

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 6
AUGUST 2025**



Title of Report	LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN REVIEW LETTER	
Presented by	Kate Hiller Head of Legal and Support Services and Monitoring Officer	
Background Papers	NWL Statistics	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	There are no financial implications to be considered.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications to be considered.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	There are no staffing or corporate implications to be considered.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To make members aware of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's (LGSCO) review letter for 2024/25 in accordance with the LGSCO Guidance on Effective Handling of Complaints.	
Recommendations	THAT THE COMMITTEE NOTES THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN'S REVIEW LETTER FOR 2024/25.	

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Committee to consider the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) Annual Review Letter. The Council received that letter on 21 May 2025, and a copy is attached as Appendix 1. The letter provides the Council with an annual summary of the complaint statistics from the LGSCO, relating to the year ending 31 March 2025. The LGSCO letter provides a link to the LGSCO website, with the statistics for North West Leicestershire District Council.

- 1.2 The Corporate Scrutiny Committee separately considers an annual report on customer service, feedback and complaints. The last report was considered by Scrutiny at its meeting in June 2025.

2.0 LGSCO OUTCOMES/STATISTICS

The letter confirms that from April 2024 to March 2025, in respect of the Council, 11 complaints were dealt with by the LGSCO. Five were deemed not to be for the LGSCO, five were assessed and closed, and one was investigated but the complaint was not upheld. The statistics are focused on the following three key areas:

Complaints upheld – Complaints are upheld when some form of fault is found in the authority's actions, including where the authority has accepted fault before an investigation is commenced. The LGSCO investigated one complaint but did not uphold any complaints in 2024/25.

Compliance with recommendations – The Ombudsman recommends ways for authorities to put things right when faults have caused injustice. The recommendations try to put people back in the position they were, before the fault, and the Ombudsman monitors authorities to ensure they comply with the recommendations. There were no recommendations due for compliance during 2024/25.

Satisfactory remedies provided by the Authority – Cases are recognised where an authority has taken steps to put things right before the complaint is made to the LGSCO. The LGSCO did not uphold any complaints in this period.

The LGSCO compares the three key annual statistics for the Council with similar types of authorities to work out an average level of performance. This is carried out for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs. In a previous annual letter, the LGSCO explained that changes were made to the way that cases were processed and investigated, with a priority being given to complaints where it is in the public interest to investigate and that the LGSCO is now less likely to investigate "borderline" issues and this could lead to a higher finding of fault overall. For this reason, the LGSCO advises that it is more helpful to authorities to compare the "uphold rates" with those of similar organisations rather than the previous years of uphold rates for North West Leicestershire District Council.

The LGSCO Guidance states that the Monitoring Officer should consider whether the implications of an investigation should be individually reported to Members where the investigation has wider implications for council policy or exposes a more significant finding of maladministration.

Examples could include:

- The maladministration is, or has been, ongoing and therefore putting the Council or authority at risk of further maladministration.
- The large scale of the fault or injustice.
- The reputational or financial risk arising.
- The large number of people affected.

The Guidance also states that, in the unlikely event that the Council did not comply with the Ombudsman's recommendations following a finding of maladministration, the Monitoring Officer should report this to Members (Cabinet or Council as appropriate) under section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. If the LGSCO issued a

public interest report (under section 30(1) of the Local Government Act 1974), there is a specific requirement for that finding to be reported to members and for a formal response to that finding to be sent to the Ombudsman, within three months setting out the action that they have taken, or propose to take, in response to the report. The Monitoring Officer meets with the relevant Strategic Director to discuss any LGSCO decisions which have been upheld against the criteria set out in the LGSCO guidance and whether the findings need to be reported to members as above. There have been no findings of this nature in the period covered by the annual letter.

In February 2025, the LGSCO also published 'good practice guides' on its website to assist local authorities in adopting the Complaint Handling Code which was updated in February 2024. The guidance is intended to help local authorities to take a proportionate approach to considering complaints and offers advice to statutory officers and senior leaders.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	A Well-Run Council.
Policy Considerations:	The Council deals with feedback in line with the corporate feedback policy.
Safeguarding:	None.
Equalities/Diversity:	None.
Customer Impact:	Customers are advised of the route to make a complaint to the LGSCO at the conclusion of stage 2 of the corporate feedback policy.
Economic and Social Impact:	None.
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon	None.
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	None.
Risks:	None.
Officer Contact	Kate Hiller Head of Legal and Support Services kate.hiller@nwleicestershire.gov.uk