
REPORT TO:	COUNCIL	AGENDA ITEM: 10
DATE OF MEETING:	21st SEPTEMBER 2017	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	FRANK McARDLE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EXT. 5702)	DOC: U:\JAYNE\Commtee\COMMRE P\LGO Annual Review 2017.docx
SUBJECT:	LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN – ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER 2017 AND UPDATE ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS TO THE OMBUDSMAN SERVICE	REF: J Beech
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 To accept the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter 2017.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 This report will provide Members with a summary of complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman ("LGO") against this Authority during the year 2016/17.

2.2 It will also bring Members up to date on developments in the LGO service.

3.0 Detail

3.1 On 20th July 2017, the Council received the Annual Review Letter for the period 2016/17 and a summary of statistics on complaints.

3.2 The Ombudsman's Office made decisions on 5 complaints about the Council in 2016/17. Of these complaints, 1 complaint was not upheld, 1 was closed after initial enquiries, 2 were referred back for local resolution and 1 complaint was upheld and resolved.

3.3 The LGO does not provide detailed information about the statistics and, therefore, in order to provide some background information for Members, the Council's LGO Link Officer has produced a table of complaint decisions, which is attached at **Annexe 'A'**. This provides a breakdown of the type of complaints received and a summary of the decisions.

LGO Developments

Change of Name

- 3.4 Since 2010, the Local Government Ombudsman has operated with jurisdiction over all registered social care providers, able to investigate complaints about care funded and arranged privately. In response to feedback from care providers (who tell the Ombudsman that the current name is a real barrier to recognition within the social care sector), the LGO has changed its name to Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.

Appointment of Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

- 3.5 The reporting year saw the retirement of Dr Jane Martin after completing her seven year tenure as Local Government Ombudsman. Michael King was appointed to the role in January 2017.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 None directly arising from this report.

5.0 Corporate Implications

- 5.1 A good complaints system is an opportunity for the Council to show that it cares about providing a good service, and that it genuinely values feedback on whether there are any problems which need attention. It is, therefore, imperative that we get feedback, not only through our own complaints system, but also from the Ombudsman, and that this information is widely distributed to show that this Authority takes complaints seriously and deals with them sympathetically.

6.0 Community Implications

- 6.1 One of the roles of the Local Government Ombudsman is to investigate complaints about Councils from members of the public. Its aim is to get Councils to put things right if they have gone wrong and if this has affected members of the public directly.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The Annual Review Letter and the publishing of complaint decisions on the LGO website are useful additions to other information held by the Council, highlighting how people experience or perceive its services. They should also be seen as an opportunity to continue to improve the services offered by the Council.

8.0 Background Papers

- Annual Review Letter 2017 from the Local Government Ombudsman