

COMPLAINTS TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. To provide the Scrutiny Committee with information following the report to Cabinet last month on the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review letter for 2014-15.
- 1.2. Margaret Douglas, Complaints and Feedback Team Manager and the council's link officer for the Ombudsman will be in attendance at the meeting to provide Members with further information.

2. BACKGROUND AND CURRENT POSITION

- 2.1. Each year the Ombudsman writes to councils within her jurisdiction setting out an annual summary of statistics of the complaints made to her office. Future annual letters will also include the outcomes and remedies of complaints.
- 2.2. The Ombudsman also explains that one of the purposes of the Annual Letter is to help ensure that learning from complaints informs scrutiny at the local level. Supporting local scrutiny is now one of the Ombudsman's key business plan objectives.
- 2.3. Amongst other matters the Ombudsman highlights the joint LGO/LGA workbook for Councillors to allow them to support local residents with their complaints. Two training sessions were delivered to Members in October, where the opportunity was taken to bring the Ombudsman's workbook to Member's attention.
- 2.4. The Ombudsman also recently jointly published "*My Expectations*" a very useful service standards framework applicable to all aspects of local authority complaint handling.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The report is referred to Scrutiny Committee for information and consideration.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the information provided regarding the Ombudsman's Annual Review.

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