

**Report to:** Audit Committee  
**Date of meeting:** 30th September 2010  
**Report of:** Head of Legal and Property Services  
**Title:** Ombudsman's Annual Review

1.0 **SUMMARY**

1.1 Attached as Appendix A is a copy of the Ombudsman's Annual Review of its dealings with the Council for the financial year 2009/2010

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the Annual Review be noted.

**Contact Officer:**

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**Report approved by:** Managing Director

### 3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 Attached at Appendix A is the Ombudsman's Annual Letter now called Annual Review detailing the complaints it received against the Council from members of the public in the financial year 2009/2010
- 3.2 In 2009/2010 the Ombudsman received 17 enquiries and complaints about the Council down from 26 enquiries and complaints in 2008/09, of which 8 were forwarded for further investigation.  
The subject area generating the largest number of complaints and enquiries was housing (6) followed by benefits, planning and building control and public finance (3 each).
- 3.3 In addition the Ombudsman decided 6 complaints against the Council in the same period. The figures do not match with those in 3.2 above as some decisions may have related to complaints actually received in the previous accounting year but not finalised, and some cases still being outstanding at the end of this accounting period.
- 3.4 Of those 3 were classified as local settlements. 1 case related to an incident where the Council had, without proper notice, unplugged electrical equipment the complainant used in relation to storing his good for sale at Charter Place, another related to failure to amend council tax records and was writing to a previous address about the complainants liability and the third was because the Council did not deal with the complainants homeless application properly, including interviewing them in the open customer service centre instead of a private interview room. In the remaining 3 cases the Ombudsman 1 he found he had no jurisdiction and in the other 2 he used his discretion not to take pursue.
- 3.5 The Council's average response time for responding to enquiries was 20 days, well within the Ombudsman's target of 28 days

### 4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

#### 4.1 **Financial**

- 4.1.1 The Head of Strategic Finance comments that There are no financial implications in this report. Any payments of compensation agreed with the Ombudsman come out of the budgets of the requisite service area.

#### 4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

- 4.2.1 The Head of Legal and Property Services comments that there are no legal issues in this report.

#### 4.3 **Equalities**

- 4.3.1 None

- 4.4        **Potential Risks**
- 4.4.1     None
  
- 4.5        **Staffing**
- 4.5.1     None
  
- 4.6        **Accommodation**
- 4.6.1     None
  
- 4.7        **Community Safety**
- 4.7.1     None
  
- 4.8        **Sustainability**
- 4.8.1     None

Appendices

Ombudsman's Annual Review

Background Papers

"No papers were used in the preparation of this report".

File Reference

None