

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

meeting date: TUESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2023
 title: OMBUDSMAN REPORT AND ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER
 submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT - CHIEF EXECUTIVE
 principal author: MAIR HILL - HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform Committee about the Annual Review Letter from the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives - } The Council aims to be a well-managed Council.
- Corporate Priorities - } Complaints to the Ombudsman and the process of resolving complaints and responding to the Ombudsman's investigation, helps to improve the way the Council delivers services.
- Other Considerations - }

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Local Government Ombudsman Service publishes an annual review letter for each Council. A copy of this Council's annual review letter is attached as Appendix 1, this relates to the year ending 31 March 2023

3. ISSUES

3.1 As can be seen from the attached report, the Ombudsman investigated 1 complaint of which 1 was upheld. The statistics relating to outcomes also relate to this one complaint.

3.2 This complaint relates to an historic matter, which has been reported to Committee previously along with the measures which the Council has put in place to address the matters raised. The background papers relating to this matter are set out below. The Council is continuing to work on its equality policies and further reports will be brought to this Committee.

3.3 Committee will also note the Ombudsman states in his report that:

"I am pleased to say the Council has now put in place a policy to meet its obligations to disabled service users, has ensured it can keep adequate records, and has made its officers aware of the Council's obligations to disabled people. I welcome the Council's actions and learning from this investigation."

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Resources are expended in officer time in dealing with Ombudsman complaints and in putting into place their recommendations.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – N/A.
- Political – N/A.

- Reputation – The Council’s reputation is enhanced by the consideration and implementation of recommendations from the Ombudsman and also as a result of the extremely low level of complaints investigated by the Ombudsman.
- Equality & Diversity – The actions implemented as a result of the Ombudsman’s recommendations will have a positive impact on equality and diversity and will ensure that the Council strives for excellence in customer service.

5 **CONCLUSION**

5.1 Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

MAIR HILL
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Policy & Finance Committee 27 September 2022
Report to Policy & Finance Committee 24 January 2023

For further information please ask for Mair Hill, extension 4418.