

Report of the Monitoring Officer

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

1. Purpose of Report

The Housing Ombudsman (HO) has made a finding of maladministration in respect of the Council failing to deal with a persistent leak at the complainant's property.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to NOTE the report.

3. Detail

In summary, the complainant contacted the Council regarding a persistent leak at their property.

During stage 2 of the complaint process, it was found that the property had been subject to a series of leaks for a number of years due to the failure to install and properly repair a fascia. Furthermore, the Council recognised that the leak had been persistent and that there had been significant delays in the repairs being undertaken. The Council offered the complainant £1,000 compensation in recognition of these delays.

The HO confirmed the fault found by the Council but found further fault in the way the compensation had been calculated. Moreover, the HO found that the initial stage 1 complaint was not dealt with in a timely manner.

It should be noted that HO took 12 months to investigate and response to this complaint. The HO initially contacted the Council to state that a response would be issued within 6 months of them initially receiving the complaint. However, the 6-month deadline set by the HO was missed. The HO did not notify the Council of this delay until they were contacted to request an update. The Council requested that the HO provide a specific date for when the complaint was to be completed. The HO did not provide a date and concluded the complaint 6 months after this contact.

The Council is due to provide the HO feedback to request that the HO improve its communication with the Council, especially where they expect delays to occur. Additionally, it is to be suggested that HO include the date of when they receive the complaint and the date it was concluded in the decision reports to provide greater transparency and accountability of the service they provide. It should be noted that the Council is required to pay for the service provided by the HO.

The Council has completed the orders as set by the HO and the recommendations have been completed. Furthermore, during the 12-month period the HO took to investigate the complaint, the Council had already issued the £1,000 payment to the complainant and provided them with a new property.

The full report is attached as an appendix.

4. Financial Implications

The comments of the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

The cost of this compensation was charged to the service budget.

5. Legal Implications

The comments of the Head of Legal Services were as follows:

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6. Human Resources Implications

The comments from the Human Resources Manager were as follows:

N/A

7. Union Comments

The Union comments were as follows:

N/A

8. Climate Change Implications

The comments from the Waste and Climate Change Manager were as follows:

N/A

9. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any [OFFICIAL (SENSITIVE)] information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

10. Equality Impact Assessment

N/A

11. Background Papers

Nil