

---

## **Meeting of the Cabinet – 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2020**

### **Report of the Chief Executive**

### **The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter 2020**

#### **Purpose**

1. To note the Annual Review Letter for 2020 from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and information in respect of complaints received against this Council and dealt with by the Ombudsman's office for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

#### **Recommendations**

2.
  - That the contents of the report and the Annual Review be noted.
  - That Directors continue to ensure that requests for information on complaints are dealt with by the date requested to ensure that the Council maximises its performance on response times and remedy of complaints is maintained.
  - That all Directorates continue to monitor and review their complaints actively to underpin ongoing good practice to achieve timely local satisfactory resolution of complaints wherever possible.

#### **Background**

3. Attached as Appendix 1 to this report is a copy of the Annual Review Letter of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The information included in the dashboard highlights the number of complaints upheld, the level of compliance with the ombudsman's recommendations and the percentage of satisfactory remedies provided by the Local Authority before the complaint reached the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.
4. The summary of involvement on complaints by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman are as follows:
  - The total number of complaints decided by the Ombudsman during this period was 80, of which 17 were subjected to a detailed investigation.

The outcome of these detailed investigations was that 11 were upheld and 6 were not upheld.

- The remaining decisions were:  
31 Referred back for local resolution  
22 Closed after initial enquiries  
6 Advice given  
4 Incomplete or invalid
- The number of Upheld complaints decided by the Ombudsman for Dudley is 11, 65% of the detailed investigations undertaken. Similar Local Authorities had 67% of their detailed investigations upheld.
- The upheld decisions were in respect of Adult Care Services (3), Corporate and Other Services (1), Education and Children's Services (6), Housing (1).
- Not upheld complaints were in respect of Education and Children's Services (1), Highways and Transport (1), Adult Care Services (2), Corporate and Other Services (1), Housing (1).
- In respect of the complaints determined by the Ombudsman in the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, there has been 2 public reports against the Council, one in respect of issues arising with the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHPC) process and one in relation to charging for Adult Social Care.

## **Finance**

5. There are no direct financial implications arising from the content of this report. Any compensation determined, arising from an investigation by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, is met from the relevant Directorate budgets.

## **Law**

6. The Commission for Local Administration was created under Parts 1 and 3 of the Local Government Act 1974.

## **Equality Impact**

7. The complaints that were subjected to a detailed investigation did not have any equality impacts. The role of the Ombudsman affords a system of complaint and redress to members of the public who feel they have been subjected to maladministration by the Council. Some complaints made concern children and young people so, dependent on the remedy proposed, there may have been either a direct or indirect impact upon them.

## **Human Resource/Organisational Development**

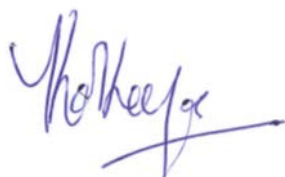
8. There are no direct Organisational Development/HR implications arising from the content of this report

## **Commercial/Procurement**

9. Commercial and Procurement agree that there are no commercial opportunities for this project.

## **Health, Wellbeing and Safety**

10. There are no direct Health, Wellbeing and Safety implications for this report.



**Kevin O'Keefe**  
**Chief Executive**

Contact Officer: Jayne Catley  
Head of Customer Services  
Telephone: 01384 814731  
Email: [jayne.catley@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.catley@dudley.gov.uk)

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter