



Date of Meeting	28 October 2019
Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Community & Culture
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Public/Private Document	Public

LGSCO Annual Review 2018-19

Executive Summary

1. The report provides Members with the Annual Review of complaints made to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) about Rochdale Borough Council in the year ending 31 March 2019.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members note the content of the report and Annual Review letter.

Reason for Recommendation

3. Part of the Council's performance management process is to ensure the Authority's ambition to continuously improve services is realised. The Annual Review provides an overview of the effectiveness of the Council's complaints procedures and customer satisfaction with Council services.

Key Points for Consideration

4. The Annual Review letter provides local authorities with the LGSCO's assessment of the Council's performance in complaint handling for the previous financial year. In addition, the review provides a general update on developments affecting the LGSCO and this year's review also includes details of the Council's compliance rate with the Ombudsman's recommended remedies.
 - 4.1 The Review shows the relatively small number of complaints received against Rochdale Council by the Ombudsman during 2018/19. In total 48 complaints and enquiries were received which is almost identical to last year. The number of decisions made by the LGSCO differs from the number of complaints and enquiries received, as complaints may be received and decided upon in different financial years.
 - 4.2 Of 50 decisions made during 2018/19, only 11 complaints were subject to

detailed investigation. 16 complaints were referred back to the Council as premature to be considered under the Council's own complaints procedure, 20 complaints were closed after initial enquiries, and 3 complaints were classified as invalid, in that the complainant had either provided insufficient information or advised at an early stage they did not wish to pursue the complaint.

- 4.3 Of the 11 complaints that were investigated, 9 were found to be upheld and 2 were not upheld. The LGSCO recommended remedies for 6 of the upheld complaints, all of which were accepted and implemented.

Details of the complaints that were upheld can be found below.

LGO Category	Nature of complaint
Adult Care Services	Safeguarding investigation
Adult Care Services	Safeguarding investigation
Adult Care Services	Financial assessment
Benefits & Tax	Housing Benefit
Education & Children's Services	Special Guardianship Policy
Education & Children's Services	Child Protection process
Education & Children's Services	Educational support for child with SEN
Planning & Development	Planning application process
Planning & Development	Planning application process

- 4.4 In addition to Annual Review letters, the LGSCO also publishes an Annual Review of Local Government Complaints and a summary of complaint statistics for every Local Authority in England. Appendix 2 contains an extract from the review which highlights Rochdale Council's performance in comparison with neighbouring authorities.

As can be seen from the extract, both the number of enquiries / complaints received by the LGSCO and the number of complaints decided in 2018-19 was lower for Rochdale BC than for most neighbouring authorities. The compliance rate for Rochdale implementing the LGSCO's agreed remedies was 100%.

4.5 **Alternatives Considered**

None. Information is provided annually by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.

Costs and Budget Summary

5. 4 of the upheld complaints resulted in a financial remedy. The total cost of agreed local settlements for LGSCO complaint decisions taken during 2018-19 was £1,550. A breakdown is shown below. This is a significant reduction on the previous year when the total cost was £29,121.56.

Service	£
Adult Care Services	700
Children's Services	850
Total	1550

Risk and Policy Implications

6. There are no specific risk issues for Members to consider arising from this report.

Consultation

7. Not applicable.

Background Papers	Place of Inspection
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| 8. None | |
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