

PART A

Report to: Audit Committee
Date of meeting: 30 June 2015
Report of: Head of Democracy and Governance
Title: Ombudsman's Annual Letter

1.0 **SUMMARY**

1.1 To note the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter attached at Appendix 1

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 To note the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter 2015

Contact Officer:

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3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 Every year the Local Government Ombudsman produces an Annual Letter that informs Councils of her work in the previous financial year and also provides detail of statistics of the number of complaints received and dealt with.
- 3.2 The Annual letter is attached as appendix 1 together with 2 spreadsheets giving details of decisions made and complaints received.
- 3.3 Members will note that whilst the Ombudsman received 17 complaints and enquiries for the period April 2014 to March 2015 only 5 were investigated. Of those 5, 3 were upheld. All 3 related to Revenues and Benefits.
- 3.4 The main reason why those particular complaints were upheld was due either to delays in responding to the customer or due to failure to notify the customer of action taken. All had history going back before 2014.

- 3.5 Of those specified by the Ombudsman as referred back for local resolution the Head of Democracy and Governance has no record of being notified about them by the Ombudsman so has no way of determining if any of the complainants did then complain directly to the Council.
- 3.6 The Head of Democracy and Governance has asked the Member and Civic Events Officer to forward to all members a copy of the publication “Handling Complaints for Service Improvement “ referred to in the Ombudsman’s letter under Supporting Local Scrutiny.
- 3.7 The Committee is asked to note the report.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Financial**

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

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

- 4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that as Monitoring Officer I am obliged to formally report to Cabinet or Council any findings of maladministration by the Ombudsman.

Appendices

- Annual Review Letter 2015

Background Papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.

File Reference

- None