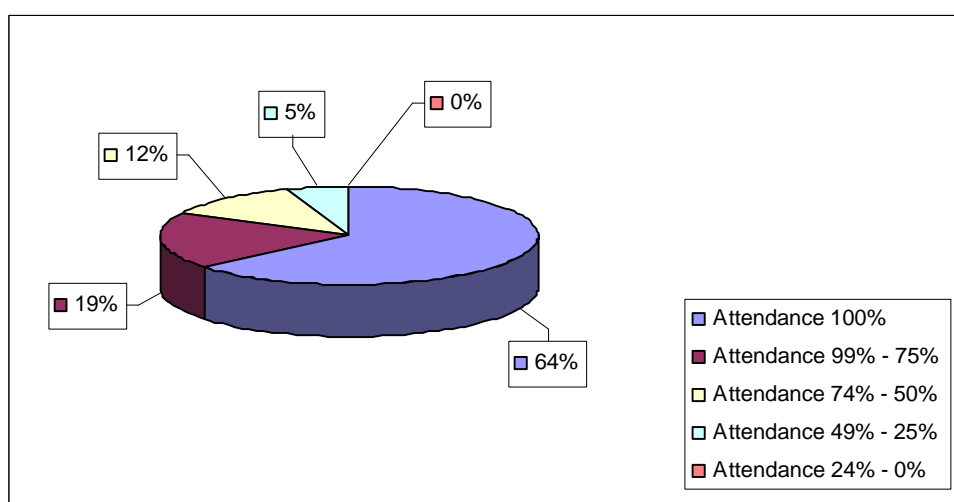
Council consists of all sixty elected members of the authority who are collectively the ultimate policy makers carrying out a number of strategic and management functions. Councillors represent their communities and bring their views into the decision making process as well as participating in the governance and management of the Council. As well as responding to individual constituents enquiries and representations Councillors also maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics.

Number of meetings in a year: seven (three of which have been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Council:

The charts below show that:

- 64% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 19% of members have an attendance record of 75%
- 12% of members have an attendance record of 50%
- 5% of members have an attendance record of 25%



(2) Cabinet

Cabinet consists of ten members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

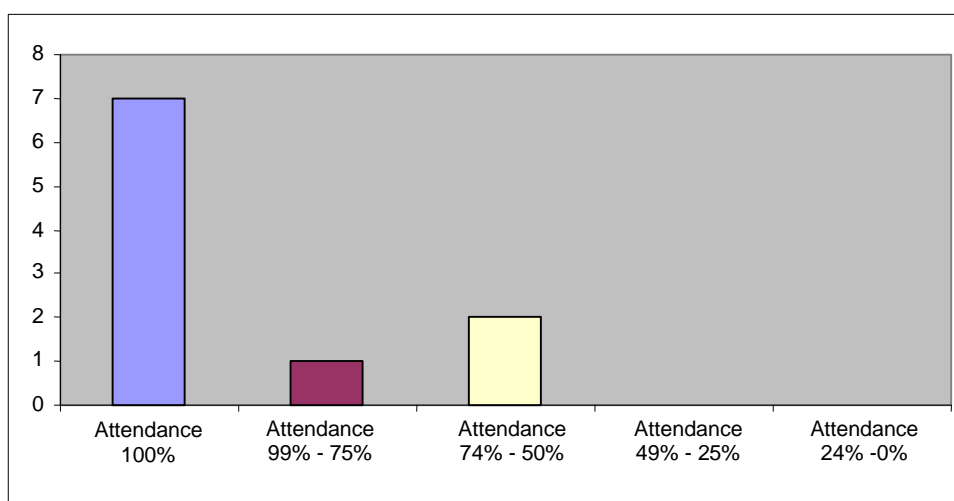
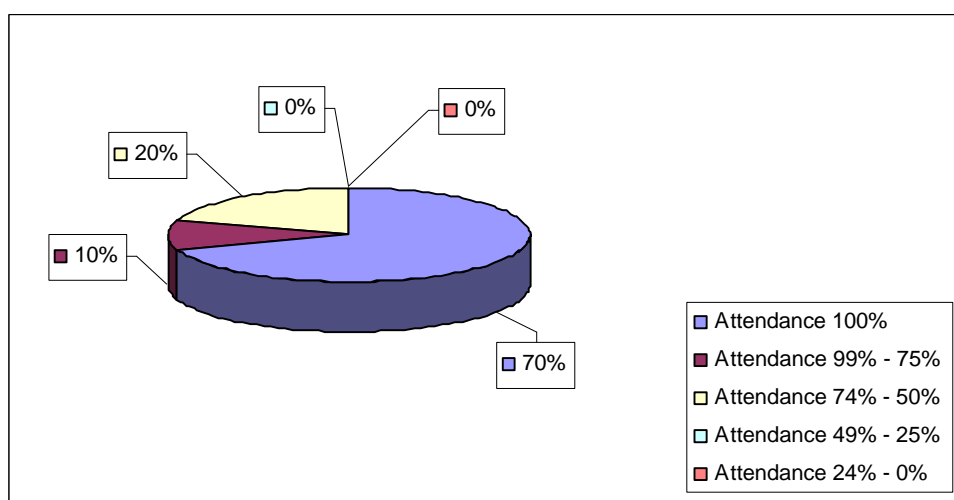
Cabinet is at the heart of the day to day decision making process and has a key role in proposing budget and policy framework to the Council. Cabinet consists of the Leader of Council with nine Councillors who have been appointed by Council. These Councillors have their own portfolios which include; Children's Services, Communities and Partnerships, Environment, Finance and Personnel, Leisure and Culture, Procurement, Transformation and Performance Management, Regeneration, Social Care, Health and Housing and Transport.

Number of meetings in a year: ten (five of which have been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Cabinet:

The charts below show that:

- 70% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 10% of members have an attendance record of 75%
- 20% of members have an attendance record of 50%



(3) Children's and Young People Scrutiny & Performance Panel

Children's and Young Peoples Scrutiny & Performance Panel consists of nine members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

Scrutiny and Performance Panels are powerful bodies that meet in public to discuss and make recommendations on the development of policies and hold the executive to account for their decisions as well as considering matters of local concern.

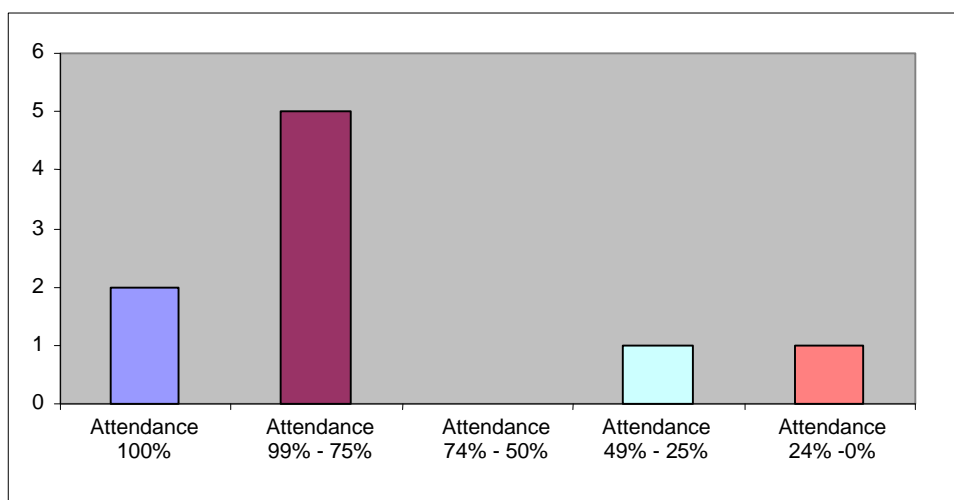
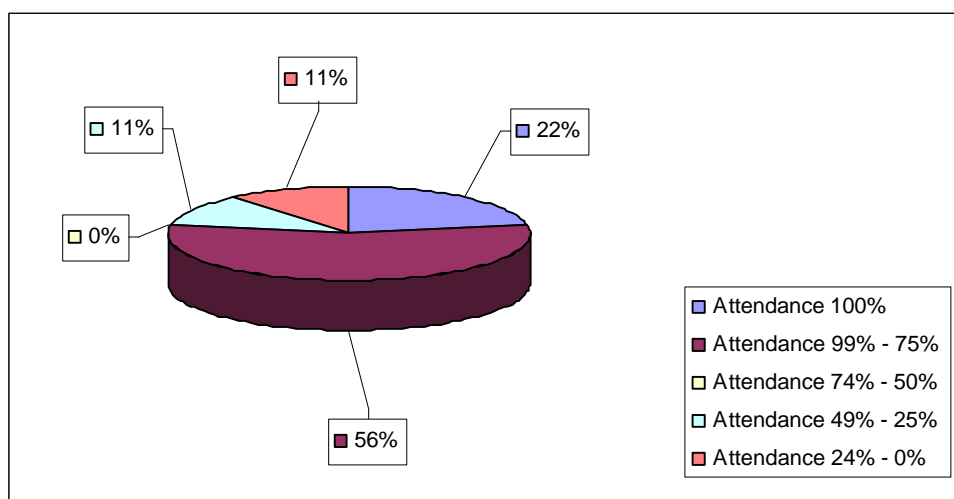
The Children's and Young People Scrutiny & Performance Panel has a remit that covers; education, children's services, youth services, children and young people partnership, communications and procurement.

Number of meetings in a year: twelve (six of which have been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Children's and Young People Scrutiny & Performance Panel:

The charts below show that:

- 22% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 56% of members have an attendance record of 75%
- 11% of members have an attendance record of 25%
- 11% of members have yet to attend a meeting of this Committee



(4) Corporate Scrutiny & Performance Panel

Corporate Scrutiny & Performance Panel consists of nine members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

Scrutiny and Performance Panels are powerful bodies that meet in public to discuss and make recommendations on the development of policies and hold the executive to account for their decisions as well as considering matters of local concern.

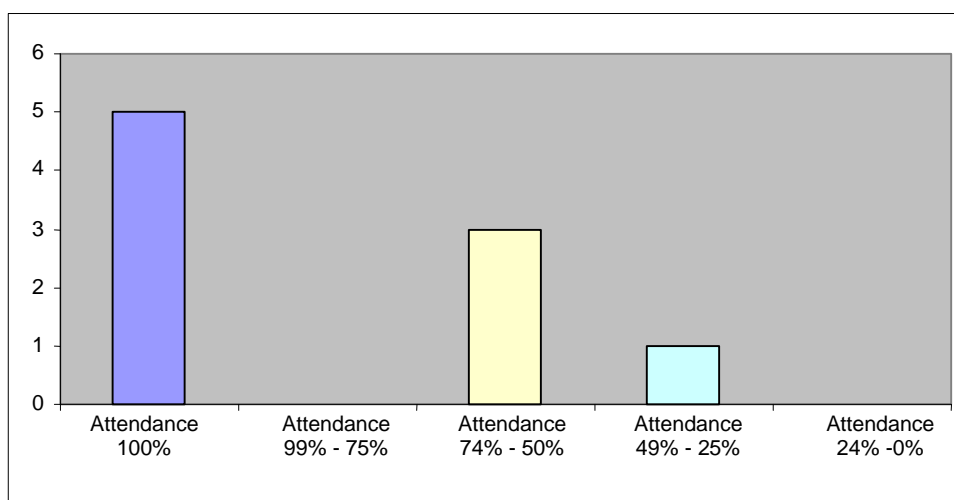
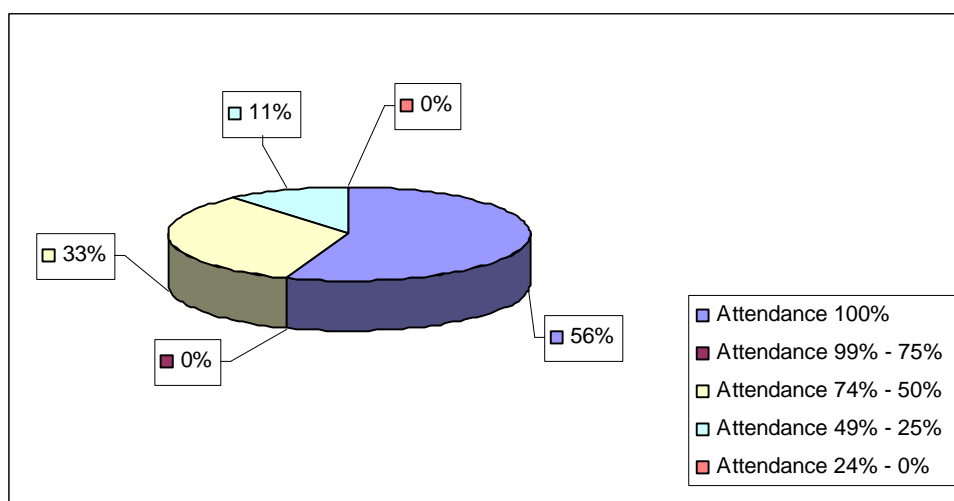
The Corporate Scrutiny & Performance Panel has a remit that covers; Finance, Corporate Performance Management, Governance and Strategic Transformation.

Number of meetings in a year: ten (four of which have been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Corporate Scrutiny & Performance Panel:

The charts below show that:

- 56% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 33% of members have an attendance record of 50%
- 11% of members have an attendance record of 25%



(5) Health, Social Care and Inclusion Scrutiny & Performance Panel

Health, Social Care and Inclusion Scrutiny & Performance Panel consists of nine members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

Scrutiny and Performance Panels are powerful bodies that meet in public to discuss and make recommendations on the development of policies and hold the executive to account for their decisions as well as considering matters of local concern.

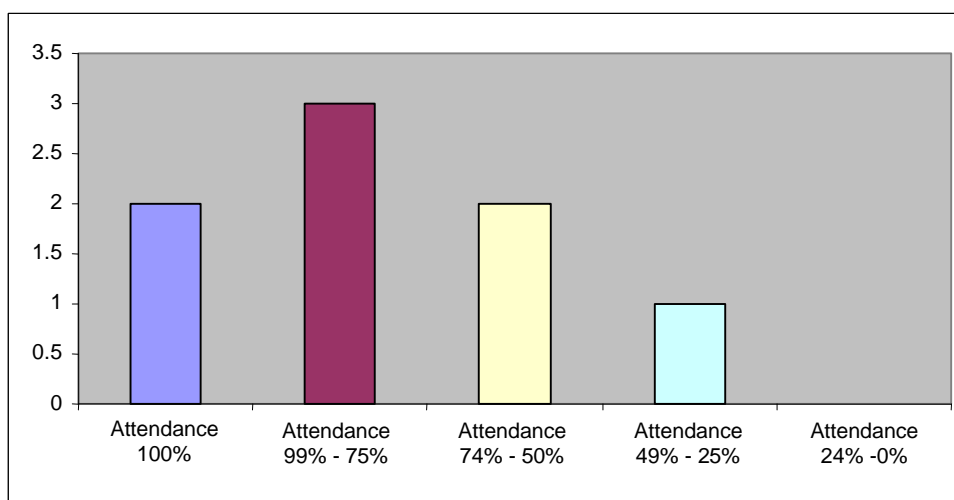
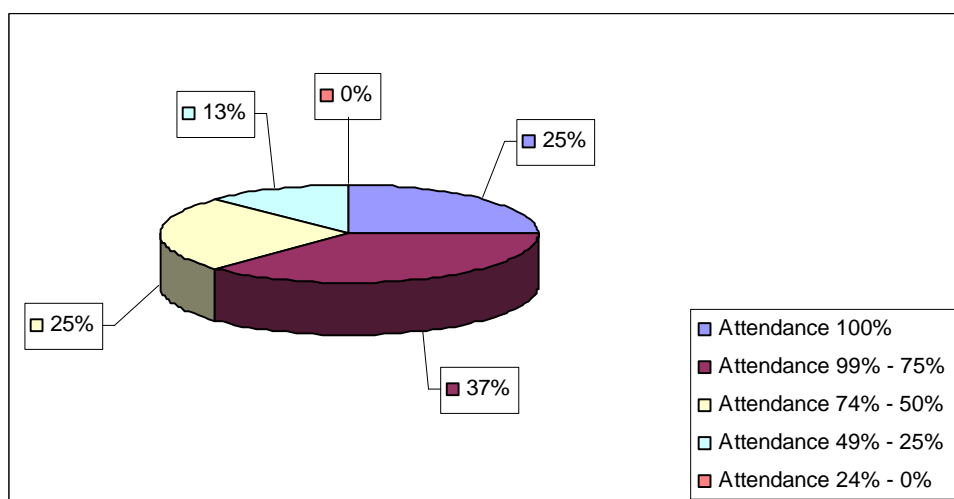
The Health, Social Care and Inclusion Scrutiny & Performance Panel has a remit that covers; adult health, strategic housing and health.

Number of meetings in a year: nine (four of which have been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Health, Social Care and Inclusion Scrutiny & Performance Panel:

The charts below show that:

- 25% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 37% of members have an attendance record of 75%
- 25% of members have an attendance record of 50%
- 13% of members have an attendance record of 1%



(6) Neighbourhood Scrutiny & Performance Panel

Neighbourhood Scrutiny & Performance Panel consists of nine members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

Scrutiny and Performance Panels are powerful bodies that meet in public to discuss and make recommendations on the development of policies and hold the executive to account for their decisions as well as considering matters of local concern.

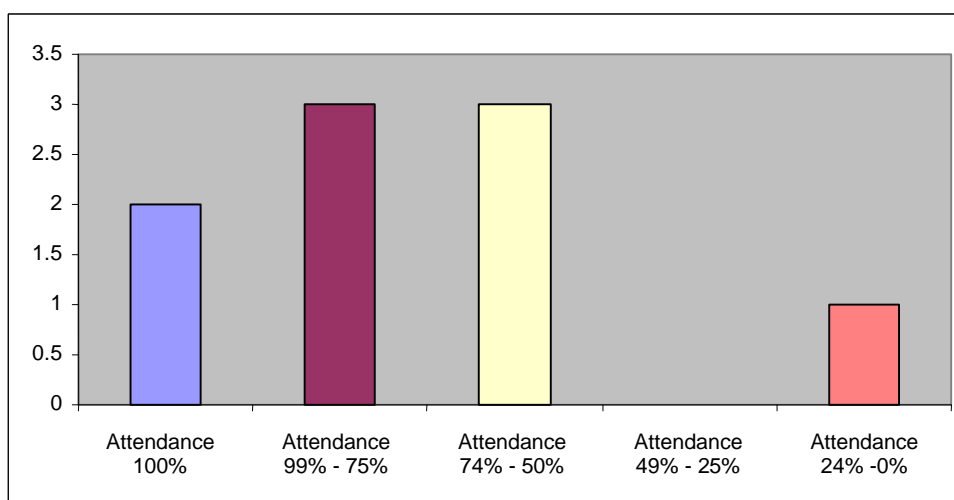
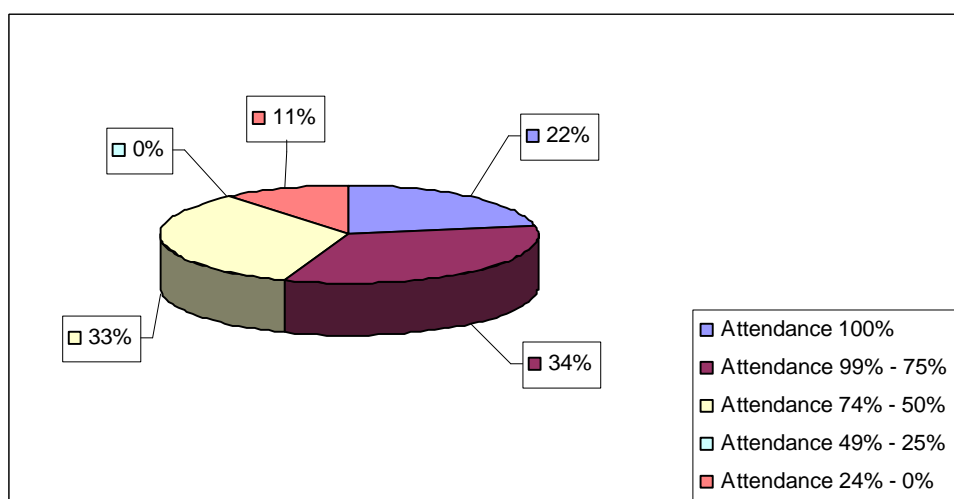
The Neighbourhood Scrutiny & Performance Panel has a remit that covers; community safety, leisure, culture and lifelong learning, neighbourhood partnerships and programmes term, emergency planning and business continuity and built environment.

Number of meetings in a year: nine (four of which have been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Neighbourhood Scrutiny & Performance Panel:

The charts below show that:

- 22% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 34% of members have an attendance record of 75%
- 33% of members have an attendance record of 50%
- 11% of members have yet to attend a meeting of this Committee



(7) Regeneration Scrutiny & Performance Panel

Regeneration Scrutiny & Performance Panel consists of nine members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

Scrutiny and Performance Panels are powerful bodies that meet in public to discuss and make recommendations on the development of policies and hold the executive to account for their decisions as well as considering matters of local concern.

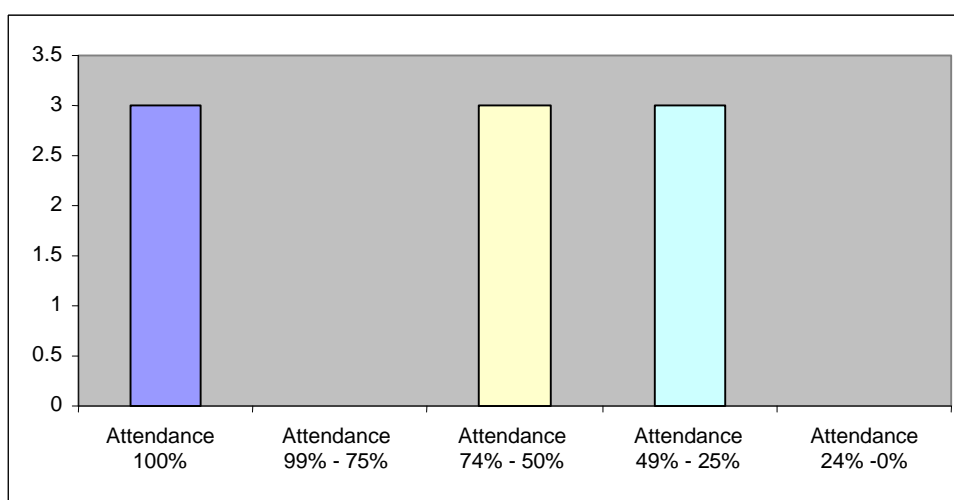
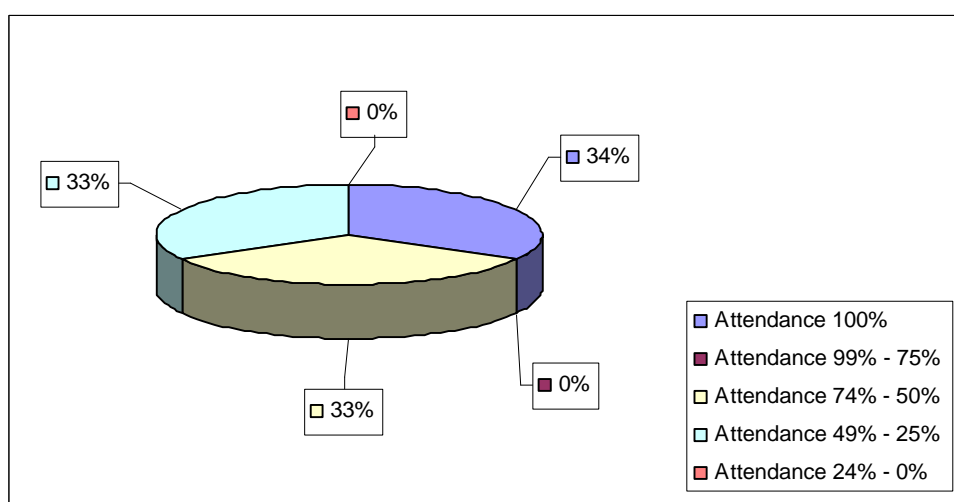
The Regeneration Scrutiny & Performance Panel has a remit that covers; economic, environmental, physical, New Deal for Communities, Walsall Strategic Borough Partnership, planning, policy and Black Country Consortium (West Midlands Groups).

Number of meetings in a year: eight (four of which have been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Regeneration Scrutiny & Performance Panel:

The charts below show that:

- 34% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 33% of members have an attendance record of 50%
- 33% of members have an attendance record of 25%



(8) Audit Committee

The Committee consists of seven members' of the authority and one co-opted independent member (non-voting) who are appointed by Council.

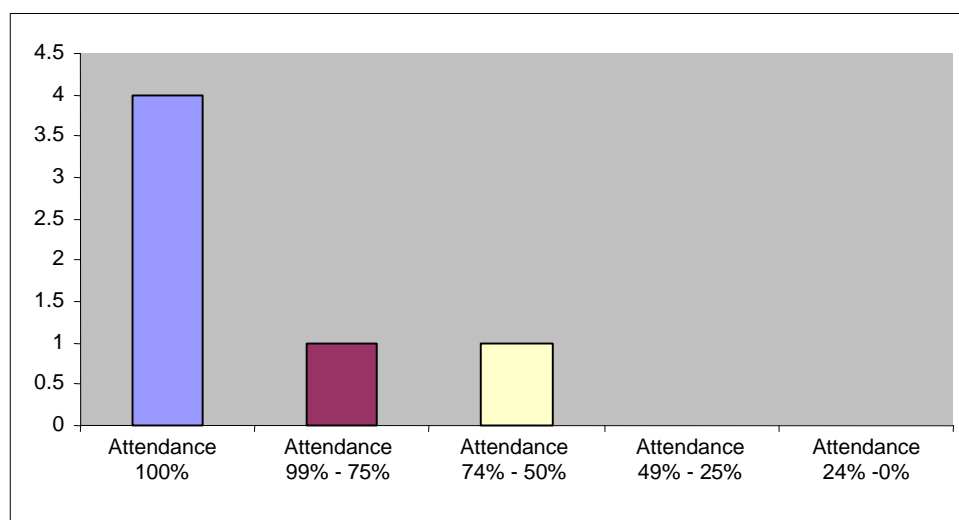
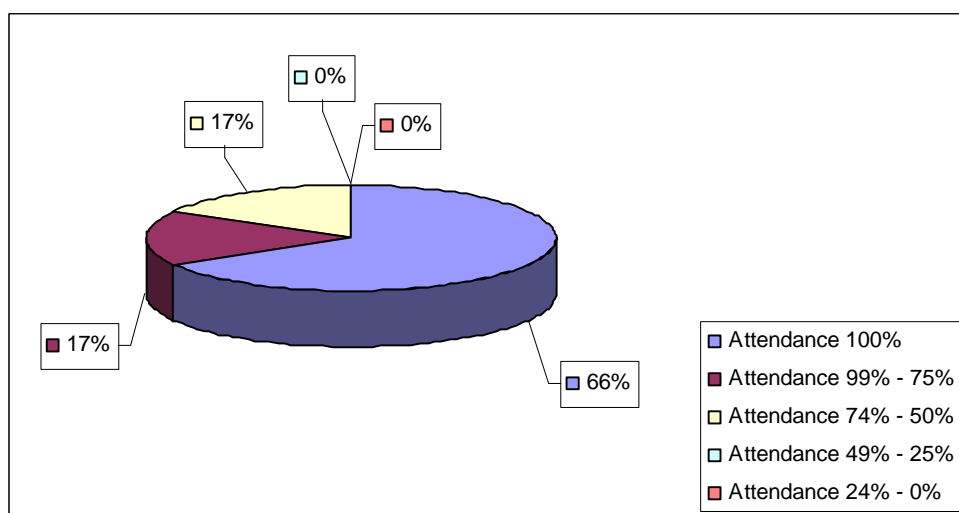
The remit of this Committee includes contributing to the Council's governance by ensuring an effective internal control environment is maintained and reviewing the mechanisms for the assessment and management of risk. The Committee agrees a work plan for the Internal Audit Service and considers recommendations and reports from external auditors. The Committee also approves the Council's Annual Statements of Accounts.

Number of meetings in a year: nine (five of which have been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Audit Committee:

The charts below show that:

- 66% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 17% of members have an attendance record of 75%
- 17% of members have an attendance record of 50%



(9) Development Control Committee

Development Control Committee consists of twenty members' of the authority who are appointed by Council on the basis of one member per ward.

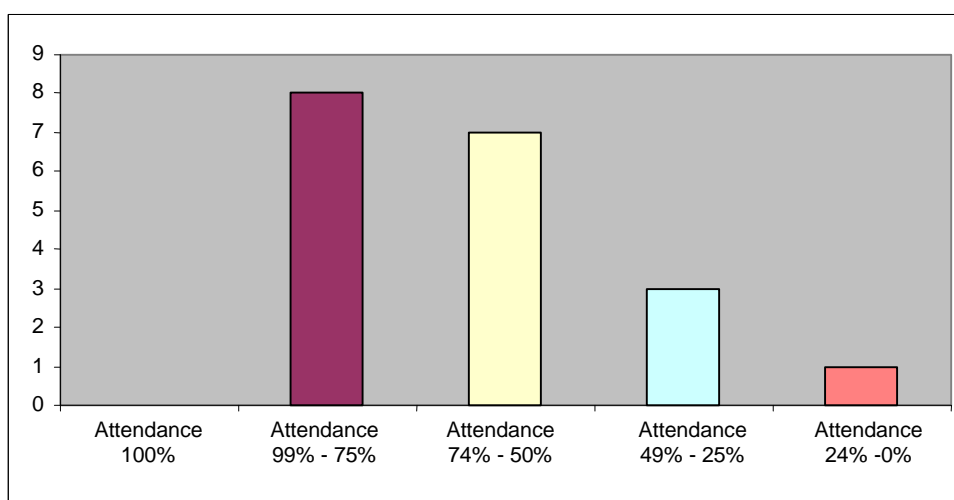
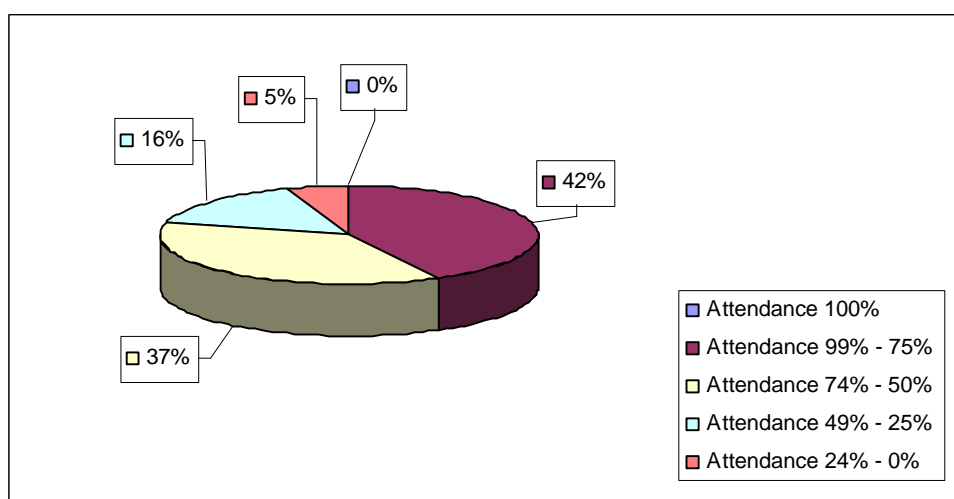
The remit of the Committee is to execute functions relating to; planning and conservation, commons registration and highways use and registration in all potential developments that are put before the Committee.

Number of meetings in a year: seventeen (ten of which have been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Development Control Committee:

The charts below show that:

- 42% of members have an attendance record of 75%
- 37% of members have an attendance record of 50%
- 16% of members have an attendance record of 25%
- 5% of members have an attendance record of 1%



(10) Employment Appeals (A)

Employment Appeals Committee consists of seven members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

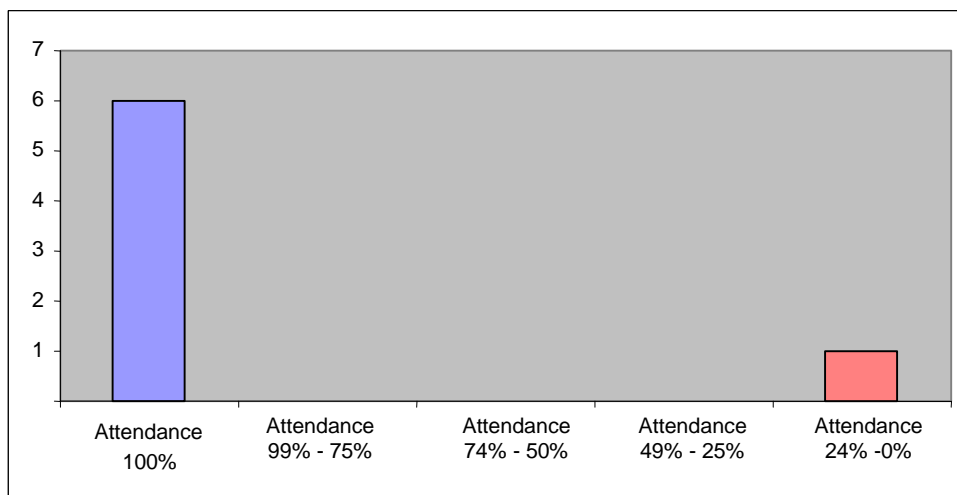
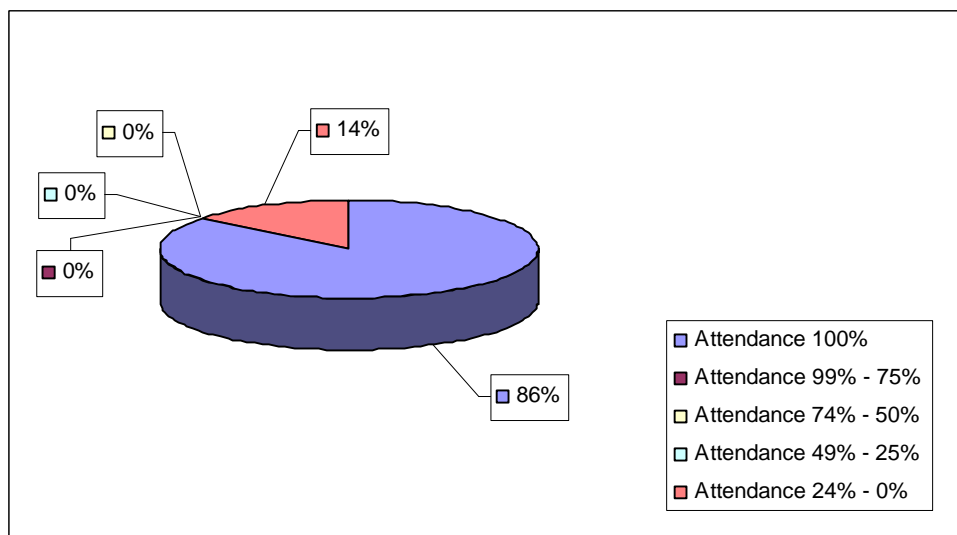
The remit of the Committee is to consider appeals in connection with disciplinary action in the case of Chief and Deputy Chief Officers only, grading, grievances or dismissal of employees, in accordance with the policies approved by the Council.

Number of meetings in last six months: two

Member's attendance at Employment Appeals (A):

The charts below show that:

- 86% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 14% of members have yet to attend a meeting of this Committee



(11) Employment Appeals (B)

Employment Appeals Committee consists of seven members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

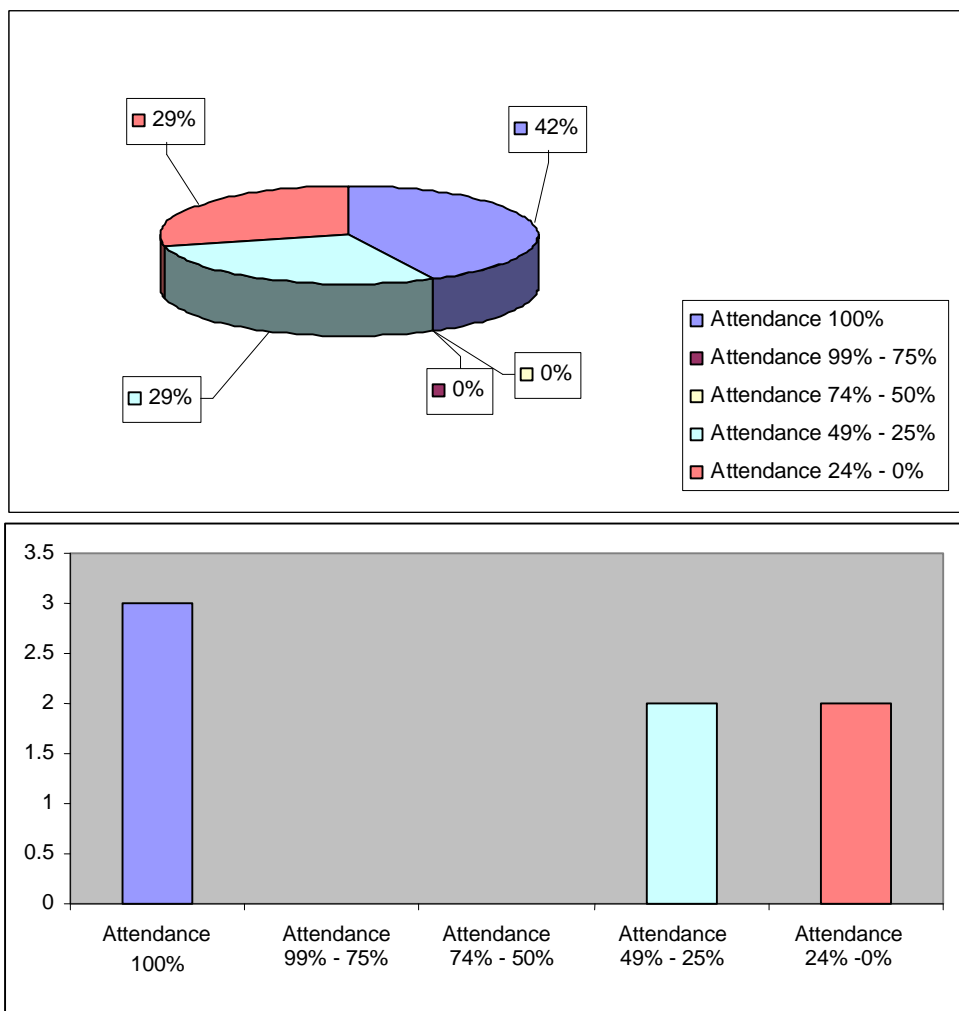
The remit of the Committee is to consider appeals in connection with disciplinary action in the case of Chief and Deputy Chief Officers only, grading, grievances or dismissal of employees, in accordance with the policies approved by the Council.

Number of meetings held in last six months: three

Member's attendance at Employment Appeals (B):

The charts below show that:

- 42% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 29% of members have an attendance record of 25%
- 29% of members have yet to attend a meeting of this Committee



(12) LEA Governor Appointment Panel

LEA Governor Appointments Panel consists of five members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

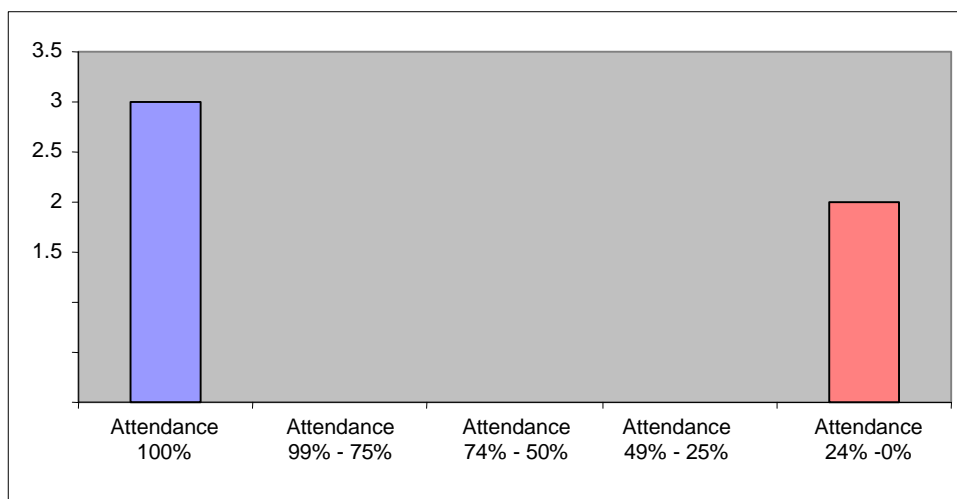
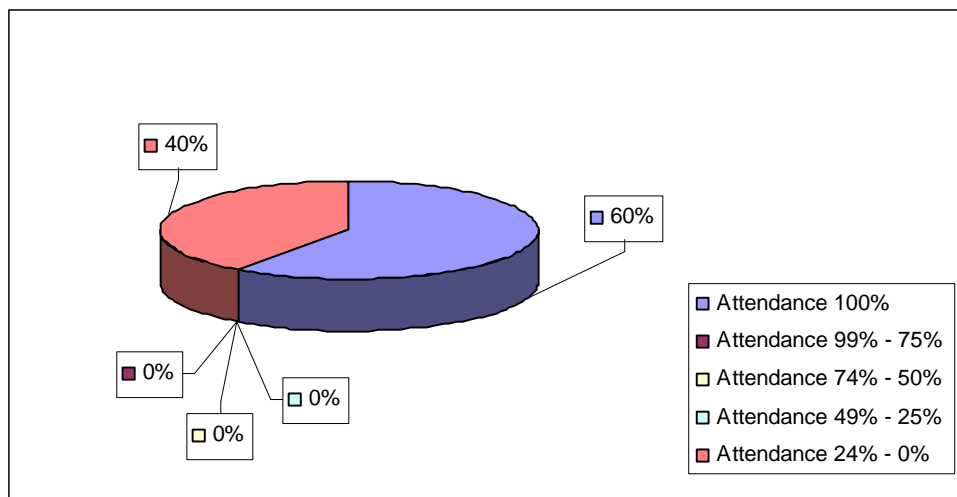
The remit of the LEA Governor Appointment Panel is to appoint and remove LEA representative School Governors.

Number of meetings in a year: six (one of which has been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at LEA Governor Appointment Panel:

The charts below show that:

- 60% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 40% of members have yet to attend a meeting of this Committee



(13) Licensing and Safety Committee

Licensing and Safety Committee consists of fourteen members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

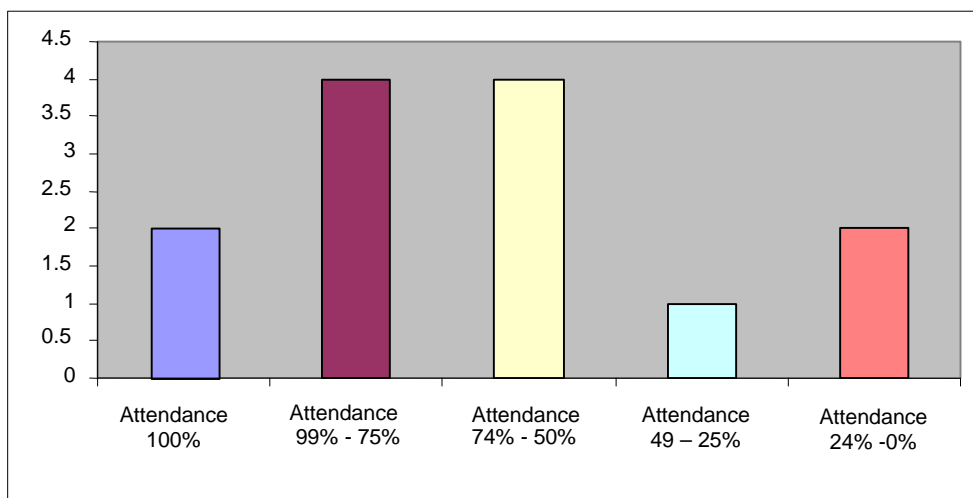
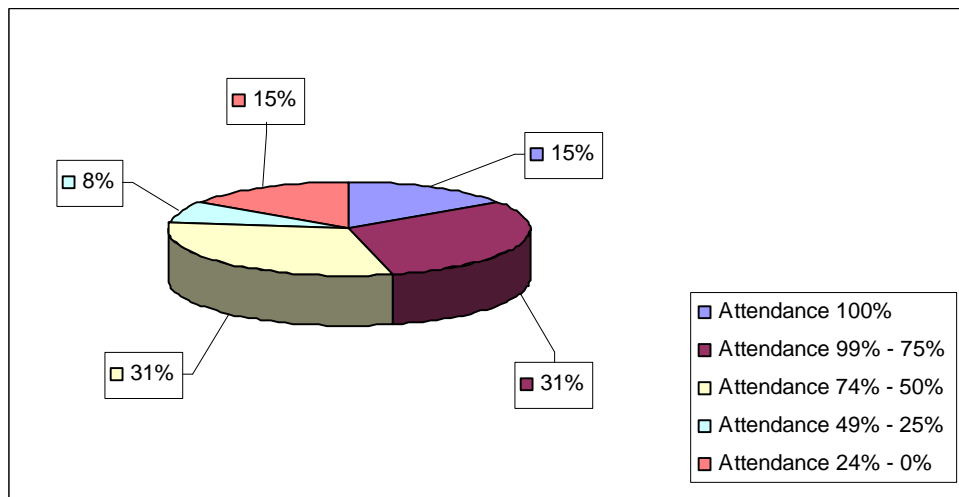
The remit of the Licensing and Safety Committee is to carry out functions relating to taxi, gaming, entertainment, food and miscellaneous licensing in addition to health and safety at work.

Number of meetings in a year: nine (five of which have been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Licensing and Safety Committee:

The charts below show that:

- 15% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 31% of members have an attendance record of 75%
- 31% of members have an attendance record of 50%
- 8% of members have an attendance record of 25%
- 15% of members have an attendance record of 1%



(14) Standards Committee

The Committee consists of four members' of the authority and six co-opted independent members (non-voting) who are appointed by Council.

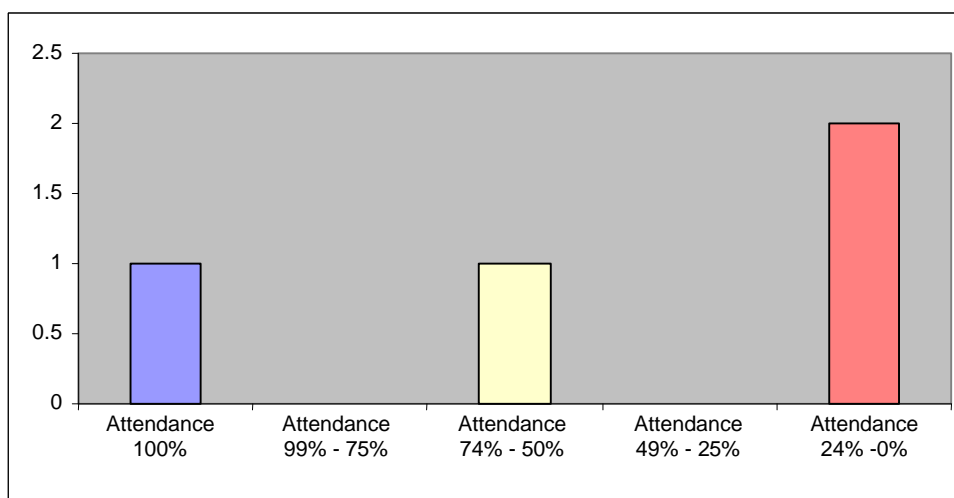
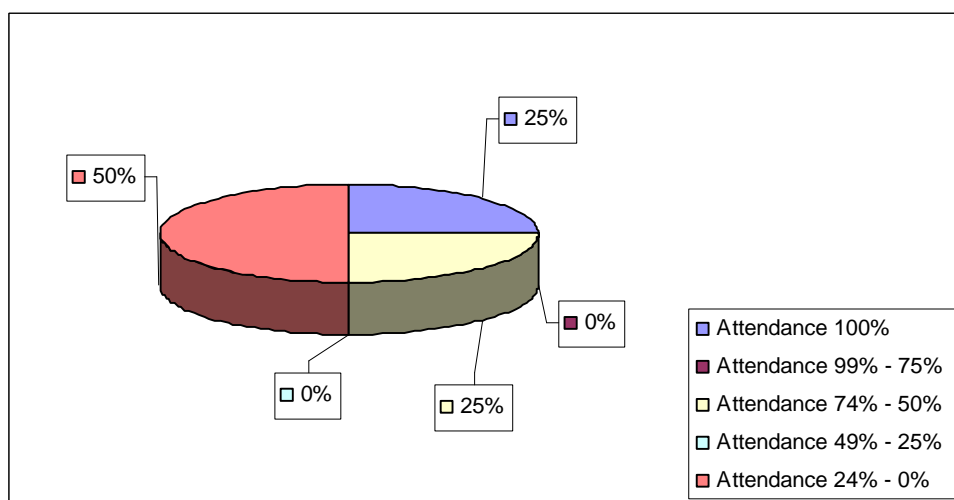
The remit of the Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of elected members and co-opted voting members ensuring that they observe the Members' Code of Conduct and deal with complaints/misconduct relating to breaches of the Code, grant dispensations to elected Members from requirements relating to interests and dealing with any case tribunal or interim case tribunal or from the Standards Board for England. The Standards Board also consider reports and policies as well as deal with breaches of protocol.

Number of meetings in a year: five (two of which has been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Standards Committee:

The charts below show that:

- 25% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 25% of members have an attendance record of 50%
- 50% of members have yet to attend a meeting of this Committee



(15) Taxi Licensing Sub Committee (A)

The Committee consists of seven members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

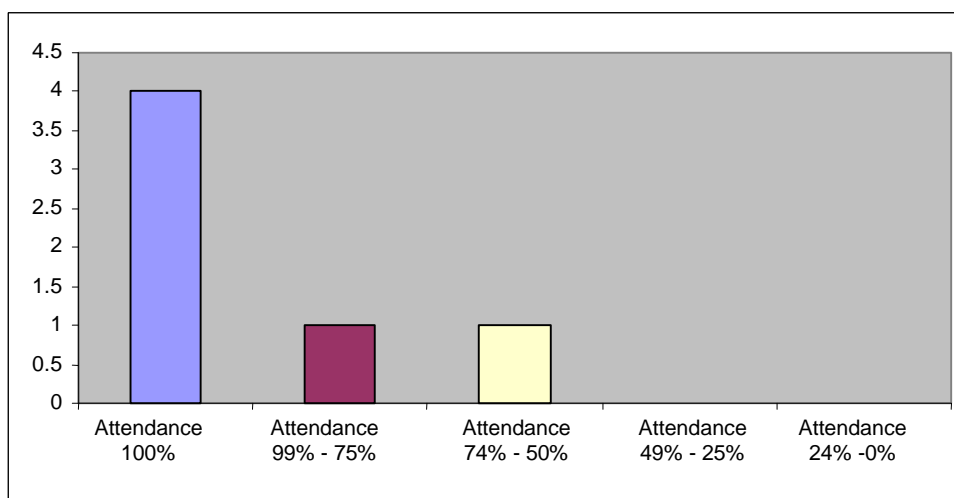
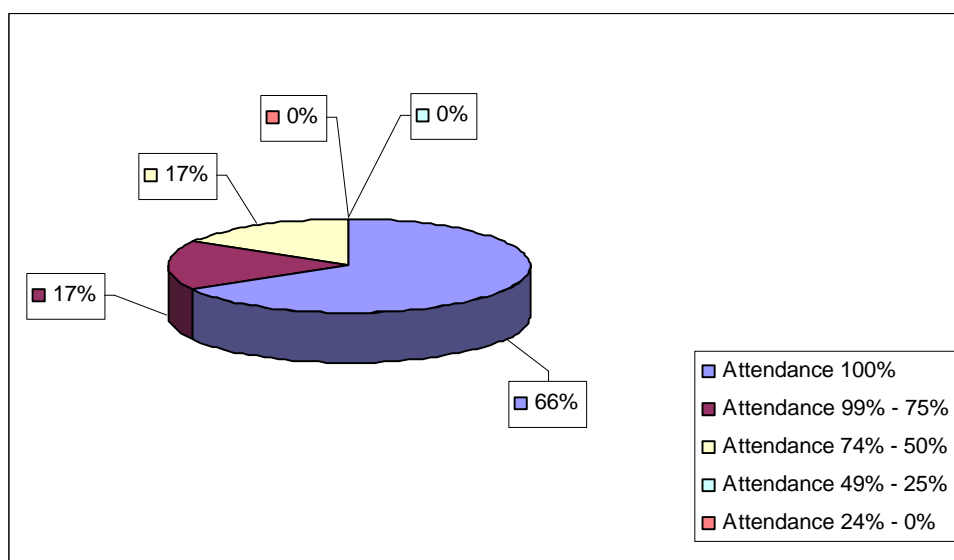
This is a sub-committee of the Licensing and Safety Committee with the power to license hackney carriages and private hire vehicles, the power to license drivers of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles and the power to license operators of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.

Number of meetings in a year: five (four of which has been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Taxi Licensing Sub Committee (A):

The charts below show that:

- 66% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 17% of members have an attendance record of 75%
- 17% of members have an attendance record of 50%



(16) Taxi Licensing Sub Committee (B)

The Committee consists of seven members' of the authority who are appointed by Council.

This is a sub-committee of the Licensing and Safety Committee with the power to license hackney carriages and private hire vehicles, the power to license drivers of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles and the power to license operators of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.

Number of meetings in a year: five (three of which has been held in this six month period).

Member's attendance at Taxi Licensing Sub Committee (B):

The charts below show that:

- 43% of members have an attendance record of 100%
- 14% of members have an attendance record of 50%
- 29% of members have an attendance record of 25%
- 14% of members have yet to attend a meeting of this Committee

