



Standards Committee

17 January 2023

Report Title:	Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2021/22
Cabinet Portfolio	Finance and Governance
Cabinet Member	Councillor Martin Bond
Exempt Report	No
Reason for Exemption	N/A
Key Decision	No
Public Notice issued	N/A
Wards Affected	All
Report of	Jan Bakewell Director of Legal and Governance janbakewell@sthelens.gov.uk
Contact Officer	Joanne Griffiths MBE Team Manager- Democratic and Scrutiny Services joanegriffiths@sthelens.gov.uk

Borough priorities	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 and neighbourhoods for all	
	Support a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected local economy	
	Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture	
	Be a responsible 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

- i. **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 21 July 2022 and is reported to the next ordinary meeting of the Standards Committee. The letter was also emailed to all Members on 27 July 2022.

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 2022, as well as the decisions reached by the LGSCO in the same period. Members will note that in the period, eleven out of thirteen complaints were upheld, which, in comparison to 2020/21, was seven more (4 out of 5 complaints were upheld). In the 2020/21 year the Ombudsman's Office received and decided fewer complaints than normal as they stopped accepting new complaints for three months due to Covid-19.
- 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 Policy, Change & Reform department (reporting to the Assistant Chief Executive) includes responsibility for Policy, Performance, Business Intelligence, Communications and Reputational Management, including all complaints. This ensures the Council reviews lessons learnt from resident concerns and complaints to inform the continuous improvement of services.

5. Consideration of Alternatives

5.1 None

6. Conclusions

6.1 To note the Annual Review letter.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 None

8. Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Implications

8.1 None

9. Social Value

9.1 None

10. Sustainability and Environment

10.1 None

11. Health and Wellbeing

11.1 None

12. Equality and Human Rights

12.1 None

13. Customer and Resident

13.1 None

14. Asset and Property

14.1 None

15. Staffing and Human Resources

15.1 None

16. Risks

16.1 None

17. Finance

17.1 None

18. Policy Framework Implications

18.1 None

19. Impact and Opportunities on Localities

19.1 None

20. Background Documents

20.1 None

21. Appendices

21.1 Appendix 1 – Annual Review Letter 2022