



Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Michael Vincent, Leader of the Council and Joanne Billington, Assistant Director of Governance and Legal (Monitoring Officer)	Cabinet	4 September 2024

Local Government Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2023/24
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Key decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** To consider the Annual Review Letter from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) for 2023/24, attached at Appendix A.

2. Council priorities

- 2.1** Deliver high quality, value for money services that meet the needs of our customers.
- 2.2** Use data, business intelligence and research to inform us in making better evidence-based decisions and improve our services.

3. Recommendation/s

- 3.1** That Cabinet notes the comments made by the LGO in the Annual Review Letter.

4. Background

- 4.1** The annual review provides a summary of statistics on the complaints made to the LGO about Wyre Council for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The data that the LGO have provided in the attached letter, shows the complaints and enquiries they have received, along with the decisions they have made. In addition, the letter also sets out Wyre Council's compliance to any recommendations made.
- 4.2** The LGO have published its annual data for all local authorities on their website, alongside the annual review of local government complaints. The attached letter provides further information on how to view the LGO's

interactive map and access other performance reports that assist in the governance and scrutiny of local services.

4.3 As reported in previous years' reports, the total number of complaints alone is not necessarily a reliable indicator to measure the council's performance. Other performance measures, together with the total number of complaints, offers a more comprehensive and insightful view of the council's approach to handling complaints, namely;

- number of upheld complaints - how often the LGO found fault by the council when investigating;
- statistics that indicate the council's willingness to accept fault and make things right;
- number of cases where the council provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached them; and
- compliance with recommendations the LGO make.

5. Key issues and proposals

5.1 During the period 1 April 2023 to the 31 March 2024 the LGO received 16 complaints and enquires. This is a significant increase from the 3 complaints received during 2022/23. However of the 16 complaints received, only two were investigated by the LGO. The table below provides further information on these cases.

5.2

Nature of Complaint	Service Area	Decision	Recommendation
Mr X complained the council failed to investigate several incidents of fly-tipping on his land and that he had been wrongly deemed as a vexatious complainant and issued with a Community Protection Warning. Mr X said this caused distress and worry.	Environmental Services and Public Protection and Regulation	Not upheld	The council were found not to be at fault. No recommendations were made by the LGO in connection with this complaint.
The LGO made a decision not to publish details of this complaint as there was a risk Ms X and Ms Y could be identified.	Housing	Upheld	The LGO found that the council were at fault and instructed the council to issue an apology, complete / refresh training and make a compensation

		payment to the complainants of £300 (£150 each). Whilst an apology and refresher training has been completed, the council have been unable to make any payments owing to bank details not being provided despite several prompts by the council. The LGO have been notified.
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6. Alternative options considered and rejected

6.1 No alternative options were considered as part of this report.

Financial, Legal/MO, and Climate Change implications	
Finance	On occasion the Local Government Ombudsman may recommend that a payment is made to a complainant to compensate for any injustice they have experienced. During 2023/24, whilst payments of £150 have been agreed to be made to two complainants, these transactions have not yet been completed. See table at 5.2 for further details.
Legal/MO	None arising directly from this report.
Climate Change	None arising directly from this report.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

Appendix A – LGO Annual Review Letter to Wyre BC for the period ending 31/03/2024.