

Bond, David

From: Marie Bench <mail@lgo.vuelio.uk.com>
Sent: 27 July 2016 15:39
To: Bond, David
Subject: LGO: Ombudsman upholding more complaints about local government

Good afternoon

On Thursday 28 July the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) will be publishing its Annual Review of Local Government Complaints 2015/16.

The report releases the LGO's data for the complaints it received in 2015/16 and presents the key trends within local government complaints. A number of case studies from complaints the LGO has investigated highlight the human impact of these common themes.

We hope that by sharing our data and knowledge from complaints, we can help councils to use the information as an early warning system for issues, promote local accountability for actions and allow for better scrutiny of services.

A copy of the report and press release can be found below. Please note both are embargoed until 00:01 on Thursday 28 July 2016.

If you have any questions about the report, do let me know.

Best regards

Marie

Local Government
OMBUDSMAN
Press Release

EMBARGOED TILL 00:01, 28/07/16

28 July 2016

Ombudsman upholding more complaints about local government

The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) has published its annual complaint statistics for local authorities.

The LGO's *Annual Review of Local Government Complaints* shows that it upheld 51% of detailed investigations in 2015/16 – up from 46% the previous year.

The LGO received 19,702 complaints and enquiries about local authorities for the year ending 31 March 2016, which is a similar level to the previous year.

It saw a 13% increase in complaints and enquiries about education and children's services. It was most likely to find fault in complaints about benefits and tax (64%), and least likely to find fault in complaints about highways and transport (40%).

The Annual Review publishes a new dataset about LGO's recommendations to put things right, which demonstrate the impact of LGO investigations. It made 3,529 recommendations to remedy injustice in total. These include 633 recommendations to prevent injustice for the wider public, such as through procedural changes and local authority staff training. There were also 255 investigations where the LGO agreed the local authority had satisfactorily remedied the injustice before the LGO became involved in the complaint.

The report analyses the data, by category, to present the key trends within local government complaints. A number of case studies from complaints the LGO has investigated highlight the human impact of these common themes.

These include a homeless family that was housed outside of their area leaving a two hour journey to work and school; and a woman with concerns about her adopted children's former foster carer, which were not investigated properly.

Dr Jane Martin, Local Government Ombudsman, said:

"We are publishing this report to demonstrate the scale of our work and provide an open resource to help others scrutinise local public services. While the number of complaints we receive is relatively small in comparison to the thousands of daily interactions between people and their councils, each complaint represents a problem that could not be resolved locally.

"I am pleased to provide more information this year about how complaints are decided and remedied. This demonstrates the impact our recommendations have for both the individual and the wider public, but also acknowledges where we agreed the local authority had remedied the complaint satisfactorily before it came to us. On the other hand, we upheld a higher proportion of detailed investigations, which may be a cause for concern if the trend continues."

The *Annual Review of Local Government Complaints* publishes the complaint statistics of the Local Government Ombudsman, for its local government jurisdiction, for the year ending 31 March 2016. This incorporates complaints and enquiries registered against local authorities as well as other local bodies that fall under the LGO's jurisdiction. These include national park authorities, school admission appeal panels, fire authorities, transport authorities, police and crime commissioners, and some other government organisations.

The LGO also looks at complaints about independent social care providers. This includes complaints from people 'self-funding' their care without any involvement by the council. Data for independent care providers are not included in this report, but are incorporated in the LGO's annual review of social care complaints, published in the autumn.

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For more information contact:

Siân Powell – Media and Press Officer
Local Government Ombudsman
0330 403 4031
s.powell@lgo.org.uk

Notes to Editors

The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) looks at complaints about local public services, resolving more than 11,000 complaints a year.

We're also the Social Care Ombudsman. We are responsible for resolving complaints about all registered social care providers, whether that care is publicly-funded or independently paid for or arranged without a council's involvement.

We are free to use and make our decisions independently. When we find that a body we have investigated has done something wrong, we recommend how it should put it right. Our investigations are held in private, and people are not identified in our decisions and reports. We publish all decisions online at www.lgo.org.uk

Please find hyperlink to the report below.

Local Government Ombudsman, PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH

Attachments

- LG Annual report 2016 [LG Annual report 2016](#)

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