

Bolsover District Council**Executive****2nd November 2015****Annual Letter from the Local Government Ombudsman 2014/15****Report of the Joint Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement/ Customer Standards and Complaints Officer**

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To provide information contained within Annual Letter from the Local Government Ombudsman 2014/15.

1 Report Details

The document contains an annual summary of statistics on the complaints made about the Authority for the year ending 31 March 2015.

The Annual Letter 2014/15 has been appended for your information.

Key points from the letter, specifically in relation to Bolsover District Council:

- The LGO received 13 enquiries and complaints during 2014/15, only 3 of which were subject to detailed investigations.
- The LGO decided 12 complaints, 2 of which were upheld and 1 not upheld. Of those which were upheld one was decided as 'Maladministration but no injustice' - there were some errors but they did not lead to enough injustice for the Ombudsman to pursue them further. The second decision was 'Maladministration and injustice' - the complaint will not be pursued further as the Council has carried out the action set out.

Benchmarking information - CIPFA Nearest Neighbour

When looking at close neighbouring authorities, the following is noted:

	Detailed investigations	Total complaints received
Ashfield District Council	5	23
Bassetlaw District Council	4	14
Bolsover District Council	3	13
Chesterfield District Council	3	23
Erewash District Council	0	5
Mansfield District Council	7	18
NE Derbyshire District Council	1	14

Whilst Bolsover District Council received 13 complaints against its services, it is pleasing that only 3 were the subject of detailed investigations. Although 2 were upheld, there was no further action or recommendation as a result.

Of the remaining decisions made, it is worthy of note that in 2 cases advice was given to the complainant, 5 were closed after initial enquiries and 2 were referred back to the Council to put through the complaints system. This appears to indicate that the LGO is satisfied that the Council is administering its complaints procedure fairly.

Please note, although this report is regarding complaints directed to the LGO, the Council received no complaints via the Housing Ombudsman (HO) for the same period.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

The report is to keep Elected Members informed of volumes and trends regarding LGO/ HO complaints.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

The report is to keep Elected Members regularly informed of volumes and trends regarding LGO/ HO complaints. No consultation or equality impact assessment is required.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

Not applicable as the report is keep Elected Members informed rather than to aid decision making.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

Whilst there are no direct financial implications with regard to the report, the Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman if complaints are not handled well.

In cases of maladministration, financial penalties can be imposed by the Local Government Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

The Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government Ombudsman. There are no Data Protection implications.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

Not applicable as the report is to keep Elected Members informed.

6 Recommendations

That Executive receive the report and the Annual Letter from the Local Government Ombudsman 2014/15.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	N/a
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	Providing Our Customers with Excellent Service Transforming Our Organisation – good governance

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
A:	Annual Letter from the Local Government Ombudsman 2014/15
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
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