

Full Council

15th January 2019



Report of: Tim O’Gara, Monitoring Officer

Title: Annual Report of Local Government Ombudsman Decisions

Ward: Citywide

Recommendation

That Full Council note the findings in the report and actions taken as a result.

Summary

The findings in the report have been referred to Full Council for consideration by the Audit committee. The report summarises the finding made in respect of the Council by the LGO in 2017/18

The significant issues in the report are:

1. The LGO has upheld 12 complaints out of a total of 129 cases in 2017/18 as compared to 21 complaints upheld in the previous year.
2. Changes made or action taken as a result of the findings are noted in the report at Appendix 1.



Context

1. This report has been referred by the Audit committee for Full Council to consider in line with the duty to report findings of maladministration or fault 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. The requirement to report applies to all Ombudsman complaint decisions, not just those that result in a public report.
4. The LGO upheld 12 cases in the year to March 2018 compared to 21 the previous year
5. Detail of findings against the Council can be found on the LGO site:

<https://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/councils-performance/council/Bristol%20City%20Council>

6. A Summary of Ombudsman Findings for Bristol taken from the LGO site for 2014-2018 is as follows :

	Total	Upheld	Not Upheld	Upheld%
2018:	133	13	15	46%
2017:	156	22	17	56%
2016:	176	29	16	64%
2015:	133	19	15	56%
2014:	160	24	16	60%

7. 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.
8. 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.
9. Appendix 1 sets out a summary of the findings made and remedies agreed.
10. Appendix 2 sets out information in respect of the Council's neighbouring authorities. This is not presented in a way that it clear to understand and the Audit Committee recommended that for future years, direct comparisons are made with the Core cities.
11. Appendix 3 – Annual letter from the LGO

Proposal

That Full Council notes the findings in the report and actions taken as a result.

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

(a) Revenue

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Summary of complaints upheld

Appendix 2 – Comparitor data

Appendix 3 – Annual letter form LGO

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

None