

Part A

Report to: **Audit Committee**

Date of meeting: **Thursday, 28 July 2022**

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

Title: **Ombudsman's Annual Letter 2021/22**

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 financial year.

1.2 Attached as appendices are a copy of that letter received on 20 July 2022 and the table of cases received and decided during that year.

2.0 **Risks**

2.1 Not applicable this report is for noting only

3.0 **Recommendations**

3.1 That the Ombudsman's Annual Letter be noted

Further information:

Carol Chen

carol.chen@watford.gov.uk

Tel: 01923 278350

4.0 **Detailed proposal**

4.1 The council received the Ombudsman's letter on 20 July 2022. A copy is appended to the report together with statistics of the number of complaints the Ombudsman received and the number decided from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

4.2 Members will note that in 2021/22 the Ombudsman received 15 complaints and decided 15. This does not mean all cases received in this period were also decided in the same period. The decided table shows in fact, that of the 15 decided 5 were from the previous year. Of the 15 decided only 4 were investigated by the Ombudsman and of those 4, 2 were upheld. Both upheld matters were reported to Cabinet in December 2021.

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 as with the 2 upheld cases the Ombudsman can ask the Council to compensate a complainant in circumstances where he feels the complainant has suffered distress. Such payments come from the relevant services budget.

5.2 **Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

5.2.1 The Group 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 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

- Annual Letter 2021/22
- Statistics 2021/22

Background papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.