

CABINET MEETING – 16 DECEMBER 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Ombudsman's Annual Review 2014 – 15

Author(s):

Interim Head of Paid Service and the Executive Director of Commercial Development

Purpose of Report:

To advise members of the number and outcome of complaints considered by the Local Government Ombudsman during 2014 - 15

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is invited to agree that the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review and continual absence of maladministration reports demonstrates a sound approach to complaint handling

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? N/A

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

It is relevant to note the findings in the context of the council's performance in dealing with complaints

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

There are no suitable alternative options.

Impacts analysed;

Equality Privacy Sustainability Crime and Disorder

Is the Decision consistent with the Council's co-operative values? Yes

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? No

Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions? N/A

ANNUAL REVIEW AND COMPLAINTS TO OMBUDSMAN 2014 - 2015**Report of the Interim Head of Paid Service and the Executive Director of Commercial Development****1. Purpose of Report**

To advise Members of the number and outcome of complaints considered by the Local Government Ombudsman during 2014-15.

2. Description of Decision (Recommendations)

Cabinet is invited to agree that the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review and continual absence of maladministration report demonstrates a sound approach to complaint handling.

3. Introduction/Background

The Local Government Ombudsman has issued her 12th annual review to the council, see Appendix 1 attached.

4. Current Position

4.1 The Ombudsman reports that 51 complaints were *received* by her for Sunderland. The average for Metropolitan councils is 49.

4.2 The Ombudsman considered 24 complaints during the year and closed 18. After making initial enquiries of the remaining six complaints, four were not upheld and two were upheld. The council had already upheld them under its own processes. However the Ombudsman recommended a payment in one and payment and actions in the other.

In terms of comparisons with other Tyne & Wear Authorities, Sunderland had the lowest number of formal investigations at six and the lowest number of complaints upheld at two.

In the year 2014-15 the council again did not receive a maladministration report from the Ombudsman.

Breakdown of Complaints by Service Area

Adult Care	Benefits & C/Tax	Corporate & other	Education & Children	Environmental Services & Public Protection	Highways & Transport	Housing	Planning & Development	Total
6	8	7	7	4	6	2	11	51

5. Reasons for the Decision

It is relevant to note the findings in the context of the council's performance in dealing with complaints.

6. Alternative Options

There are no suitable alternative options.

7. Impact Analysis

N/A

10. List of Appendices

Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter 2014 – 15.

11. Background Papers

N/A