

COUNCIL – 2ND SEPTEMBER 2019

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Part A

ITEM 6.1 LOCAL GOVERNMENT & SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN REVIEW LETTER 2018/19

Purpose of Report

To make Members aware of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's (LGSCO) review letter for 2018/19 and one case of a complaint which was upheld by the LGSCO during the year, in accordance with the LGSCO's guidance which is that the Monitoring Officer should make a periodic report to Councillors summarising any upheld complaints.

Recommendation

That the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's review letter for 2018/19, attached as Appendix A, and the summary of the upheld complaint as set out in Part B of this report, be noted.

Reason

To comply with the guidance from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman that the Monitoring Officer should make Members aware of upheld complaints on a periodic basis.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

The LGSCO's guidance is that the Monitoring Officer should report details of complaints to Members periodically.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

No further actions are required to implement the recommended decision.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

There are none.

Risk Management

There are no specific risks associated with this decision.

Background Papers:

LGSCO Decision Summary for the upheld
complaint during 2018/19:

<https://www.lgo.org.uk/decisions/planning/other/17-010-966>

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Part B

Background

1. The LGSCO is the final stage for complaints about councils, all adult social care providers (including care homes and home care agencies) and some other organisations providing local public services. They are a free service. They investigate complaints in a fair and independent way, and do not take sides.
2. As set out in the appended review letter for 2018/19, the LGSCO received a total of 21 complaints and enquiries about Charnwood Borough Council during 2018/19 (compared to 28 in 2017/18), and made 22 decisions (compared to 22 in 2017/18). The difference in numbers is because complaints and enquiries received during one year are sometimes not resolved until the following year.
3. As stated in the LGSCO's letter, the volume of complaints does not necessarily in itself indicate the quality of the Council's performance, and one of the most important statistics is the number of upheld complaints, which was one in 2018/19 (compared to one in 2017/18).

Upheld Complaints

4. The upheld complaint (ref. 17 010 966) related to a long-running planning enforcement case where the complainant felt that the Council had unreasonably banned him from attending its offices for 12 months.
5. The Ombudsman found that although there was some fault in the Council's record keeping, there was still sufficient evidence to support the Council's decision because of the complainant's behaviour towards its officers, and therefore he had not been caused an injustice.
6. A link to the LGSCO's full decision notice for the upheld complaint is included in the background papers section of this report.

Appendices

Appendix A: LGSCO Review Letter for 2018/19