

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING	Standards Committee	
MEETING	15 th July 2025	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	Annual Report on Commission for Local Administration in England (Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman) complaints	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix 1 Annual letter from the Ombudsman Appendix 2 Anonymised determinations made by the Ombudsman 2024-25		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 To report the Ombudsman's Annual Review and determinations for 2024 – 2025 and provide an opportunity for the Standards Committee to comment on these.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to note the Annual Review and note the determinations made by the Ombudsman and determine what, if any, further action is required.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 None.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The duty under s.5(2) Local Government & Housing Act 1989 requiring the Monitoring Officer to prepare a formal report to Council where the Ombudsman has found maladministration, can be discharged by an annual periodic report to the Council. The Council has delegated the consideration of any report of the Local Government Ombudsman to the Standards Committee.

5 THE REPORT

5.1 This report covers the year ending 31st March 2025. During this period 28 escalated cases were considered and decided by the Ombudsman. Of those, 7 detailed investigations were undertaken by the Ombudsman and all were upheld. Appendix 2 to the report details the cases in anonymised form and any recommendations made by the Ombudsman.

	Year 20-21	Year 21-22	Year 22-23	Year 23-24	Year 24-25
Investigated cases upheld with fault	2	3	6	4	7
Investigated cases dismissed with no fault	1	4	5	1	0
Other cases assessed & dismissed without fault	23	27	21	34	21
TOTAL escalated cases	26	34	32	39	28

6 RATIONALE

6.1 To allow consideration of the complaints and recommend any actions required.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 None

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 S.151 Officer

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

Contact person	Michael Hewitt tel 01225 395125
Background papers	None
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

Local Government & Social Care OMBUDSMAN

21 May 2025

By email

Mr Godfrey
Chief Executive
Bath and North East Somerset Council

Dear Mr Godfrey

Annual Review letter 2024-25

I write to you with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2025. The information offers valuable insight about your organisation's approach to complaints, and I know you will consider it as part of your corporate governance processes. We have listened to your feedback, and I am pleased to be able to share your annual statistics earlier in the year to better fit with local reporting cycles. I hope this proves helpful to you.

[Your annual statistics are available here.](#)

In addition, you can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read the public reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

In a change to our approach, we will write to organisations in July where there is exceptional practice or where we have concerns about an organisation's complaint handling. Not all organisations will get a letter. If you do receive a letter it will be sent in advance of its publication on our website on 16 July 2025, alongside our annual Review of Local Government Complaints.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

In February we published [good practice guides](#) to support councils to adopt our [Complaint Handling Code](#). The guides were developed in consultation with councils that have been piloting the Code and are based on the real-life, front-line experience of people handling complaints day-to-day, including their experience of reporting to senior leaders and elected members. The guides were issued alongside free [training resources](#) organisations can use to make sure front-line staff understand what to do when someone raises a complaint. We will be applying the Code in our casework from April 2026 and we know a large number of councils have already adopted it into their local policies with positive results.

This year we relaunched our popular [complaint handling training](#) programme. The training is now more interactive than ever, providing delegates with an opportunity to consider a complaint from receipt to resolution. Early feedback has been extremely positive with delegates reporting an increase in confidence in handling complaints after completing the training. To find out more contact training@lgo.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Amerdeep Somal
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Reference	Category	Subcategory	Decided	Decision	Decision Reason	Remedy	Service improvement recommendations
22017440	Adult Care Services	Provider obo council: residential care	17/05/2024	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology,Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble,Procedure or policy change/review	Within three months of my decision, the Council will review its policies to ensure people are offered choice as part of this discharge process, or any decision to restrict choice is properly considered and recorded. The Council will also ensure that all staff are aware of any changes arising from this.
23006727	Education & Childrens Services	Education Council: Alternative provision	31/05/2024	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology,Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble,Financial redress: Loss of service,Provide training and/or guidance,Procedure or policy change/review	The Council will send a reminder to officers dealing with EHC needs assessments to remind them of the need to comply with the timescales in the code of practice. The Council will provide evidence to the Ombudsman of the work it is undertaking as part of the business change programme to track annual reviews of EHC plans to make sure the timescales set out in the code of practice are adhered to.
23014363	Education & Childrens Services	Education Council: Alternative provision	29/05/2024	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology,Financial redress: Loss of service,Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble,New appeal/review or reconsidered decision,Provide training and/or guidance	The Council will share this decision with relevant staff.
23018920	Education & Childrens Services	Education Council: Alternative provision	30/09/2024	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology,Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble	
23019676	Education & Childrens Services	Education Council: Alternative provision	06/12/2024	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology,Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble,Procedure or policy change/review,Financial redress: Loss of service	The Council will review its policies and procedures to make sure it retains sufficient oversight and control over what a school is doing on its behalf.
23019700	Adult Care Services	Council: care plan	17/04/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		

Reference	Category	Subcategory	Decided	Decision	Decision Reason	Remedy	Service improvement recommendations
24000250	Adult Care Services	Council: safeguarding	22/05/2024	Advice given	Consent - section 26A(1)(b)		
24000429	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	Refuse & recycling	18/04/2024	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given		
24000694	Planning & Development	Enforcement-householder	28/05/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
24000796	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	Refuse & recycling	25/04/2024	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given		
24002822	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	Refuse & recycling	01/06/2024	Incomplete/Invalid	Insufficient information to proceed and PA advised		
24002922	Adult Care Services	Council: charging	25/11/2024	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology, Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble, Provide information/advice to person affected, Procedure or policy change/review, Provide training and/or guidance	<p>The Council agreed that it would review the communications it has with those who use adult care services, or their relatives, in the event of an NHS decision to remove continuing healthcare funding. This was to ensure those affected by such decisions knew the Council would assess care needs and to provide some basic information about when it might fund social care needs.</p> <p>The Council agreed that further to the review of communications it would also brief its social work staff on its expectations. This briefing would highlight the importance of transparency and openness about its involvement in such cases, areas where we found fault with the Council during this investigation.</p>
24003594	Highways & Transport	Traffic management	22/07/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
24004203	Planning & Development	Enforcement-householder	02/08/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		

Reference	Category	Subcategory	Decided	Decision	Decision Reason	Remedy	Service improvement recommendations
24005219	Corporate & Other Services	Standards committees	12/07/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
24006433	Benefits & Tax	Housing benefit	04/11/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	26(6)(a) tribunal Other		
24006464	Adult Care Services	Council: assessment	18/09/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
24007870	Planning & Development	Householder planning application	10/10/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	26(6)(b) appeal to Minister		
24008124	Education & Childrens Services	Education Council: SEN Assessments and reviews	21/01/2025	Upheld	fault & inj	Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble, Financial redress: Loss of service	
24011514	Adult Care Services	Council: charging	24/03/2025	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
24012049	Benefits & Tax	Council tax	27/11/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	26(6)(a) tribunal Other		
24012269	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	Refuse & recycling	27/11/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	26(6)(c) Court remedy		
24012964	Highways & Transport	Highways & transport-other	13/12/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
24013352	Planning & Development	Other planning application	22/11/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
24013718	Education & Childrens Services	Education Council: Transport	15/01/2025	Closed after initial enquiries	No worthwhile outcome achievable by investigation		
24013766	Corporate & Other Services	Land	09/12/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	26B(2) not made in 12 months		
24017522	Adult Care Services	Council: direct payments	13/03/2025	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
24020037	Highways & Transport	Parking penalties	26/02/2025	Closed after initial enquiries	26(6)(a) tribunal TPT/PATAS		