



**ST HELENS**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Standards Committee

12 January 2021

<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2019/20</b>
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Councillor Martin Bond
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Finance and Governance
<b>Exempt Report</b>	No
<b>Reason for Exemption</b>	N/A
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Public Notice issued</b>	N/A
<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Report of</b>	Jan Bakewell Director of Legal & Governance janbakewell@sthelens.gov.uk Tel: 01744 673209
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<p><b>Borough priorities</b></p> <p>Please mark <b>X</b> for any priority supported by this report</p> <p><b>NB</b> Use Section 4 - Background Information to explain how each selected priority is supported</p>	Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life	
	Promote good health, independence and care across our communities	
	Create safe and strong communities for our residents	
	Support a strong, diverse and well-connected local economy	
	Create a green, thriving and vibrant place to be proud of	
	Be a modern, efficient and effective Council	X

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 To report the receipt of the Annual Review Letter from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

## 2. Recommendations for Decision

**Standards Committee is recommended to note the report.**

## 3. Purpose of this Report

- 3.1 To report the Annual Review letter which the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman sent to the Chief Executive on 22 July 2020 and is reported to the next ordinary meeting of the Standards Committee.

## 4. Background /Reasons for the recommendations

- 4.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) provides an Annual Review Letter to each Council to help inform elected members of their respective Council's performance in relation to complaints. A copy of the letter is attached to the report at Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The Annual Review Letter provides information in relation to the number of complaints received by the LGSCO in the twelve-month period ending 31 March 2020, as well as the decisions reached by the LGSCO in the same period. Members will note that in the period, six complaints were upheld, which, in comparison to 2018/19, was one more.
- 4.3 The Ombudsman reported that in 100% of cases they were satisfied the authority had successfully implemented their recommendations.
- 4.4 The significant challenges facing the Council in terms of budget reductions does mean that it becomes harder to continue to meet expectations and can impact on the scope for, and level of, complaints. The Council continues to treat all complaints seriously and ensures we take on board any learning points and make necessary changes to our processes where appropriate.

4.5 With regard to the increased number of upheld complaints compared to previous years. The Council's programme of transformation and performance improvement will allocate focused resource to address and support any performance issues highlighted by upheld complaints. The new Policy, Change & Reform department (reporting to the Assistant Chief Executive) will include responsibility for Policy, Performance, Business Intelligence, Communications and Reputational Management, including all complaints. This will ensure the Council reviews lessons learnt from resident concerns and complaints to inform the continuous improvement of services.

## **5. Community Impact Assessment**

5.1 N/A

## **6 Consideration of Alternatives**

6.1 N/A

## **7 Conclusions**

7.1 To note the Annual Review Letter

## **8.0 Implications**

N/A

## **9. Background papers**

None

## **10. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Annual Review Letter 2019/20