

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	6
Date:	4th August 2008	Status	Open
Category	3. Part of the Budget and Policy Framework		
Subject:	Annual Letter from the Local Government Ombudsman		
Report by:	Customer Service and Access Officer		
Other Officers Involved			
Director	Chief Executive Officer		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Customer Focused Services		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES – Providing excellent customer focused services

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Continually improving our organisation.

The effective management of complaints is central to good customer service. It also provides a good source of information which the Council can use to improve services.

TARGETS

Local Performance Indicators CSP3, CSP4 and CSP5 for number of complaints and response times

VALUE FOR MONEY

N/A

THE REPORT

To provide information contained within the Annual Letter 2007/08 from the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).

The Annual Letter provides a summary of the complaints that the LGO received for Bolsover District Council over the last financial year. It also contains a covering letter and a statistical breakdown of the complaints together with an explanatory note. These documents have been appended for your information.

Key points from the Annual Letter:

- The LGO received 18 complaints during 2007/08, a reduction of 5 when compared to the previous year. The spread of complaints by subject is very similar to last year, with the largest number of complaints remaining those about Housing.
- The LGO did not issue any reports for Bolsover in 2007/08 and no complaints resulted in a local settlement.
- Our average response time to first enquiries was 34.8 days, very similar to the 2006/07 figure of 34.1 days and outside of the LGO's target of 28 days. Relevant Heads of Service have been reminded of the need to provide their information for investigations in good time.
- The LGO has noted that liaison arrangements with Bolsover have worked well during the year and that they have not experienced any problems.
- The LGO decided 19 complaints during the year, of which 6 were premature. Of the complaints decided 2 (11%) were resubmitted premature complaints as the complainant remained unhappy. Neither of these complaints resulted in a local settlement. The LGO notes that this suggests that the Council's complaints procedure is working effectively.

ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The contents of the LGO's Annual Letter.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial: - None

Legal: - None

Human Resources: None

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Executive receive the report and the LGO Annual Letter 2007/08

REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION

To keep Members informed of Ombudsman complaints and the view of the Ombudsman as to the District's complaints handling.

ATTACHMENTS: - Annual Letter 2007/08 dated June 2008

FILE REFERENCE:

SOURCE DOCUMENT: