

Part A

Report to: **Audit Committee**

Date of meeting: **Thursday, 19 September 2019**

Report author: **Group Head of Democracy and Governance**

Title: **Ombudsman's Annual Letter 2019**

1.0 Summary

1.1 Every year the Ombudsman sends every local authority a letter enclosing statistics relating to the number of complaints he has received and decided in the previous calendar year.

1.2 Attached as appendices are a copy of that letter received on 24 July 2019 and the statistics tables.

2.0 Risks

2.1 Not applicable the letter is for noting only

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 That the Ombudsman's Annual Letter be noted.

Further information:

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4.0 Detailed proposal

4.1 The council received the Ombudsman's letter on 24 July 2019. A copy is appended to the report together with statistics of the number of complaints the Ombudsman received and the number decided in the year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

4.2 This year the number of complaints received equals the number of decisions made 30. However this does not mean that all complaints decided were received in the last financial year or that complaints received in that year were decided in year.

4.3 This year the Ombudsman has introduced a map tracker on its website which shows in pie chart form statistics for each local authority. This shows that of the 5 complaints the Ombudsman actually investigated out of the 30 decided 3 were upheld which equates to 60% of complaints compared with an average of 43% for similar authorities. All 3 of the upheld complaints have been reported to Cabinet. One related to parking, one to housing allocations and one to Revenues and Benefits enforcement. In all cases the council complied with the Ombudsman's recommended remedy.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications in this report. However the Ombudsman can ask the council to compensate a complainant in circumstances where he feels the claimant has suffered distress.

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

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

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 Not applicable

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 Not applicable

5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 Not applicable

5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 Not applicable

5.7 **Sustainability**

5.7.1 Not applicable

Appendices

Ombudsman's Annual Letter

Statistics of complaints received

Statistics of complaints decided

Background papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.