

Audit and Governance Committee



Date of meeting:	27 September 2021
Title of Report:	Local Government Ombudsman Review 2020/21
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Deacon (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Culture, Leisure & Sport)
Lead Strategic Director:	Andy Ralphs (Strategic Director of Customer and Corporate Services)
Author:	Robert Sowden
Contact Email:	Robert.Sowden@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	LGORS/2021
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

Update Audit and Governance Committee on key findings of analysis into complaints relating to Plymouth that have been received by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).

The Local Government and Adult Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) published the annual statistics for Plymouth City Council on 28 July 2021.

This report provides:

- A summary of key findings
- The overall context for Plymouth in relation to all LGO complaints (section 1);
- An analysis of the complaints received and lessons learned for the four top categories of service (sections 2 to 5).

Key points to consider include;

- The headline upheld rate of 78% is based on a small sample of 18 complaints subject to detailed LGO investigation. This is a small number when placed in the context of 4,910 stage one complaints received by the Council in 2020/21, in fact just 1.3% of all stage complaints made it to the LGO and 0.3% progressed to an LGO detailed investigation.

- COVID-19 has had a significant impact on complaint numbers, with complaints not received between April and June 2021, this and the small sample of 18 detailed investigations makes it difficult to draw big conclusions from the findings in the analysis.

- The upheld rate of 78% compares to 63% in similar local authorities, it is worth noting that the small sample means an outcome of 'upheld' in just two fewer complaints would bring Plymouth much more in line with similar local authorities.

- In seven of the upheld cases there was no recorded service improvement recommendation that had been published by the LGO, this does not mean that in these cases there has not been any learning from a complaint. We should consider working with services to ensure all learning is captured in a more processed manner, allowing for easier analysis and deriving of intelligence.

Recommendations and Reasons

Audit and Governance Committee note the analytical findings into complaints received by the LGO relating to Plymouth.

Alternative options considered and rejected

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Empowering our People to deliver

Providing a quality service to get the basics right first time

Engaging with and listening to our residents, businesses and communities

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

None

Financial Risks:

None

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

None

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
		If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Local Government Ombudsman Review 20/21							
B	Decisions made summary							
C	LGSCO and CIPFA Comparator Groups							
D	Themes and Remedies							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Peter Honeywell											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 10/09/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: Cllr Mark Deacon Approved by email											
Date approved: 16/09/2021											