

Subject: Local Government Ombudsman Annual Letter for the year ended 31st March 2009 and Annual Complaints Review (including complaints made against the Planning Unit)

Status: For Publication

Report to: Performance Scrutiny Committee
Standards Committee
Development Control
Full Council

Date: 15th September 2009
1st October 2009
5th October 2009
7th October 2009

Report of: Executive Director - Business and the Head of Customer Services

Portfolio

Holders: Finance and Resources and Customer Services

Key Decision: No

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the improvements contained within with Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter for the year ended 31st March 2009.
- 1.2 To provide Members with an annual update on activities within the Complaints and Feedback Process.
- 1.3 To inform Members of the Ombudsman complaints and formal complaints received against the Planning Unit for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009.

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
 - Well Managed Council

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

Ombudsman Complaints

- 4.1 The Local Government Ombudsman provides an Annual Summary of Complaints they have received against the Council in period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009. A copy of this letter is attached as Appendix 1.
- 4.2 This year the Local Government Ombudsman has changed the way in which complaints are recorded. The 2008/2009 period has seen the introduction of recording numbers of telephone enquiries that the Advice Team have dealt with. These figures are recorded in the same database as complaints and are included in the figures that the Local Government Ombudsman Reports.
- 4.3 The Ombudsman's Annual Letter is briefly summarised as follows:
- 4.3.1 The Local Government Ombudsman received 35 enquiries in complaints against the Council, out of these 22 complaints were forwarded to the investigative team. This is one less than in the period 2007/2008.
- 4.3.2 The greatest number of complaints continues to be in relation to planning matters. Out of the 35 enquiries in complaints 23 of these were related to planning and building control matters, which accounts for 66% of the total, however the numbers concerned are low since 15 of these complaints were in relation to the same matter. A full report on planning complaints is attached in Appendix 4.
- 4.3.3 During the 2008/2009 period the Ombudsman made 16 decisions, 13 of which related to planning matters. Out of the decisions made there were no cases where the Ombudsman had found evidence of maladministration to report.
- 4.3.4 The Local Government Ombudsman requires responses to their investigation enquiries within 28 calendar days. The start date of this response time is taken from the date of the Ombudsman's correspondence, and not the date that the letter is received by the Council. In the period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009 the Council's initial response times to first enquiries were:

Time Period	Average No. of days to respond
01/04/2008 – 31/03/2009	44.0
01/04/2007 – 31/03/2008	22.8
01/04/2006 – 31/03/2007	41.1

As the statistical information shows, the average response time has increased from 22.8 in 2007/08 to 44 in 2008/09. These times were not within the required 28 days. The Ombudsman has expressed concerns over the return to poor performance as follows: *"The Council's performance in relation to response times is disappointing. I do not wish to read too much into such a small number of enquiries, but the planning department might wish to look at ways it can improve in this respect."*

- 4.4 When dealing with Ombudsman enquiries correspondence is done mainly through email which speeds up the response process. The weekly monitoring system highlights any outstanding enquiries and Liaison Officers are able to work with departments to ensure the Ombudsman receives a timely response. This process works well unless large quantities of information are required. In cases where lots of information is required by the Ombudsman it is more effective to send hard copy information, particularly where over-sized plans are required.
- 4.5 The breakdown of complaints is examined in more detail at [Appendix 2 and 3](#).
- 4.6 The current number of open Ombudsman complaints as at the date of production of this report (09/07/2009) is as follows:

Service Area	Number of complaints
Planning	1
Planning Enforcement	1

Ombudsman – Planning Complaints

- 4.7 For the period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009 the Local Government Ombudsman recorded 23 enquiries in complaints against the Planning Unit. Out of the 23 enquiries 19 were referred for investigation compared with 16 in 2007/2008. It must be noted however that out of the 19 complaints 15 of them were in relation to the same matter.
- 4.8 The way in which complaints are recorded has also changed this year. Previously if several complaints were received that were the same in nature, they would have been allocated one number and treated as one complaint. Under the new system all complaints are logged and treated separately which will now result in a higher number of complaints showing on the Ombudsman's statistics than in previous years. A breakdown of the planning complaints forwarded to the Ombudsman can be found in [Appendix 4](#).
- 4.9 The Local Government Ombudsman has recorded that they have closed 13 complaints against the Planning Unit for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009 as follows:

Ombudsman's Discretion	8
Outside Ombudsman's Jurisdiction	4
Local Settlement	1

- 4.10 Since the publication of the Annual Letter a further 15 complaints have been closed as 'no or insufficient evidence of maladministration', these were all in relation to the same matter.
- 4.11 The main concern for the Ombudsman has been a return to poor performance in relation to response times to enquiries and has advised that the planning department should implement procedures for improvement in this area.

Planning Improvements as a result of the Ombudsman's Report

- 4.12 The Planning Service has now been through a restructure, and as a consequence, a Business Unit Manager has been appointed who will have responsibility for ensuring that responses to Ombudsman complaints are dealt with in a timely fashion in order to address this concern.

Customer Complaints and Feedback

- 4.13 A weekly summary report continues to be produced for the Executive Management Team, showing progress with the resolution of complaints by service area against the customer service target of providing a response within 10 working days of acknowledging receipt. The cumulative number of compliments received by service area during each quarter is also reported.

Complaints

- 4.14 An analysis of complaint data by service area, comparing average days to deal with complaints in both 2007/08 and 2008/09, is attached at [Appendix 5](#).
- 4.15 It is encouraging to note a significant reduction year on year in overall complaints received, down from 189 in 2006/07 to 110 in 2008/09 (-41.8%). Three service areas accounted for the majority of this reduction – Street Scene with 34 fewer complaints (-75.6%), Development Control with 28 fewer complaints (-49.1%) and Capita Council Tax with 9 fewer complaints (-39.1%). The overall average time to deal with complaints fell from 7.0 days in 2007/08 to 6.4 days in 2008/09 against a target of 10 days.
- 4.16 The methods used by customers to register formal complaints about the Council are as follows:

Complaint Method	April 2007 - March 2008		April 2008 - March 2009	
	No. of complaints	% of total	No. of complaints	% of total
Feedback form	41	21.7	16	14.5
E-mail	54	28.6	30	27.3
On-line form	17	9.0	6	5.4
Letter	58	30.7	40	36.4
Telephone	16	8.4	10	9.1
Ombudsman referral	2	1.1	6	5.5
Via Area Forum	1	0.5	-	-
Face to face at One Stop Shop	-	-	2	1.8
Total	189		110	

Whilst this data shows a trend away from the use of pre-printed feedback forms to register formal complaints, the use of electronic media (e-mail or on-line

form) has plateaued year on year and there has been a slight resurgence in the proportion of customers writing letters to raise their concerns.

- 4.17 Analysis of the root cause of complaints was implemented for 2007/08, with complaints being categorised into 7 main types. The table at [Appendix 6](#) shows the breakdown of complaint types by service area. In overall terms, the breakdown of complaints in 2008/09 compared with 2007/08 is as follows:

Complaint type	2007/08		2008/09	
	No. of complaints	% of total	No. of complaints	% of total
Technical/legal/regulatory	36	19.0	21	19.1
Poor communication	19	10.1	6	5.5
Delayed response/lack of response	46	24.3	19	17.3
Complaint against named officer	9	4.8	15	13.6
Complaint received via MP	2	1.1	1	0.9
Complaint received via Councillor	3	1.6	0	0
Complaint re RBC policy or procedure	74	39.1	48	43.6
Total	189		110	

- 4.18 Out of the total number of complaints received 29 (26%) were justified whilst 81 (74%) were unjustified (see [Appendix 8](#)). Of the 29 justified complaints, learning points were identified in just 9 cases, 6 affecting Development Control, 1 affecting Street Scene, 1 affecting Environmental Health and 1 affecting the Capita Call Centre. During 2009/10 we will be taking action to raise the profile of capturing learning points and evidencing action taken in the service area to prevent a recurrence of the problem.

Compliments

- 4.19 During 2008/09, a total of 158 compliments were received and an analysis of those compliments by service area is attached at [Appendix 7](#). This is an increase of 100 on 2007/08, mainly attributable to the Elections team receiving 94 customer compliments for the improvements introduced for the canvass for the 2008 Electoral Roll.

Planning Customer Complaints and Feedback

- 4.20 As noted in 4.14 there has been a significant reduction in the formal complaints made against the Planning Department and the service has continued to improve in 2008/2009.
- 4.21 Whilst the number of complaints had decreased in 2008/2009 the time taken to respond to complaints has increased by 1.8 days (see [Appendix 5](#)). The main root cause of complaints against the Planning Department continues to be in relation to the category of delayed response/lack of response (see [Appendix 6](#)). This has been recognised as an area for improvement.
- 4.22 Out of the 29 complaints received by the Planning Department 31% were justified whilst 69% were unjustified.

Planning Improvements as a result of Customer Complaints and Feedback

- 4.23 It is considered that the recent changes implemented through a restructure in the Planning Service including the creation of a Business Unit Manager will assist in improvement.

Planning Compliments

- 4.24 During 2008/2009 compliments received by the Planning Department have increased by 2.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 The Council does however face the risk of financial penalty should the Ombudsman find against the Council in any existing or future complaints.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 The legal implications have been included within the report. In addition to Ombudsman investigations the Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility to consider and where necessary investigate illegality, maladministration or statutory breaches which may in turn also be reported to Council.

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

- 7.1 Initially, there are no Human Resources implications, however an investment in training and development may be required.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The Council continues to show good performance in relation to the outcome of Ombudsman decisions. There have been no decisions concerning Maladministration in the 2008/2009 period, which is consistent with the 2007/2008 period.
- 8.2 Data from the formal complaints process and also the Ombudsman data has highlighted response times as an area for improvement, particularly in relation to Planning. The Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter raises concerns over the time taken to deal with complaints. This period has shown a significant return to poor performance, whilst the number of complaints investigated remains at approximately the same number over a one year period.

- 8.3 The Council recognises that the majority of complaints (both Ombudsman and Formal) are in respect of the Planning Department. Much of this can be attributed to the fact that Planning is, and always will be, an emotive and contentious issue.
- 8.4 The recent improvements to the customer services pages, which now include information on how to complain to the Ombudsman have proved successful.
- 8.5 The formal complaints process is in the course of review to ensure that it remains relevant to customer needs and has a sharper focus on service areas identifying and acting on learning points arising from customer feedback. Part of the review process will involve consultation with customers, both those who have had cause to complain to Rossendale Borough Council and also those who take an active interest in local affairs through attendance at Area Forums.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 9.1 That Members note the content of the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009.
- 9.2 That the Planning Unit Manager be asked to provide a report to Performance Scrutiny on the process for responses to Ombudsman complaints.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 10.1 The Planning Unit Manager has been consulted in identifying how future improvements can be made to the Planning Service following the issues identified in the Ombudsman's Annual Letter and the results of the customer complaints feedback.

11. COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Community Impact Assessment required No

Is a Community Impact Assessment attached No

12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required No

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached No

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Background Papers

Document	Place of Inspection
Local Government Ombudsman Annual Letter 2008/09	Democratic Services

**The Local Government Ombudsman's
Annual Review**

Rossendale Borough Council
for the year ended
31 March 2009

The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) provides a free, independent and impartial service. We consider complaints about the administrative actions of councils and some other authorities. We cannot question what a council has done simply because someone does not agree with it. If we find something has gone wrong, such as poor service, service failure, delay or bad advice, and that a person has suffered as a result, the Ombudsmen aim to get it put right by recommending a suitable remedy. The LGO also uses the findings from investigation work to help authorities provide better public services through initiatives such as special reports, training and annual reviews.

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Section 1: Complaints about Rossendale Borough Council 2008/09

Introduction

This annual review provides a summary of the complaints we have dealt with about Rossendale Borough Council.

I hope that the review will be a useful addition to other information your authority holds on how people experience or perceive your services.

Two appendices form an integral part of this review: statistical data for 2008/09 and a note to help the interpretation of the statistics.

Changes to our way of working and statistics

A change in the way we operate means that the statistics about complaints received in 2008/09 are not directly comparable with those from 2007/08. Since 1 April 2008 the new LGO Advice Team has been the single point of contact for all enquiries and new complaints. The number of telephone calls to our service has increased significantly since then to more than 3,000 a month. Our advisers now provide comprehensive information and advice to people who telephone, write or e-mail. It enables citizens to make informed decisions about whether to put their complaint to us.

This means that direct comparisons with some previous year-statistics are difficult and could be misleading. So this annual review focuses mainly on the 2008/09 statistics without drawing those comparisons.

Enquiries and complaints received

During the year the advice team received 35 enquiries in complaints against your Council, by far the greatest number of which (23) related to planning and building control matters. 22 complaints were forwarded to the investigative team for investigation.

Complaint outcomes

Of the complaints submitted for investigation, five were found to be outside jurisdiction and in eight cases discretion was exercised not to pursue the complaints.

Local settlements

We will often discontinue enquires into a complaint when a council takes or agrees to take action that we consider to be a satisfactory response – we call these local settlements. In 2008/09, 27.4% of all complaints the Ombudsmen decided and which were within our jurisdiction were local settlements. Of the complaints we decided against your authority, two complaints were locally settled.

The first of these was a planning enforcement complaint about delay in ensuring that a landscaping scheme was carried out and in ensuring that the highways authority carried out works specified in a section 106 agreement. This was remedied by the Council undertaking to ensure that planting was done in the next planting season and to put pressure on the highways authority to carry out the necessary works.

The other local settlement was a waste management complaint where the Council had failed to collect recyclable rubbish for a three month period. By the time the complaint arrived at my office the Council had already reinstated the service. Additionally it apologised to the complainant and made a £20 compensation payment.

Liaison with the Local Government Ombudsman

During the year my office made enquiries of the Council on three occasions. The average time taken for a response was 44 days, against a target of 28 days. This is disappointing in the context of last year's much better performance with a larger number of enquiries where the average for a response was 22.8 days, and an unfortunate return to the poor performance of 2006/07 when the average was 41.1 days. I am aware that some complaints relate to complex and time-consuming matters. One of the planning and building control complaints about which there was an enquiry took 72 days for a response, which inevitably distorts the average. However, I note that the other enquiry to that department took 43 days. By comparison the third enquiry, about a highways issue, received a response in 17 days.

Training in complaint handling

Part of our role is to provide advice and guidance about good administrative practice. We offer training courses for all levels of local authority staff in complaints handling and investigation. All courses are presented by experienced investigators. They give participants the opportunity to practice the skills needed to deal with complaints positively and efficiently. We can also provide customised courses to help authorities to deal with particular issues and occasional open courses for individuals from different authorities.

I have enclosed some information on the full range of courses available together with contact details for enquiries and bookings.

Conclusions

The Council's performance in relation to response times is disappointing. I do not wish to read too much into such a small number of enquiries, but the planning department might wish to look at ways in which it can improve in this respect.

I welcome this opportunity to give you my reflections about the complaints my office has dealt with over the past year. I hope that you find the information and assessment provided useful when seeking improvements to your Council's services.

**Mrs A Seex
Local Government Ombudsman
Beverley House
17 Shipton Road
YORK
YO30 5FZ**

June 2009

Section 2: LGO developments

Introduction

This annual review also provides an opportunity to bring councils up to date on developments – current and proposed – in the LGO and to seek feedback. It includes our proposal to introduce a 'statement of reasons' for Ombudsmen decisions.

Council First

From 1 April 2009, the LGO has considered complaints only where the council's own complaints procedure has been completed. Local authorities have been informed of these new arrangements, including some notable exceptions. We will carefully monitor the impact of this change during the course of the year.

Statement of reasons: consultation

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 made provision for the LGO to publish statements of reasons relating to the individual decisions of an Ombudsman following the investigation of a complaint. The Ombudsmen are now consulting local government on their proposal to use statements of reasons. The proposal is that these will comprise a short summary (about one page of A4) of the complaint, the investigation, the findings and the recommended remedy. The statement, naming the council but not the complainant, would usually be published on our website.

We plan to consult local authorities on the detail of these statements with a view to implementing them from October 2009.

Making Experiences Count (MEC)

The new formal, one stage complaint handling arrangement for adult social care was also introduced from 1 April 2009. The LGO is looking to ensure that this formal stage is observed by complainants before the Ombudsmen will consider any such complaint, although some may be treated as exceptions under the Council First approach. The LGO also recognises that during the transition from the existing scheme to the new scheme there is going to be a mixed approach to considering complaints as some may have originated before 1 April 2009. The LGO will endeavour to provide support, as necessary, through dedicated events for complaints-handling staff in adult social care departments.

Training in complaint handling

Effective Complaint Handling in Adult Social Care is the latest addition to our range of training courses for local authority staff. This adds to the generic Good Complaint Handling (identifying and processing complaints) and Effective Complaint Handling (investigation and resolution), and courses for social care staff at both of these levels. Demand for our training in complaint handling remains high. A total of 129 courses were delivered in 2008/09. Feedback from participants shows that they find it stimulating, challenging and beneficial in their work in dealing with complaints.

Adult Social Care Self-funding

The Health Bill 2009 proposes for the LGO to extend its jurisdiction to cover an independent complaints-handling role in respect of self-funded adult social care. The new service will commence in 2010.

Internal schools management

The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Bill (ASCL) 2009 proposes making the LGO the host for a new independent complaints-handling function for schools. In essence, we would consider the complaint after the governing body of the school had considered it. Subject to legislation, the new service would be introduced, in pilot form, probably in September 2010.

Further developments

I hope this information gives you an insight into the major changes happening within the LGO, many of which will have a direct impact on your local authority. We will keep you up to date through LGO Link as each development progresses but if there is anything you wish to discuss in the meantime please let me know.

**Mrs A Seex
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June 2009

Appendix 1: Notes to assist interpretation of the statistics 2008/09

Introduction

This year, the annual review only shows 2008/09 figures for enquiries and complaints received, and for decisions taken. This is because the change in the way we operate (explained in the introduction to the review) means that these statistics are not directly comparable with statistics from previous years.

Table 1. LGO Advice Team: Enquiries and complaints received

This information shows the number of enquiries and complaints received by the LGO, broken down by service area and in total. It also shows how these were dealt with, as follows.

Formal/informal prematures: The LGO does not normally consider a complaint unless a council has first had an opportunity to deal with that complaint itself. So if someone complains to the LGO without having taken the matter up with a council, the LGO will usually refer it back to the council as a 'premature complaint' to see if the council can itself resolve the matter. These are 'formal premature complaints'. We now also include 'informal' premature complaints here, where advice is given to the complainant making an enquiry that their complaint is premature. The total of premature complaints shown in this line *does not include* the number of resubmitted premature complaints (see below).

Advice given: These are enquiries where the LGO Advice Team has given advice on why the Ombudsman would not be able to consider the complaint, other than the complaint being premature. For example, the complaint may clearly be outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction. It also includes cases where the complainant has not given enough information for clear advice to be given, but they have, in any case, decided not to pursue the complaint.

Forwarded to the investigative team (resubmitted prematures): These are cases where there was either a formal premature decision, or the complainant was given informal advice that their case was premature, and the complainant has resubmitted their complaint to the Ombudsman after it has been put to the council. *These figures need to be added to the numbers for formal/informal premature complaints (see above) to get the full total number of premature complaints. They also needed to be added to the 'forwarded to the investigative team (new)' to get the total number of forwarded complaints.*

Forwarded to the investigative team (new): These are the complaints that have been forwarded from the LGO Advice Team to the Investigative Team for further consideration. The figures may include some complaints that the Investigative Team has received but where we have not yet contacted the council.

Table 2. Investigative Team: Decisions

This information records the number of decisions made by the LGO Investigative Team, broken down by outcome, within the period given. **This number will not be the same as the number of complaints forwarded from the LGO Advice Team** because some complaints decided in 2008/09 will already have been in hand at the beginning of the year, and some forwarded to the Investigative Team during 2008/09 will still be in hand at the end of the year. Below we set out a key explaining the outcome categories.

MI reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration causing injustice.

LS (local settlements): decisions by letter discontinuing our investigation because action has been agreed by the authority and accepted by the Ombudsman as a satisfactory outcome for the complainant.

M reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration but causing no injustice to the complainant.

NM reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding no maladministration by the council.

No mal: decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation because we have found no, or insufficient, evidence of maladministration.

Omb disc: decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation in which we have exercised the Ombudsman's general discretion not to pursue the complaint. This can be for a variety of reasons, but the most common is that we have found no or insufficient injustice to warrant pursuing the matter further.

Outside jurisdiction: these are cases which were outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction.

Table 3. Response times

These figures record the average time the council takes to respond to our first enquiries on a complaint. We measure this in calendar days from the date we send our letter/fax/email to the date that we receive a substantive response from the council. The council's figures may differ somewhat, since they are likely to be recorded from the date the council receives our letter until the despatch of its response.

Table 4. Average local authority response times 2008/09

This table gives comparative figures for average response times by authorities in England, by type of authority, within three time bands.

LGO Advice Team

Enquiries and complaints received	Benefits	Public Finance inc. Local Taxation	Planning and building control	Transport and highways	Other	Total
Formal/informal premature complaints	1	4	3	0	2	10
Advice given	0	1	1	0	1	3
Forwarded to investigative team (resubmitted prematres)	0	0	1	0	0	1
Forwarded to investigative team (new)	0	0	18	1	2	21
Total	1	5	23	1	5	35

Investigative Team

Decisions	MI reps	LS	M reps	NM reps	No mal	Omb disc	Outside jurisdiction	Total
01/04/2008 / 31/03/2009	0	2	0	0	1	8	5	16

Response times	FIRST ENQUIRIES	
	No. of First Enquiries	Avg no. of days to respond
1/04/2008 / 31/03/2009	3	44.0
2007 / 2008	10	22.8
2006 / 2007	11	41.1

Average local authority response times 01/04/2008 to 31/03/2009

Types of authority	<= 28 days		29 - 35 days		> = 36 days	
		%		%		%
District councils	60	60	20	20	20	20
Unitary authorities	56	56	35	35	9	9
Metropolitan authorities	67	67	19	19	14	14
County councils	62	62	32	32	6	6
London boroughs	58	58	27	27	15	15
National park authorities	100	100	0	0	0	0

Ombudsman Statistics

Complaints Forwarded to the Ombudsman 01/04/08 to 31/03/09				
Reference	Category	Date Received by Ombudsman	Decision Made	Outcome
0800800	Highway Management	07/07/2008	12/05/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>Ombudsman's discretion</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
0800811	Planning Enforcement	08/07/2008	25/09/2008	Local Settlement
0801146	Land	29/08/2008	23/10/2008	Outside Jurisdiction
0801038	Planning Applications	11/08/2008	Open as at 31/03/2009	Still open
08006632	Planning Applications	18/06/2008	07/07/2008	Outside Jurisdiction
0801157	Land	02/09/2008	24/11/2008	No or insufficient evidence of maladministration
08014732	Planning Applications	05/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
08019086	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
08019088	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
08019095	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
08019098	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
08019101	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.

Reference	Category	Date Received by Ombudsman	Decision Made	Outcome
08019100	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019419	Planning Applications	13/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019418	Planning Applications	13/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019427	Planning Applications	13/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019422	Planning Applications	13/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019420	Planning Applications	13/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08020051	Planning Applications	26/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08020058	Planning Applications	26/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08020050	Planning Applications	26/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
0802006	Planning Enforcement	26/02/2009	Open as at 31/03/2009	Still open
Number Received	22			

Ombudsman Decisions Made 01/04/2008 to 31/03/2009

Reference	Category	Date Received by Ombudsman	Decision Made	Outcome
07C14652	Waste Management	29/01/08	07/04/08	Local Settlement
08008112	Planning Enforcement	08/07/08	25/09/08	Local Settlement
07C12858	Planning Applications	18/12/07	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C13057	Planning Applications	21/12/07	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C13058	Planning Applications	21/12/07	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C12095	Planning Applications	03/12/07	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C15401	Planning Applications	12/02/08	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C12905	Planning Applications	17/12/08	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C17483	Planning Applications	17/03/08	22/09/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C15773	Planning Applications	19/02/08	19/11/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
08011461	Land	29/08/08	23/10/08	Outside Jurisdiction
08011570	Land	02/09/08	24/11/08	No or insufficient evidence of maladministration
07C15719	Planning Applications	15/02/08	14/04/08	Outside Jurisdiction
07C15223	Planning Applications	07/02/08	14/04/08	Outside Jurisdiction
07C15161	Planning Applications	07/02/08	14/04/08	Outside Jurisdiction
08006632	Planning Applications	18/06/08	07/07/08	Outside Jurisdiction
Number of Decisions Made	16			

Response times to first enquiry letters 01/04/08 – 31/03/09

Reference	Date Received by Ombudsman	Date Enquiry Sent to Council	Date Response Received	Time Taken/ Days	Category
08008112	08/07/08	10/07/08	22/08/08	43	Enforcement
07C15773	19/02/08	29/04/08	10/07/08	72	Planning Applications
08008005	07/07/08	22/08/09	08/09/08	17	Highway Management
First Enquiries Total				3	
Average Number of Days to Respond					44

Ombudsman Statistics in Relation to Planning

Planning Complaints Forwarded to the Ombudsman 01/04/08 to 31/03/09				
Reference	Category	Date Received by Ombudsman	Decision Made	Outcome
0800811	Planning Enforcement	08/07/2008	25/09/2008	Local Settlement
0802006	Planning Enforcement	26/02/2009	Open as at 31/03/2009	Still open
0801038	Planning Applications	11/08/2008	Open as at 31/03/2009	Still open
08006632	Planning Applications	18/06/2008	07/07/2008	Outside Jurisdiction
08014732	Planning Applications	05/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019086	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019088	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019095	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019098	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019101	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019100	Planning Applications	09/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.
08019419	Planning Applications	13/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as 'No or insufficient evidence of maladministration' in 2009/2010 report.

Reference	Category	Date Received by Ombudsman	Decision Made	Outcome
08019418	Planning Applications	13/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
08019427	Planning Applications	13/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
08019422	Planning Applications	13/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
08019420	Planning Applications	13/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
08020051	Planning Applications	26/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
08020058	Planning Applications	26/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
08020050	Planning Applications	26/02/2009	18/06/2009	Will be recorded as ' <i>No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</i> ' in 2009/2010 report.
Number Received	19			

Planning Decisions Made 01/04/2008 to 31/03/2009

Reference	Category	Date Received by Ombudsman	Decision Made	Outcome
08008112	Planning Enforcement	08/07/08	25/09/08	Local Settlement
07C12858	Planning Applications	18/12/07	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C13057	Planning Applications	21/12/07	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C13058	Planning Applications	21/12/07	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C12095	Planning Applications	03/12/07	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C15401	Planning Applications	12/02/08	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C12905	Planning Applications	17/12/08	18/04/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C17483	Planning Applications	17/03/08	22/09/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C15773	Planning Applications	19/02/08	19/11/08	Ombudsman's Discretion
07C15719	Planning Applications	15/02/08	14/04/08	Outside Jurisdiction
07C15223	Planning Applications	07/02/08	14/04/08	Outside Jurisdiction
07C15161	Planning Applications	07/02/08	14/04/08	Outside Jurisdiction
08006632	Planning Applications	18/06/08	07/07/08	Outside Jurisdiction
Number of Planning Decisions Made	13			

Planning response times to first enquiry letters 01/04/08 – 31/03/09

Reference	Date Received by Ombudsman	Date Enquiry Sent to Council	Date Response Received	Time Taken/ Days	Category
08008112	08/07/08	10/07/08	22/08/08	43	Enforcement
07C15773	19/02/08	29/04/08	10/07/08	72	Planning Application
First Enquiries Total	2				
Average Number of Days to Respond	57.5				

Complaints to RBC by Service Area and Average Response Times

Service Area	2007/08			2008/09		
	Total complaints	% of total	Average days to deal	Total complaints	% of total	Average days to deal
Development Control	57	30.2	11.5	29	26.4	13.3
Streetscene	45	23.8	3.4	11	10.0	2.5
Capita - Benefits	12	6.3	2.8	9	8.2	3.0
Capita - BIU	0	0.0	0	1	0.9	8.0
Capita - Call Centre	3	1.6	9.3	5	4.6	3.8
Capita - Council Tax	23	12.2	5.2	14	12.8	3.4
Capita - Council Tax Recovery	10	5.3	3.8	10	9.1	3.3
Capita - NNDR	0	0.0	0	1	0.9	2.0
Capita - One Stop Shop	1	0.5	8.0	4	3.6	3.8
Communities	0	0.0	0.0	3	2.7	1.7
Executive Office	4	2.1	9.3	1	0.9	11.0
Customer Services & ICT	5	2.6	7.6	4	3.6	8.8
Emergency Planning	0	0.0	0	1	0.9	7.0
Environmental Health	3	1.6	3.3	3	2.7	5.0
Licensing	5	2.6	3.0	2	1.8	12.5
Property Services	4	2.1	8.0	1	0.9	12.0
Facilities Management	2	1.1	36.0	0	0.0	0.0
Forward Planning	1	0.5	2.0	0	0.0	0.0
Legal	2	1.1	10.5	2	1.8	4.0
Communications	2	1.1	5.0	0	0.0	0.0
Finance	3	1.6	0.7	3	2.7	1.0
Parking	2	1.1	6.5	5	4.6	3.0
Human Resources	1	0.5	13.0	0	0.0	0.0
Economic Regeneration	1	0.5	4.0	1	0.9	3.0
Committee Services	3	1.6	8.3	0	0.0	0.0
Total	189	100.0	7.0	110	100.0	6.4

Complaints received not for RBC:

Greenvale Homes	1			0	
Lancashire Highways	4			2	
Rosendale Leisure Trust	1			1	
Overall total	195			113	

Key

 exceeds 10 day target

Customer Compliments by Service Area 2008/09

Directorate	Service Area	Team	Compliments received during:			
			April - June 2008	July - September 2008	October - December 2008	January - March 2009
Chief Executive		Executive Office				1
	People & Policy	Human Resources				
		Policy Unit				
		Communications				
	Finance & Property	Financial Services				
		Property Services				
Place	Street Scene Operations	Refuse & Cleansing	2	3	1	3
		Emergency Planning				
		Parks & Open Spaces		2		
	Customer Services	Capita - Council Tax Recovery				
		Capita - Council Tax				
		Capita - Call Centre				
		Capita - Benefits				
		Capita - OSS	2	1	1	
		ICT				
		Customer Services			1	1
	Communities	Community Safety				
		LSP Delivery				
		Service Development				
	Regeneration	NEATs	6		1	
		Regeneration Delivery			1	
		Regeneration Progs			1	
		Economic Development				1
	Traffic & Parking				1	
Business	Legal	Legal Services				
		Committee & Member Services		3	8	1
		Elections	2	2	94	2
	Planning	Building Control				1
		Forward Planning				
		Development Control	4	4	2	1
		Land Charges	1			
	Environmental Health	Environmental Health	2	1		
Licensing					1	
Total			19	16	111	12

Justified/Unjustified Complaints by Service Area 2008/09

Service Area	Development Control	Street Scene	Capita - Benefits	Capita - BIU	Capita - Call Centre	Capita - Council Tax	Capita - Council Tax Recovery	Communities	Executive Office	Customer Services & ICT	Emergency Planning	Environmental Health	Licensing	Property Services	Legal	Finance	Parking	Economic Regeneration	Total			
Justified	9	8	4	-	2	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	29	26.36%	
Unjustified	20	3	5	1	3	13	9	1	3	2	-	4	1	2	2	1	2	3	5	1	81	73.64%
Total	29	11	9	1	5	14	10	1	4	3	1	4	1	3	2	1	2	3	5	1	110	