

**North East Derbyshire District Council**

**Standards Committee**

**9 December 2020**

**Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter**

**Report of the Head of Transformation/Organisation**

This report is public

**Purpose of the Report**

- To review the annual review letter of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGO), see **Appendix 1** attached to this report.

**1 Report Details**

- 1.1 The Council received its Annual Review Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020. It contains information on how many complaints and enquiries had been referred to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman and how many complaints were upheld or referred back for local resolution.
- 1.2 There were no complaints and enquiries received by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman for North East Derbyshire District Council this year. See **Appendix 2**.
- 1.3 This compares favourably with last year when we received 3 complaints and enquiries which were referred to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman. 1 was closed after initial enquiries, 1 was not upheld and 1 was referred back for local resolution.

**2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation**

- 2.1 A review of the Joint Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy and Procedure has taken place and a revised policy approved at the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020 SAMT meeting. The updated Policy and supporting Procedure has been in place since this date and is displayed on the Council's website.
- 2.2 Mandatory training continues to take place virtually and is rolled out across the Strategic Alliance. This provides a consistent approach in the way that all officers across both Councils effectively deal with all Compliments, Comments and Complaints.

### **3 Consultation and Equality Impact**

3.1 Not applicable for information only.

### **4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

4.1 Not applicable for information only.

### **5 Implications**

#### **5.1 Finance and Risk Implications**

5.1.1 The Council is at risk of recommendations or decision by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman if complaints are not handled well.

5.1.2 In cases of maladministration, financial penalties can be imposed by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.

5.1.3 In the case of complaints about Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Environmental Information requests, the Information Commissioner's Office can issue decision notices and impose significant fines.

#### **5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection**

5.2.1 The policy allows compliance with the Local Government Act 1974 and guidance set out by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman. It is also in line with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

#### **5.3 Human Resources Implications**

5.3.1 Not applicable.

### **6 Recommendations**

6.1 That Standards Committee receive the Annual Review letter of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman and notes the outcomes as detailed in the report.

**7 Decision Information**

<b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
<b>District Wards Affected</b>	Not applicable
<b>Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework</b>	Transforming our Organisation – Good Governance

**8 Document Information**

<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
1 2	Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Complaints statistics
<b>Background Papers</b> (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
N/A	
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