

Subject: Local Government Ombudsman
Complaints Update October –
December 2007

Status: For Publication

Report to: Performance Scrutiny Committee **Date:** 13th February 2008

Report of: Executive Director of Regulatory Services

Portfolio

Holder: Quality Services to Customers

Key Decision: No

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update Members on the current number of Ombudsman complaint activity for the period October – December 2007.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities and associated corporate objective.

- Delivering Quality Services to Customers (Customers, Improvement)
- Well Managed Council (Improvement, Community Network)

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

4.1 Ombudsman complaints come in two forms. The first being a 'Premature Complaint' which is a complaint that the Ombudsman has received, which has not yet been through the Council's own complaint's procedure. In this instance the Service Assurance Team are given 12 weeks to resolve the complaint. The second form is a Full Investigation.

4.2 The Ombudsman's Annual Letter (published each May) does not differentiate between premature and full investigations and classes them all as 'open' and in order to provide a comparison with the Annual Letter when it is published, the figures in this report have been compiled in the same way.

Complaints Open at Start of Quarter

4.3 There were 7 complaints open at the start of the quarter as follows:

Planning	3
Council Tax	1
Land Charges	1
Street Scene	1
Total	6

Complaints Open at the End of the Quarter

4.4 There were 5 complaints open at the end of the quarter as follows:

Planning	3
Council Tax	1
Land Charges	1
Total	5

Complaints Closed during the Quarter

4.5 One complaint closed during the quarter as follows:

Service	Outcome
Street Scene	Outside LGO jurisdiction - street furniture responsibility of house holder.

4.6 Confirmation is currently awaited on the closure of 2 complaints (Council Tax and Land Charges).

4.7 It should be noted that the Council has no control over the duration of an Ombudsman Investigation. Investigations can last for varying periods, depending upon the complexity of the complaint and other agencies and authorities involved.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

5.1 No comments.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

6.1 This Report is important in relation to the Council's Corporate Priorities.

7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

7.1 No comments.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The Ombudsman’s Annual Letter will not be published until May 2008, however, in the interim, the Performance Scrutiny Committee should continue to monitor Ombudsman complaint activity.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

9.1 That Members note the update.

9.2 That an update for the next quarter be provided.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

10.1 Nil.

11. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required No

Is an Equality Impact Assessment attached N/A

12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required No

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached N/A

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