

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

23 MARCH 2011

OMBUDSMAN STATISTICS

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Geoff Denaro
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a six monthly update on ombudsman statistics.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested:

- 2.1 to note the contents of the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The provisional Ombudsman statistics compiled by the Local Government Ombudsman(LGO) for the year ended 31 March 2011 will be circulated by the LGO in May. This report provides an update on the number of complaints received for the period from 01.04.10 to 31.10.10 based on the Council's records.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 For the period from 1st April 2010 to 31st October 2010 the number of ombudsman complaints made about the Council was 12. Of these 5 were referred for formal investigation by the LGO. The outcome of these 5 complaints was that no findings of maladministration were made against the Council.
- 4.2 A further 5 complaints were classed as premature meaning that the complainant had not given the Council an opportunity to resolve the complaint but had instead reported it directly to the LGO. These complaints are referred back to the Council to be considered through the internal complaints system.

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- 4.3 One complaint was discontinued because the complainant had complained against the District Council when in fact her complaint should have been made about Bromsgrove District Housing Trust.
- 4.4 Finally, on one matter the ombudsman rejected the complaint and made a finding of no maladministration based on the documents provided by the complainant and without conducting a formal investigation.
- 4.5 Response times to those complaints that are formally investigated are monitored by the Council as a performance indicator. The target response time is 28 days. The average response time for the 5 formal complaints that were investigated was just over 30 days. This is higher than usual due to staff absences over August which prevented one matter from being completed within the target response time.
- 4.3 Officers will be able to give Members a more detailed breakdown of the activity relating to the Ombudsman later in the year once the full statistics for 10/11 are available in the format of the Annual Report issued by the LGO. This item is already included in the work programme for the Standards Committee.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 Improvement/ One Community.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are those linked to poor standards of complaint handling. The effects of not handling

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complaints efficiently can include poor customer service, increased customer dissatisfaction, increased numbers of complaints and damage to the Council's reputation.

9.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

- Through the Council's customer feedback system and Customer First Policy.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The statistics should enable the Council to improve service delivery to customers.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

12.1 None

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

13.1 None

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

14.1 None

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

15.1 None

16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

16.1 None

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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17.1 None

18. LESSONS LEARNT

18.1 N/a

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

19.1 N/a

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	No
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	No
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	No
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No

21. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards

22. APPENDICES

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None

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

24. KEY

N/A

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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