

AUDIT COMMITTEE 27th November 2015

Title of paper:	Ombudsman Annual Letter	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Angela Probert	Wards affected: All
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Other colleagues who have provided input:		
Recommendation(s):		
1	Councillors are asked to note the contents of this report	

1. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Complaints are an important feedback mechanism for us to help influence service improvement and therefore increase citizen satisfaction. Thus enabling us as an authority to keep our citizens at the heart of what we do.

This year the Ombudsman service has committed to research to see if working as a Public Sector Ombudsman which will encompass Health, Housing & Council. This would be in line with the Scottish way of working. We expect the findings from the research to be published in the Queens Speech with a draft bill before March 2016.

We are also undergoing a refresh of the customer experience, looking at the way we capture feedback and how we learn from the complaints, comments and compliments we receive.

The ombudsman is advocating that authorities use their complaints as methods of service improvement with the following statement “All too often complaints are seen in a negative light, but in doing so authorities can waste a valuable opportunity to look at what has gone on and put things right, not just for the individual but for other people in future” So as an authority we are already working towards this, sharing learning with other relevant departments.

A brief overview shows last year we had 14 upheld cases this year we have 6. The overall total of contacts last year was 115, which has gone down by 5 this year. We as an authority are still the second best performing authority within the core cities. In the attached documents we show the 6 cases which were upheld and the final decisions the LGO made.

In comparison to many other cities we show a higher number of complaints but show a much lower number of complaints upheld, for example Liverpool show the same number of complaints per 10,000 citizens as we do, however we only have 6 cases upheld whereas Liverpool have 20. This could imply that our standard of service is seen to be better, consequently citizens expectations are higher.

We continue to have a good working relationship with the LGO teams, maintaining our response rates, working in a timely manner, which in turn also helps us to provide a better service to the citizens of Nottingham.

2. BACKGROUND

Nottingham City Council is still the responsible body for complaints about housing provided by Nottingham City Homes and their figures are included in our Annual Letter.

3. BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING EXEMPT OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

None.

4. PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

Annual Letter from the LGO