

**Bolsover District Council**

**Meeting of the Executive on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

**Annual Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman 2023/24**

**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Performance & Governance**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Classification</b>  | This report is Public   |
| <b>Contact Officer</b> | Lesley Botham<br>Customer Service, Standards & Complaints Manager |

**PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT**

To provide Executive with information contained within the Annual Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) 2023/24.

---

**REPORT DETAILS**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Annual Letter from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) contains an annual summary of statistics on the complaints made against the Council for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. It should be noted that the data provided by the LGSCO may not align with the data this Council holds. This is because their numbers include enquiries from people who have been signposted by the LGSCO back to the Council, but who may then choose not to pursue their complaint.
- 1.2 The LGSCO received 8 enquiries and complaints during 2023/24, 3 were closed after initial enquiries, 3 referred back for local resolution/internal complaints process 1 case was invalid or incomplete. (1 decision received May 24 – closed after initial enquiries).
- 1.3 The Annual Letter 2024 (Appendix 1) and supporting information is attached.

## Benchmarking information – (CIPFA) Nearest Neighbour

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

By way of background information, the LGSCO upheld 80% of complaints submitted to them in 2023/24 (up from 74% in 2022/23) with the average being 63% for similar authorities.

|                                  | Detailed investigations | Upheld complaints (average for similar authorities - 63%) | Compliance rate  | Satisfactory remedy before complaint reached the Ombudsman |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| Ashfield District Council        | 2                       | 1 (50%)   | No recommendations were due for compliance in this period        | 1  |
| Bassetlaw District Council       | 2                       | 1 (50%)   | 100%   | 0  |
| <b>Bolsover District Council</b> | <b>0</b>                | <b>0</b>  | <b>No recommendations were due for compliance in this period</b> | <b>0</b>   |
| Chesterfield Borough Council     | 2                       | 1 (50%)   | 100%   | 0  |
| Erewash District Council         | 0                       | 0   | No recommendations were due for compliance in this period        | 0  |
| Mansfield District Council       | 2                       | 2 (100%)  | 100%   | 0  |
| NE Derbyshire District Council   | 4                       | 3 (75%)   | 100%   | 0  |

## **2. Details of Proposal or Information**

2.1 N/A

## **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

3.1 To note the overall performance and receive the report and the Annual Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman 2023/24.

## **4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

4.1 None.

---

## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. That Executive note the Annual Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman 2023/24.

Approved by Councillor Duncan McGregor, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Performance & Governance

### **IMPLICATIONS:**

**Finance and Risk:**            Yes             No

**Details:**

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 and Social Care Ombudsman if complaints are not handled appropriately. In cases of maladministration, financial penalties can be imposed by the Ombudsman.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

**Legal (including Data Protection):**            Yes             No

**Details:**

The Council is at risk of recommendations or decisions by the Local Government Ombudsman and Social Care Ombudsman and, in the case of complaints about Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Environmental Information requests, the Information Commissioner's Office can issue decision notices and impose significant fines. There are no Data Protection implications.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

**Environment:**            Yes             No

**Details:**

There are no areas contained within this report

On behalf of the climate change lead Officer

**Staffing:**            Yes             No

**Details:**

There are no staffing implications contained within this report

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

## DECISION INFORMATION

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <p><b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b><br/>         A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards, or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p><b>Revenue - £75,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capital - £150,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/><br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p> | No |
| <p><b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b><br/> <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>   | No |

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <p><b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b></p>  | All      |
| <p><b>Consultation:</b><br/> <b>Leader / Deputy Leader</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Executive</b> <input type="checkbox"/><br/> <b>SLT</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br/> <b>Members</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> | Details: |

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, and Environment.</b></p>   |
| <p>Increasing customer satisfaction with our services<br/>         Improving customer contact and removing barriers to accessing information<br/>         Actively engaging with partners to benefit our customers<br/>         Promoting equality and diversity and supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people</p> |

| DOCUMENT INFORMATION |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Appendix No          | Title  |
| 1:                   | Annual Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman 2023/24    |
| 2:                   | Excel workbook:<br>Complaints Received<br>Complaints Decided<br>Compliance |

|  |
|--|
| <p><b>Background Papers</b></p>  |
| <p><i>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 Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i></p> |
| None   |