

Audit Committee

26th November 2018



Report of: Tim O’Gara, Monitoring Officer

Title: Annual Report of Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Decisions

Ward: Citywide

Officer Presenting Report: Nancy Rollason Head of Legal Service

Recommendation

That the Audit committee note the report and refer to Full Council for consideration

Summary

The report summarises the finding made in respect of the Council by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) in 2017/18. No public reports have been made.

The significant issues in the report are:

The LGO has upheld 12 complaints out of a total of 129 cases in 17/18 as compared to 21 complaints upheld in the previous year.

Council Tax - 4 upheld

Adult Care 4 upheld

Childrens services 1 upheld

Housing – Homelessness 1 upheld

Planning 1 upheld

Waste collection 1 upheld

Any changes made or action taken as a result of the findings are noted in the report at Appendix 1.



Context

1. This report is presented to the Committee to consider for referral to Full Council in line with the duty to report to the Full Council where findings of maladministration or fault have been made by the Ombudsman, summarising the findings made.
2. The Ombudsman has sent the Council all findings made in the year ending the 31st March 2018.
3. No public reports have been made in respect of the Council in that time. However, the requirement applies to all Ombudsman complaint decisions, not just those that result in a public report.
4. The LGO has upheld 12 cases in the year to March 2018 compared to 21 the previous year.
5. The Council dealt with 10,126 formal Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints in the 2017-2018, which means the escalation rate is 1.28% against total LGO cases and 0.12% against upheld LGO cases.
6. In respect of cases where routine mistakes and service failures have been made, and the Council has agreed to remedy the complaint by implementing the recommendations made following an investigation, the Ombudsman is of the view that the duty to report is satisfactorily discharged if the Monitoring Officer makes a periodic report to the Council summarising the findings on all upheld complaints over a specific period of time.
7. Appendix 1 sets out a summary of the findings made and remedies agreed.
8. Appendix 2 sets out information in respect of the Council's neighbouring authorities.
9. The Annual letter from the LGO to the Council is at Appendix 3

Proposal

That the Committee note the report and refer to Full Council for consideration.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

This report is made in compliance with the Council's duty to report Findings of maladministration or fault to Full Council

Legal advice provided by Nancy Rollason Head of Legal Service

Financial

The costs associated with implementing specific recommendations made following the investigations, including compensation payments as outlined in Appendix A are contained within current budgets.

Finance advice provided by Michael Pilcher, Finance Business Partner.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Summary of complaints upheld

Appendix 2 – Comparator data

Appendix 3 – Annual letter from the LGO

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

None