



## CABINET REPORT

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Annual Letter of Local Government Ombudsman</b>
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**AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC**

<b>Cabinet Meeting Date:</b>	14 October 2009
<b>Key Decision:</b>	NO
<b>Listed on Forward Plan:</b>	YES
<b>Within Policy:</b>	YES
<b>Policy Document:</b>	NO
<b>Directorate:</b>	Finance and Support
<b>Accountable Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Tony Woods
<b>Ward(s)</b>	N/A

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To receive the Annual Review from the Local Government Ombudsman for the year ended 31 March 2009.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the contents of the annual letter

### 3. Issues and Choices

#### 3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The Council has now received the Annual Review from the Local Government Ombudsman for the period April 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009.

- 3.1.2 The Local Government Ombudsman has received a total of 76 Enquiries of which 47 were investigated as Complaints. There has been a reduction in complaints investigated compared to 07/08 although the report advises against direct comparisons as the LGO have changed the way in which they operate and now deal with all enquiries and complaints.
- 3.1.3 Of the 76 complaints and enquiries 31 were about housing issues, 30 related to Revenues and Benefits and 5 were planning related.
- 3.1.4 Of the 47 Complaints which were investigated, in 14 of those cases (30%) no maladministration was found. A further 9 cases were also not investigated either because they were outside of the LGO's jurisdiction or there was no significant injustice to the complainant.
- 3.1.5 The reports issued and local settlements in relation to the complaints investigated are detailed fully in the Appendix Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review for the year ended 31 March 2009.
- 3.1.6 The Local Government Ombudsman makes mention of the reduction in response times from 48.2 days 07/08 to 34.4 days in 08/09.

## **3.2 Choices (Options)**

- 3.3.1 That the contents of this report inform planned improvements to complaints handling.
- 3.3.2 That copies of this report are made available to other members, our customers and officers in the Council.

## **4. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **4.1 Policy**

There are no policy implications at this stage.

### **4.2 Resources and Risk**

There are currently no resource or risk implications to the Council.

### **4.3 Legal**

There are no legal implications to the Council.

### **4.4 Equality**

This report does not identify any specific issues in relation to equalities.

### **4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)**

This is an external letter from the Local Government Ombudsman.

#### **4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes**

The report supports the Council's priorities and outcomes in particular to provide excellent customer service. The effective handling of complaints links closely to the delivery of the Council's Customer Excellence Strategy.

#### **4.7 Other Implications**

None identified.

### **5. Background Papers**

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Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review for the year ended 31 March 2009

**Marion Goodman, Head of Customer Services and ICT, Ext. 8273**