

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

Subject: Ombudsmen Annual Review 2008/2009
Complaints Performance.

Committee: Standards Committee

Date: 9 December 2009

Cabinet Member: Councillor Steve Ricketts

CMT Member: Adam Broome – Director for Corporate Support

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Ref: OBM/09
Part: I

Executive Summary:

Attached at Appendix 1 is the Annual Response (and associated report) from the Local Government Ombudsman commenting on the council's performance in relation to complaints for the year ending in March 2009.

The Ombudsman's Advice Team received a total of 111 enquiries and complaints during 08/09, of these **61** were investigated, where as in the previous year 89 were investigated and whilst the method of recording complaints has changed, this should still be considered a reduction.

Out of the 61 investigated, 11 related to Housing, 2 related to Children and Family Services, 7 related to Education, 5 related to Benefits, 1 related to Finance, 12 related to Planning, 5 related to Transport and Highways, 8 related to Antisocial Behaviour, 5 related to Waste and 5 were classed as 'other'.

A total of 59 decisions were made during the year; there was no evidence of maladministration in **33** cases, the Ombudsmen used his discretion in 9 cases, 10 cases were considered to be outside of jurisdiction. A total of **6** cases were classed as local settlements with 4 cases receiving compensation totalling **£1000** and **1** case of maladministration resulting in a payment of **£400**.

The response times remain disappointing with the average days taken to respond improving marginally by only 0.2 days when compared to last year at **32.6** days.

Corporate Plan 2009-2012:

This report relates directly to one of the Council's corporate priorities – Improving Customer Experience (Corporate Improvement Priority 1 – Improving Customer Service)

**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:
Including finance, human, IT and land**

Resources will be required to deliver the Corporate Improvement Priority Plan to deliver the actions for improving complaints handling.

Other Implications: e.g. Section 17 Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management, Equalities Impact Assessment, etc.

None identified.

Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:

Note the contents of the report.

Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:

None

Background papers:

Annual Letter – Appendix 1

Response to Annual Letter – Appendix 2

Sign off: comment must be sought from those whose area of responsibility may be affected by the decision, as follows (insert initials of Finance and Legal reps, and of Heads of HR, AM, IT and Strat. Proc.):

Head of Fin		Head of Leg		Head of HR		Head of AM		Head of IT		Head of Strat Proc	
Originating SMT Member											