

PUBLIC

**Agenda Item No.5 (a)**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**22 March 2017**

**Report of the Director of Legal Services**

**COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS OVERVIEW 2015-2016**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

To inform the Committee about complaints and compliments received by the Council during the financial year 2015-2016 and to present the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

**2. Information and Analysis**

The terms of reference of the Standards Committee include "*the overview of complaints handling and Local Government Ombudsman investigations.*" Accordingly, the Committee is invited to receive the report which was presented by the Chief Executive to Cabinet on 22 November 2016 entitled "Compliments and Complaints Overview 2015-2016" which is attached at Appendix 1.

**3. Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors have also been considered: financial, legal and human rights, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

**4. Background Papers**

The file held on behalf of the Chief Executive.

**5. Officer's Recommendation**

To note the report of the Chief Executive to Cabinet entitled "Compliments and Complaints Overview 2015-2016."

**John McElvaney  
Director of Legal Services**

## **Appendix 1**

### **Derbyshire County Council**

#### **CABINET**

**22 November 2016**

#### **Report of the Chief Executive**

### **COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS OVERVIEW 2015-2016 (Strategic Policy, Economic Development and Budget)**

#### **1. Purpose of the Report**

To inform Cabinet of:

- compliments received by the Council during the financial year 2015-16.
- complaints dealt with under the Council's Complaints Procedure;
- the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter in respect of Derbyshire County Council for the year ended 31 March 2016;

#### **2. Information and Analysis**

Compliments, complaints and representations provide valuable feedback about the services the Council provides. Departments actively encourage feedback, both positive and negative to allow them to continually improve these services.

#### **Compliments**

The recording of compliments enables the Council to understand the areas where the Authority is doing well and identify practices and procedures that can be preserved or applied to other departments. As such they are an important source of feedback from the general public and service users. This report does not make direct comparison between the numbers of complaints and numbers of compliments received. Whereas corporate complaints follow national guidance, agreed corporate procedure and recording protocols, there is no corporate policy on the recording of compliments. The inclusion of compliments does however provide a balance to complaints received.

Table 3 below shows that during 2015-16, the Council received 1,157 compliments, which is 17% below the 1,391 compliments received in 2014-15. The highest percentage of compliments were received by Adult Care, Economy, Transport and Environment and Health and Communities. Across all departments, a significant number of compliments related to customer

service, with the enthusiasm, helpfulness and professionalism of staff being greatly appreciated by the public.

**Table 3. Compliments received by Department 2014-15 and 2015-16**

		Chief Executives	Corporate Resources	Health & Communities	Children's Services	Economy, Transport & Environment	Adult Care	Total
<b>2015-16</b>	Compliments	9	36	331	128	262	391	<b>1157</b>
	% of All	1%	3%	29%	9%	23%	34%	<b>100%</b>
<b>2014-15</b>	Compliments	0	70	319	175	357	470	<b>1391</b>
	% of All	0%	5%	23%	9%	26%	34%	<b>100%</b>

Analysis of compliments received by each department is outlined below.

- **Adult Care**

Within Adult Care the majority of compliments received were around the professional quality of work. Staff were thanked for their professional care, compassion, help and understanding. One family member commented on the high standard of care and that the staff are a credit to their profession. Another compliment was received regarding the support offered by the department which was described as “absolutely faultless”.

Below are some examples of the compliments received:

- “Just to say a truly huge thank you for all your persistent and consistent thoughtfulness throughout your work on my case. You always knew exactly what to say and your dedication shines legitimately too. You are super!”
- “Without you I don’t know what I would have done. Your girls are brilliant in every sense of the word, kind, caring and compassionate”
- “I was amazed to be offered the service of four visits each day for six weeks free of charge I think that is excellent! Very reassuring to know someone was there. I will miss the team, thank you all very much”.

- **Chief Executive’s**

Call Derbyshire received six compliments about the high quality of customer care given across a number of different services.

- **Children's Services**

Many compliments were received across the wide range of services provided by Children's Services. A number of compliments (51%) highlighted the high standard of professionalism by social workers when dealing with specialist and safeguarding activities ranging from fostering, adoption and child protection. There were also numerous compliments about support services and the family support activities provided by multi-agency teams.

Below are some examples of the compliments received:

- "You've made a massive difference in my life and helped create and turn my son into the young man he is today."
- "The wonderful caring and compassionate help put us back on the right path to be effective parents."
- "Many thanks for all your advice/information. It helped us put an informed transition package in place."

The compliments received demonstrate how greatly staff and services are valued. Compliments within the department are under reported, to address this work is taking place to improve mechanisms to ensure that all compliments are captured.

- **Corporate Resources**

In the Corporate Resources Department compliments received were for Corporate Property. The majority of these compliments referred to the high level of workmanship and professionalism of staff. A number of compliments were from schools and these ranged from roofing works to building a new classroom block. Compliments were also received from other departments relating to assistance with numerous office moves.

Below are some examples of the compliments received:

- "Cannot thank everyone involved for their compassion, professionalism, respect and communication."
- "Convey my heartfelt thanks to all that had anything to do with the wonderful wet room - you have no idea the joy I get from using it. Staff worked hard to finish it as soon as possible to a high standard and the design is great. You all need a medal."

- **Economy, Transport and Environment**

There were many compliments received on the services provided with the highest number of compliments covering the Transport and Environment Division (50%). These included compliments about the Countryside Service such as the maintenance of country parks and compliments relating to staff at the household waste recycling centres. There were also

a large number of compliments received for the Highways Division (45%) which were mainly in relation to highways maintenance.

Below are some examples of the compliments received:

- “Just to let you know how informative, friendly and enjoyable I found the Discovery Walks and I look forward to repeating the whole interesting experience again next year. Keep up the good work!”
  - “I just wanted to pass on that the staff at the Ilkeston Household Waste Recycling Centre are brilliant. Whenever I visit they always ask what I have and have come and collected it from me.”
  - “Members of the Highways Department have been kindly repairing footpaths in Walton. Your employees were delightful, most courteous, kind and helpful. I can honestly say there was no inconvenience to anyone on Sunningdale Rise as your men went out of their way to inform people when they would be starting work.”
- **Health and Communities**  
The majority of compliments received by Derbyshire Sport related to the support and advice provided for clubs seeking grant funding.

A large number of compliments received by the Libraries and Heritage Division praised the role of libraries, particularly in relation to customer service (50%). General expressions of satisfaction with libraries accounted for 23% of compliments, with 9% regarding events and activities put on in the library. There were also a number of compliments about the services provided by the Record Office.

Below are some examples of the compliments received:

- “I wanted to say a big thank you to you for all you help with the application. I really appreciated all comments and feedback every time that I sent something through and for sending things back straight away.”
- “Your service is excellent and always excels itself. A fantastic institution. Your approach is commendable you are good humoured and an example to others.”
- “May I thank you all for your news, guidance and advice, you made my search far easier than I thought it would be. I will highly recommend your services.”

### **Trading Standards**

The majority of compliments (54%) were received from both members of the Trusted Trader Scheme and consumers who referred to the confidence and reliability of the scheme. These are used to both monitor the scheme and inform future development. Compliments were also

received from businesses and members of the public regarding the assistance and advice received from Trading Standards and also from farmers and members of the public with regard to animal health activity.

## **Complaints**

During 2015-16, the Council dealt with 647 complaints, which is a reduction in number since 2014-15 when 801 complaints were handled. The largest decrease was seen in Adult Care (28%). However, Adult Care handled the most complaints in 2015-16 with 36% (235) of the total, followed by Children's Services 30% (191), and Economy, Transport and Environment 21% (137). Given the public facing services they provide these departments together account for 87% of the complaints received. During the monitoring period, 96% (623) complaints were completed i.e. they had been through all stages of the complaints procedure, to satisfactorily resolve the issue concerned. This is a slight increase on the percentage completed in 2014-15 which was 93%.

Departments have, where possible, provided detailed information about each individual complaint, which has informed this report.

## **Outcomes of complaints**

The percentage of complaints upheld has increased from 17% in 2014-15 to 21% in 2015-16, but the actual numbers were 140 in 2014-15 and 139 in 2015-16. The percentage of complaints partially upheld has increased slightly from 21% in 2014-15 to 22% in 2015-16. The number of complaints not upheld has reduced from 50% in 2014-15 to 46% in 2015-16. This means that the level of complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld in 2015-16 is very similar to figures for 2014-2015.

The overall percentage of complaints having other outcomes has increased from 4% in 2014-15 to 7% in 2015-16. Examples of reasons given for the recording of 'other' as an outcome include instances where the actual outcome has not been recorded, a verbal rather than written response has been given, and complainant contact information has been incorrectly supplied or excluded from the complaint so a response could not be provided. The outcomes of complaints and variations within departments can be seen in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Outcomes of complaints 2014-15 and 2015-16**

			Chief Executives	Corporate Resources	Health & Communities	Children's Services	Economy, Transport & Environment	Adult Care	Total
2015-16	Upheld	Number	0	0	7	27	42	63	139
		%	0%	0%	11%	15%	32%	28%	21%
	Partially Upheld	Number	13	3	37	22	29	40	144
		%	87%	43%	60%	12%	21%	17%	22%
	Not Upheld	Number	2	4	18	103	61	107	295
		%	13%	57%	29%	54%	45%	46%	46%
	Other	Number	0	0	0	26	1	18	45
		%	0%	0%	0%	14%	1%	8%	7%
	Not completed	Number	0	0	0	13	4	7	24
		%	0%	0%	0%	7%	3%	3%	4%
Total	Number	15	7	62	191	137	235	647	
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Previous financial year 2014-15	Upheld	Number	0	10	5	27	33	65	140
		%	0%	53%	9%	14%	20%	22%	17%
	Partially Upheld	Number	21	5	27	32	23	64	172
		%	100%	25%	51%	15%	14%	20%	21%
	Not Upheld	Number	0	3	19	120	106	155	403
		%	0%	15%	36%	56%	63%	48%	50%
	Other	Number	0	1	2	11	5	11	30
		%	0%	5%	4%	5%	3%	3%	4%
	Not completed	Number	0	1	0	23	2	30	56
		%	0%	5%	0%	11%	1%	9%	7%
Total	Number	21	20	53	213	169	325	801	
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Over the years there have been fluctuations in the number of complaints received, with the highest number received in 2007-08 which was 916 and the lowest in 2015-16 which was 647 as can be seen in Table 2. The percentage of complaints upheld and partially upheld also changed over the years but again the percentages for 2015-16 are similar to those seen in 2007-08.



**Table 2. Outcomes of complaints 2007-08 to 2015-16**

Complaint outcomes		2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Upheld	Number	184	193	146	149	163	152	151	140	139
	%	20%	24%	21%	19%	20%	19%	19%	17%	21%
Partially Upheld	Number	194	257	172	166	141	172	182	173	144
	%	21%	32%	25%	21%	17%	22%	23%	22%	22%
Not Upheld	Number	467	292	304	355	422	394	385	403	295
	%	51%	36%	43%	45%	51%	50%	48%	50%	46%
Other	Number	71	47	43	90	69	22	36	30	45
	%	8%	6%	6%	12%	8%	3%	4%	4%	7%
Not completed	Number	*	16	35	21	35	42	49	55	24
	%	*	2%	5%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%	4%
Total	Number	916	805	700	781	830	782	803	800	647
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
		*This category was combined with the 'Other' category at this time								

### **Adherence to timescales for responding to complaints**

With regard to completed complaints, 66% were replied to within the agreed timescale. The timescale for dealing with Stage One complaints under the Corporate Complaints Procedure (which covers non-statutory complaints) is in accordance with the Council's Customer Service Charter. This states that the Council aims to reply to letters, faxes and emails within 10 working days of receipt, or if this standard cannot be met, the complainant will be informed as to when they can expect a reply. The inclusion of complaints where a timescale longer than 10 days was in place for example 20 days for statutory complaints, results in the percentage replied to within the agreed timescales increasing to 85%. Stage One complaints are dealt with locally by the staff in the department concerned, with Stage Two complaints being referred to the Departmental Complaints Officer or appropriate manager. Where possible departments try and resolve complaints at Stage One (local resolution) to keep Stage Two (formal investigation) complaints to a minimum, but this results in them being more complex and taking more time to resolve. In particular, to reply to a complaint where front line staff are involved within 10 days is not always possible. In addition many of the complaints received involve co-ordination between both health and social care to form a joint response. The current Corporate Complaints Procedure and Guidance are due for review. Part of the review will involve agreeing a more realistic timescale to respond to complaints at Stage One.

Response times, and the ability of departments to respond to complaints are also affected by the number of unreasonably persistent complainants (UPCs) and multiple complaints from the same person. The Local Government Ombudsman has defined 'unreasonable' and 'unreasonably persistent' complainants as those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the local authority, hinder the authority's consideration of their or other people's complaints. Economy, Transport and Communities had five UPC's on file in 2015-16.

## Demographics

The recording of demographic information is important in monitoring the profile of complainants. However, the level of complainant demographic information collected is generally low and varies considerably across departments.

Departments should be encouraged to improve the collection of this information wherever possible. The most comprehensive data gathered is on complainant gender, with 96% of complainants disclosing this information in 2015-16, which is higher than 90% in 2014-15 (see Table 3).

**Table 3. Completed complaints demographics 2014-15 and 2015-16**

			2014-15	2015-16
Gender	Male	Number	331	280
		%	45%	45%
	Female	Number	338	315
		%	45%	51%
	Not Stated	Number	75	28
		%	10%	4%
	Total	Number	744	623
		%	100%	100%

## Changes to service delivery as a result of complaints received

Complaints received by the Council relate to a combination of service and performance issues. A number relate to communication, customer care and the overall service provided. In order to assist the process of addressing complaints, all departments continue to reinforce the Council's Customer Service Charter protocols through staff meetings and corporate Putting People First training.

Actions taken by individual departments in response to stage one complaints received about service provision during 2014-15 are outlined below:

- **Adult Care**

Adult Care produce and publish a comprehensive annual report which is presented to the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care. This report shows the steps which have been taken to develop practice in response to dealing with complaints and is underpinned by an action plan. Monthly reports are distributed to SMT and Operational Managers to reflect outstanding complaints and provide a reminder of the appropriate timescale. Operational Managers ensure improvements are made from upheld complaints and this learning is discussed where appropriate at the Adult Care Quality Compliance Group. Learning Reviews from individual complaints are shared with all staff via the Adult Care Practice Bulletin.

Each year, Adult Care draws up an action plan to make positive changes as a result of learning from complaints. The majority of complaints within Adult Care concern the quality of work (26%). This is a broad heading which covers issues such as a perceived lack of care provided by our homecare or residential staff, a care worker being late or not attending a meeting. As such a high number of complaints within this category are perhaps to be expected. Complaints had been received about differentiating staff roles and responsibilities as well as seeing the names of the staff in a residential home. Following consultation the use of different coloured polo t-shirts for differing staff roles was implemented, in addition each member of staff also has a name badge which is clearly visible to the residents rather than just the Derbyshire County Council official badge.

There have also been a number of complaints regarding communication (23%) and this has resulted in a change to existing procedures. For example, the importance of providing clear and consistent information has been highlighted at the Social Care Forum. In response, a number of factsheets have been developed for the public and articles shared internally to raise people's level of professionalism and competence enabling staff to better signpost and support clients. The accuracy of information shared verbally is also now double-checked prior to the end of each call.

- **Chief Executive's**

In total 12 complaints were received by Call Derbyshire about the time waiting for a call to be answered. To address this there has been a constant review of call queue management and overview training for team leaders. A review of rota planning has taken place to ensure appropriate cover of all skills mixes across all services within current staffing levels. New staff have been recruited and are undertaking training to further increase the resource available to answer calls.

- **Children's Services**

The Head of Service Quality Assurance, Performance & Participation receives regular monitoring reports about complaints and representations with the Senior Management Team being updated on a quarterly basis. The number of complaints and response times are also discussed with Heads of Service (Localities) as part of their six monthly performance management group meetings.

Improving communication across the department and particularly front line services continued to be a focus for work in 2015-16 as 30% of the complaints received related to issues with communication. Further embedding of systematic practice across safeguarding and specialist services along with improved quality assurance processes are aimed at

reducing the overall number of complaints and improving communication with children and young people and their families. Systematic practice focusses on building on the strengths within a family to address areas requiring improvement and it is anticipated that this will improve overall communication between operational staff and service users.

The complaints and representations received are helping to inform the Special Educational Needs service restructuring that is underway. In addition extra capacity has been sourced to seek to address the timeliness of completion of Education Health and Care plans.

- **Corporate Resources**

All seven complaints received were for Corporate Property. After further investigation into two of the cases, it transpired that they were not the responsibility of the Council.

- **Economy, Transport and Environment**

During 2015-16, complaints to the department included lack of action (27%), the attitude/action of staff (27%) and lack of response (15%). Dashboards available on the Single Asset Management System (SAMS) are currently being reviewed to highlight enquiries and jobs due in chronological order. This will enable Officers to view commitments on a priority basis and to plan their daily workload accordingly. In relation to lack of response, staff have also been reminded about the importance of customer communication particularly in cases where enquiries cannot be resolved within expected timescales. With regard to complaints about staff attitude, customer care training has taken place for the front line workforce such as road workers. Relevant staff have been advised that, when setting up a contract with a third party, clear arrangements for complaint handling must be included, as any complaint about a service provided by a third party working on behalf of the Council is treated as a complaint against the Council itself.

Complaints and compliments are reported to the quarterly Departmental Performance Clinic which also considers and reviews lessons learnt. Complaints are also reported at Management Review Meetings where appropriate, as part of the Quality Management System.

The department continues to ensure that messages are reiterated to the work force where appropriate and monitors situations, taking appropriate action when it is necessary to do so in order to avoid further complaints of the same nature. As the complaints process is now being monitored under the Quality Management System, any instances of non-conformance are raised and processed with a view to looking for corrective action to be taken to avoid problems occurring again.

- **Health and Communities**

During 2015-16 a number of complaints were received by Libraries and Heritage about the behaviour of other service users 17 (40%), with persistent offensive behaviour being addressed through issuing of bans where appropriate. Training on dealing with challenging customer behaviour is also provided to the relevant staff. Instances where the public have been unhappy with the customer care that they have received from library staff 13 (31%) have been resolved individually with the staff concerned and through training provided where appropriate.

### **Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)**

The LGO Annual Review Letter 2015-16, giving details of the total number of complaints for Derbyshire for the year ended 31 March 2016, is attached at Appendix A for consideration. All of the Ombudsman's annual review letters are published on the LGO website ([www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)) and copied to the Audit Commission. Derbyshire's Annual Review Letter has also been published on the Council's website:

<http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/complaints/ombudsman/default.asp>

The aim of the Annual Review Letter is to provide councils with information which will help them assess their performance in handling complaints.

For the period ending 31 March 2016, the LGO received 96 complaints relating to Derbyshire County Council. The 96 complaints compares to 68 enquiries and complaints for Derbyshire in 2014-15 (an increase of 41%).

For the period ending 31 March 2016 the LGO also made decisions on 95 complaints, compared to 68 decisions in 2014-15 (an increase of 39%), of the decisions made by the LGO for 2015-16, 12 decisions were upheld, compared to 9 decisions upheld in 2014-15. In terms of complaints upheld by the LGO these can be identified as relation to the following County Council departments.

Department	Number of decisions against the Council
Adult Care	8
Children's Services	3
Economy, Transport and Environment	1

There were no reports issued against the Council in 2015-16 because in all of the 12 cases where there were findings against the Council, the LGO suggested a remedy which the Council agreed to.

The Annual Review Letter refers to the Government announcing its intention to produce draft legislation for the creation of a single ombudsman for public services in England. This is something the LGO support, as it will provide the public with a clearer route to redress in an increasingly complex environment of public service delivery.

The LGO will continue to support government in the realisation of the public service ombudsman, and are advising on the importance of maintaining their 40 years plus experience of working with local government and understanding its unique accountability structures.

### **Next steps**

Compliments and complaints are a useful source of feedback for the Council, and it is important that learning from the feedback continues to be identified, shared across departments and used to inform service improvement. The Corporate Complaints Group will continue to work together to share learning, ensure consistency in complaint handling across departments, and improve efficiency and accuracy in the collection of the statistics.

## **4. Legal Considerations**

Complaints are dealt with by Council departments in accordance with the relevant complaints procedure.

The Local Government Ombudsman's powers are defined by the Local Government Act 1974 as amended by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The Ombudsman may investigate complaints of maladministration causing injustice.

## **5. Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, financial, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

## **6. Key Decision**

No

## **7. Call-in**

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? – **No**

## **8. Officer Recommendations**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Note the key issues relating to the complaints procedure, the monitoring of complaints and changes to service as a result of complaints received.
2. Continue to use the information contained within the report to support key process and service improvements within their departments.
3. Undertake a review of the Corporate Complaints Procedure and Guidance including agreeing a more realistic timescale for responding to Stage One complaints.
4. Receive a report on the progress and developments on complaints and compliments following the end of the 2016-17 monitoring period.

## Appendix A Letter from Local Government Ombudsman



21 July 2016

*By email*

Mr Ian Stephenson  
Chief Executive  
Derbyshire County Council

Dear Mr Ian Stephenson

### **Annual Review Letter 2016**

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2016.

The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received and the decisions we made about your authority during the period. I hope that this information will prove helpful in assessing your authority's performance in handling complaints.

Last year we provided information on the number of complaints upheld and not upheld for the first time. In response to council feedback, this year we are providing additional information to focus the statistics more on the outcome from complaints rather than just the amounts received.

We provide a breakdown of the upheld investigations to show how they were remedied. This includes the number of cases where our recommendations remedied the fault and the number of cases where we decided your authority had offered a satisfactory remedy during the local complaints process. In these later cases we provide reassurance that your authority had satisfactorily attempted to resolve the complaints before the person came to us. In addition, we provide a compliance rate for implementing our recommendations to remedy a fault.

I want to emphasise that these statistics comprise the data we hold, and may not necessarily align with the data your authority holds. For example, our numbers include enquiries from people we signpost back to the authority, but who may never contact you.

In line with usual practice, we are publishing our annual data for all authorities on our website, alongside an annual review of local government complaints. The aim of this is to be transparent and provide information that aids the scrutiny of local services.

### **Effective accountability for devolved authorities**

Local government is going through perhaps some of the biggest changes since the LGO was set up more than 40 years ago. The creation of combined authorities and an increase in the



number of elected mayors will hugely affect the way local services are held to account. We have already started working with the early combined authorities to help develop principles for effective and accessible complaints systems.

We have also reviewed how we structure our casework teams to provide insight across the emerging combined authority structures. Responding to council feedback, this included reconfirming the Assistant Ombudsman responsible for relationship management with each authority, which we recently communicated to Link Officers through distribution of our manual for working with the LGO.

### **Supporting local scrutiny**

Our corporate strategy is based upon the twin pillars of remedying injustice and improving local public services. The numbers in our annual report demonstrate that we continue to improve the quality of our service achieving swift redress.

To measure our progress against the objective to improve local services, in March we issued survey to all councils. I was encouraged to find that 98% of respondents believed that our investigations have had an impact on improving local public services. I am confident that the continued publication of our decisions (alongside an improved facility to browse for them on our website), focus reports on key themes and the data in these annual review letters is helping the sector to learn from its mistakes and support better services for citizens.

The survey also demonstrated a significant proportion of councils are shoring the information we provided with elected members and scrutiny committees. I welcome this approach, and want to take this opportunity to encourage others to do so.

### **Complaint handling training**

We recently refreshed our Effective Complaint Handling courses for local authorities and introduced a new course for independent care providers. We trained over 700 people last year and feedback show a 96% increase in the number of participants who felt confident in dealing with complaints following the course. To find out more, visit [www.lgo.org.uk/training](http://www.lgo.org.uk/training).


### **Ombudsman reform**

You will no doubt be aware that the government has announced the intention to produce draft legislation for the creation of a single ombudsman for public services in England. This is something we support, as it will provide the public with a clearer route to redress in an increasingly complex environment of public service delivery.

We will continue to support government in the realisation of the public service ombudsman, and are advising on the importance of maintaining our 40 years plus experience of working with local government and our understanding of its unique accountability structures.

This will also be the last time I write with your annual review. My seven-year term of office as Local Government Ombudsman comes to an end in January 2017. The LGO has gone through extensive change since I took up post in 2010, becoming a much leaner and more focused organisation, and I am confident that it is well prepared for the challenges ahead.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Martin', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dr Jane Martin  
Local Government Ombudsman,  
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

**Local authority report:** Derbyshire County Council

**For the period ending:** 31/03/2016

For further information on interpretation of statistics, please visit our website:

<http://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/annual-review-reports/interpreting-local-authority-statistics>

## Complaints and enquiries received

Adult Care Services	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Education and Children's Services	Environment Services	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
36	1	2	38	3	15	0	1	0	96

## Decisions made

Decisions made				Detailed investigations			
Incomplete or Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed after initial Enquiries	Not Upheld	Upheld	Uphold Rate	Total
4	0	42	24	13	12	48%	95
<b>Notes</b> Our uphold rate is calculated in relation to the total number of detailed investigations  The number of remedied complaints may not equal the number of upheld complaints. This is because, while we may uphold a complaint because we find fault, we may not always find grounds to say the fault caused injustice that ought to be remedied.  The compliance rate is the proportion of remedied complaints where our recommendations are believed to have been implemented.					Complaints Remedied		
					by LGO	Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO involvement	Compliance Rate
					9	2	100%