

Audit, Standards and Governance Committee

15th October 2026

Annual Statistics from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Karen May
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton Assistant Director for Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
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	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	n/a
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Sustainability
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	n/a
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to RESOLVE that: -

Subject to Members' comments, the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee is assured by the report.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of the annual summary of complaint statistics issued by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman ('LGSCO') for the period ending 31st March 2026.
- 2.2 As reported to Members in the 2025 ombudsman report, the LGSCO has changed the way in which information about complaints is delivered to Councils. Instead of issuing an annual review letter in September setting out the statistics, a two stage approach is now being used:-
- (i) In May each year the LGSCO will finalise the annual statistics for the year ended 31st March and will forward this

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information to Councils and publish it on the LGSCO website. This will apply to all councils in England and Wales.

- (ii) In July each year certain councils (but not all) will receive an annual letter. The LGSCO has stated that “this will apply where there is exceptional practice or where we have concerns about an organisation’s complaint handling”.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 Officers can confirm that Bromsgrove District Council (‘BDC’) did not receive an annual letter as outlined in paragraph 2.2 (ii). Accordingly, this report sets out for Members a breakdown of the annual statistics. A link to view the statistics online is included at the end of the report.
- 3.2 For the period ending on 31 March 2026, the statistics for BDC as collated and published by the LGSCO were recorded as follows:-

Number of Complaints Received – 13

Planning and Development	8
Benefits & Tax	2
Highways & Transport	2
Corporate & other services	1

[Out of the 13 complaints received, 4 were rejected as not being matters for which the Council was responsible and/ or that the LGSCO had authority to investigate.]

Number of Complaints Decided - 7

Planning and Development	5
Benefits& Tax	1
Corporate & other services	1

- 3.3 Of these 7 decided cases, 3 were closed after initial inquiries (all planning related), 3 were referred back for local resolution and 1 was closed on the grounds of being incomplete with insufficient information to proceed. The reason the numbers of complaints received and number of complaints decided do not match is because some of the complaints received will still be subject to on-going assessment and had not been concluded by 31st March 2026.

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- 3.5 The detail of the recorded outcomes of the 7 decided cases is set out below: -

Outcome	Number	Explanation
Closed after initial inquiries	3	Complaint assessed but LGSCO decided not to investigate it
Referred back for local resolution	3	Premature complaint; referred back to Council for resolution
Incomplete/ Invalid	1	Insufficient information to proceed

- 3.6 During this reporting period none of the decided complaints were upheld meaning that there were no findings that the Council was at fault in relation to any of the 7 decided cases. The data also shows that there were no investigations linked to the 7 matters that did not proceed.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Local Government Ombudsman powers are contained in the Local Government Act 1974 as amended by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 5.2 The main activity of the LGSCO is the investigation of complaints, which are limited to complaints from members of the public.
- 5.3 In compliance with LGSCO guidance this report discharges the Council's obligation to provide an annual report to members summarising the complaint findings for the year ended 31st March 2026.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 Not applicable.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 An Effective and Sustainable Council.

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Climate Change Implications

6.3 Not applicable

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.4 In terms of customer implications, providing good customer service is of significant importance to the Council and the statistics in the review will assist officers in the monitoring of complaint handling and resolution.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

7.2 These risks are being managed through the Council's Customer services strategy which aims to promote good customer service throughout the Council and includes a defined procedure for responding to complaints before they reach the stage of being referred to the Ombudsman.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 Annual summary of complaint statistics 2025 to 2026

Link to view annual statistics on the LGSCO website:

[Bromsgrove District Council - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Karen May	06.10.2026
Financial Services	James Walton – Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer	06.10.2026

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Legal Services	Nicola Cummings – Principal Solicitor	01.10.2026
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	n/a	
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	n/a	