
**REPORT TO THE GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE
MEETING ON: 17th October 2019**

Status: Information
Title: Annual Review Letter: Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Originator: Verina Wenham – Chief Officer, Governance and Monitoring Officer
Where from: Local Government and Social Care ombudsman
Where to next:

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update members on the annual review letter received from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Office (LG&SCO) for the year ending 31st March 2019.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 ***That the LG&SCO's annual review letter for 2018/19 attached as Appendix A and the summary of complaints set out in the briefing note attached as Appendix B , be noted.***

Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 The LG&SCO submits an Annual Letter to the Council on all the complaints received and this is to inform members of the complaints received and the outcomes for the year 2018/19.

4 Impact on Communities

- 4.1 Customer feedback is valued as a means to continuously review and seek to improve the services delivered by and on behalf of the Council.

5 Key Facts

- 5.1 Each year the LG&SCO provides a report on the complaints and enquiries he has received for the Council. The report provides information on the number and type of complaints and identifies where an investigation has been carried out by the LG&SCO with the outcome. The report is in the public domain via

their website (www.lgo.org.uk) alongside the reports for all other authorities. A copy of the Annual Letter for 2018/19 is attached as Appendix A.

5.2 In the financial year 2018/19 the LG&SCO responded to 10 customer complaint referrals. The Council were only informed of 9 complaints. Out of the 10 referrals, 5 complaints were closed after initial enquiries, 3 were investigated and 1 complaint was upheld. A detailed statistical overview is detailed in Appendix B attached to this report.

5.3 The complaint that was upheld related a planning enforcement case. The LG&SCO found that the Council was at fault in the time taken to respond to the developers non compliant with the enforcement notice. The Council has apologised and paid the sum of £200 in compensation.

6 Legal Issues

6.1 The Local Government Act 1974 established the Local Government Ombudsman (LG&SCO) for England and for Wales (now known as the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman). The Act defines the main statutory functions:

- to investigate complaints against councils and some other authorities
- to investigate complaints about adult social care providers from people who arrange or fund their own adult social care
- to provide advice and guidance on good administrative practice

7 Resource Issues

7.1 Ombudsman investigations may recommend a local settlement by the council or prove maladministration by the council, which may lead to compensation being paid to the customer. One payment of compensation was made in 2018/19.

8 Equality Implications

8.1 Monitoring customer feedback provides an important source of assurance that council services are fair, equitable and free from discrimination and harassment.

9 Impact on the Organisation

9.1 Complaints naturally require officer time to carry out investigations and prepare evidence.

10 Community Safety Implications

10.1 None as far as this report is concerned

11. Carbon Management Implications

11.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

12. Risk Management Implications

12.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

13 Consultation

13.1 The Joint Chief Executives, Leader and the Scrutiny Chairman have been sent a copy of the annual review letter for 2018/19.

14 Options Considered

14.1 N/A

15 Background Papers

15.1 LG&SCO Decision Summaries for the upheld complaint during 2018/19

Previous report(s): N/A

Information Issued Under Sensitive Issue Procedure: Y/N

Ward Members Notified: Y/N

Appendices: *list any appendices here including title and filename in brackets (e.g. Performance Data 2010 (perfdata.doc)).*

A. LG&SCO Annual review letter for 2018/19

B. Briefing Note: Annual Report: Local Government Ombudsman