

Part A

Report to: Audit Committee

Date of meeting: 26 July 2018

Report author: Head of Democracy and Governance

Title: Ombudsman's Annual Letter

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report provides the committee with the Ombudsman's Annual Letter to the Council together with statistics on the number of cases received and decided by them in the year 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Failure to comply with any recommendation of the Ombudsman	Damage to the reputation of the Council	All Ombudsman decisions are notified to relevant service heads	treat	2
Failure to deal with complaints in a timely fashion	Complainant more likely to complain to the Ombudsman	Services adhere to council complaints policy	treat	4

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 To note the contents of this report.

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4.0 Detailed proposal

- 4.1 Attached in the appendices is the Ombudsman's Annual Letter for the year 1 April to 31 March 2018 together with statistics showing the number of complaints received during this period and the number determined.
- 4.2 It should be noted that the number received and the number determined may not necessarily be the same as some may have been determined during the year from complaints made in the previous year (2 in this case) and some may still to be determined (3 in this case).
- 4.3 Unfortunately during the last year 2 of the cases that were determined were upheld with findings of maladministration. Both related to Revenues and Benefits. Both were reported to Cabinet one on 3rd July 2017 and the other on 5th March 2018.
- 4.4 The Committee will note that 17 complaints were received in the last year comprising 5 for Revenues and Benefits, 5 for Housing, 3 for Environmental Health, 2 for Development Management and 2 for Highways related issues.
- 4.5 There were 14 cases determined and as stated above 2 were upheld, 6 were referred back to the Council as the complainant had not been through the internal complaints procedure first, three were closed after initial inquiries were made and 2 were either incomplete or invalid.
- 4.6 All Ombudsman decisions are published on their website.
- 4.7 The Committee is asked to note the report.

5 Implications

5.1 Financial

- 5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications in this report.

5.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

- 5.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal issues contained in this report.

5.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

- 5.3.1 No implications.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 No implications.

5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 No implications.

5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 No implications.

5.7 **Sustainability**

5.7.1 No implications.

Appendices

Ombudsman's Annual Letter, Complaints received, Complaints Determined

Background papers

None