

Report of the Interim Strategic Director

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN AND HOUSING OMBUDSMAN  
SERVICE ANNUAL REVIEW LETTERS**

1. Purpose of report

To present the Local Government Ombudsman's (LGO) annual review letter and the Housing Ombudsman Service annual report to the Council and thereby promote all the Council's objectives.

2. Detail

The annual review letter from the Local Government Ombudsman is summarised at appendix 1. The annual report of the Housing Ombudsman Service is summarised at appendix 2.

**Recommendation**

**The Committee is asked to NOTE the report.**

Background papers

Nil

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER**

1. In 2017/18 the LGO received ten complaints about the Council. Of these, nine decisions were made, none were determined to be incomplete or invalid, two were provided with advice and three were referred back to the Council for local resolution; we have no way of knowing if these complainants did contact the Council. Annex A provides a breakdown of the complaints received and the decisions made. Annex B provides a comparison with neighbouring authorities
2. The purpose of the LGO annual letter is to help ensure that learning from complaints informs scrutiny at the local level. Supporting local scrutiny is one of the LGO's key business plan objectives. Its corporate strategy is based on remedying injustice and improving public services. The LGO has produced a complaints manual for Complaints Officers to assist their understanding of how the LGO investigate complaints. The manual can be found at [www.lgo.org.uk/link-officers](http://www.lgo.org.uk/link-officers).
3. The LGO's *Annual Review of Local Government Complaints* shows that it upheld 0% of detailed investigations in 2017/18 – showing an improvement from the 75% upheld rate in 2016/17.

Local authority report – Broxtowe Borough Council – For the period ending – 31/03/2018

Complaints and enquiries received

Local Authority	Adult Care Services	Benefits and tax	Corporate and other services	Education and children’s services	Environmental services and public protection	Highways and transport	Housing	Planning and development	Other	Total
Broxtowe BC	0	0	0	0	3	1	5	1	0	10

Decisions made

Detailed investigations carried out				Advice given	Closed after initial Enquiries	Incomplete/Invalid	Referred back for local resolution	Total
Not Upheld	Upheld		Uphold Rate					
0	0		0%	2	4	0	4	9
Complaints Remedied								
By LGO	Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO involvement	Compliance Rate						
0	0	0%						

**Comparison with neighbouring authorities**

The table shows how many complaints the LGO received and determined about neighbouring authorities.

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Complaints received</b>	<b>Complaints determined</b>	<b>Complaints investigated &amp; upheld</b>	<b>Complaints investigated &amp; not upheld</b>
Ashfield District Council	16	5	1	4
Bassetlaw District Council	18	6	3	3
<b>Broxtowe Borough Council</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Gedling Borough Council	7	0	0	0
Mansfield District Council	17	5	2	3
Newark & Sherwood District Council	16	0	0	0
Nottingham City Council	98	15	4	11
Nottinghamshire County Council	106	45	25	20
Rushcliffe Borough Council	11	3	3	0

**HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT**

The report sets out a year of significant change and positive achievement. The Housing Ombudsman has led an organisational review that is transforming the organisation with a new strategy based on her vision, *Housing Matters: Fairness Matters*.

The Housing Ombudsman Service (HoS) ensures the fair resolution of housing complaints, locally if possible. It works with landlords and residents to resolve individual complaints within the landlord's complaint procedure. If things go wrong they seek to put them right and encourage learning from outcomes. The HoS works with landlords and residents and facilitates improvements to complaint handling and service delivery. It aims to role model the service it expects of others.

The key highlights of the year are:

- It dealt with 14,445 complaints and enquiries, seeing a reduction from 15,112 for the 2017/18 period. Productivity increased significantly resulting in more cases being closed during the year than were received.
- In 2017/18, 79% of the complaints received were concluded without requiring a formal determination.
- Responsive repairs has continued to be the largest category of complaint received at 37% of the overall number.
- Timeliness has improved with a reduction in the average case time for complaints in our formal remit from nine months to eight months, and we continue to work towards achieving our six-month target. 100% of cases were determined within 12 months.
- The HoS have high levels of compliance with our orders – 99% are implemented within three months and 100% within six months.

The Housing Ombudsman said: *“Over the year we have successfully completed a range of activities to further develop our service for the benefit of our customers and made real progress against our targets. We carry forward a strong desire to improve further the service we provide and to use our experience and unique perspective of housing complaints to help shape better systems of redress for the future.”*