

Standards and Audit Committee

Tuesday 18 September 2018 at 7.30pm

**Council Chamber
Runnymede Civic Centre, Addlestone**

Members of the Committee

Councillors M G Nuti (Chairman), D E Anderson-Bassey (Vice-Chairman), A Alderson, M D Cressey, S L Dennett, J R Furey, Mrs Y P Lay, P Snow, P J Taylor and A P Tollett.

In accordance with Standing Order 29.2 any non-member of the Committee who is considering attending the meeting should first request the permission of the Chairman.

A G E N D A

Notes:

- i) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2 below, may be discussed in private but only if the Committee so resolves.
- ii) The relevant "background papers" are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the Agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to **Miss C Pinnock, Democratic Services, Law and Governance Business Centre, Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel: Direct Line: 01932 425627). (email: clare.pinnock@runnymede.gov.uk)**.
- iii) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please ring Mr B A Fleckney on 01932 425620. Agendas and Minutes for all the Council's Committees may also be viewed on www.runnymede.gov.uk.
- iv) In the unlikely event of an alarm sounding, members of the public should leave the building immediately, either using the staircase leading from the public gallery or following other instructions as appropriate.
- v) **Filming, Audio-Recording, Photography, Tweeting and Blogging of Meetings**

Members of the public are permitted to film, audio record, take photographs or make use of social media (tweet/blog) at Council and Committee meetings provided that this does not disturb the business of the meeting. If you wish to film a particular meeting,

please liaise with the Council Officer listed on the front of the Agenda prior to the start of the meeting so that the Chairman is aware and those attending the meeting can be made aware of any filming taking place.

Filming should be limited to the formal meeting area and not extend to those in the public seating area.

The Chairman will make the final decision on all matters of dispute in regard to the use of social media, audio-recording, photography and filming in the Committee meeting.

LIST OF MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

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PART II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection.

a)	<u>Exempt Items</u>	
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b)	<u>Confidential Items</u>	
	(No items to be considered under this heading)	

1. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman will read the Fire Precautions, which set out the procedures to be followed in the event of fire or other emergency.

2. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

3. MINUTES

To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 July 2018, as attached at Appendix 'A'.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

If Members have an interest in an item please record the interest on the form circulated with this Agenda and hand it to the Legal Representative or Democratic Services Officer at the start of the meeting. A supply of the form will also be available from the Democratic Services Officer at meetings.

Members are advised to contact the Council's Legal section prior to the meeting if they wish to seek advice on a potential interest.

Members are reminded that a non pecuniary interest includes their appointment by the Council as the Council's representative to an outside body and that this should be declared as should their membership of an outside body in their private capacity as a director, trustee, committee member or in another position of influence thereon.

Members who have previously declared interests which are recorded in the Minutes to be considered at this meeting need not repeat the declaration when attending the meeting. Members need take no further action unless the item in which they have an interest becomes the subject of debate, in which event the Member must leave the room if the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or if the interest could reasonably be regarded as so significant as to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest.

6. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2018/19 (TIAA)

Synopsis of report:

To inform Members on the progress made by TIAA, the Council's internal auditors, on progress to date with the 2018/19 Internal Audit Annual Plan.

Recommendation(s):

None: The report is for information.

1. Context of report

1.1 Attached at Appendix 'B' is TIAA's Internal Audit Progress Report for 2018/19.

2. **Report**

2.1 The report identifies the audits which have been completed since the meeting of this Committee in June 2018 for the 2018/19 planned audits.

2.2 There have not been any changes to the 2018/19 audit plan.

3. **Resource implications**

3.1 The audit service is budgeted for in the Council's annual budgets, with a small contingency to cover unforeseen audits.

4. **Legal implications**

4.1 None.

5. **Equality implications**

5.1 None.

(For information)

Background papers

Relevant Internal Audit working files and reports

7. **INTERNAL AUDIT COMPARISONS REPORT (TIAA)**

Synopsis of report:

To present Members with a report which provides a comparison of assurance levels from 2014/15 to 2017/18 so that the Committee can see any trends arising.

Recommendation(s):

None: The report is for information.

1. **Context of report**

1.1 Attached at Appendix 'C' is TIAA's Comparisons report which the Committee requested at its last meeting in July 2018.

2. **Report**

2.1 The report sets out a comparison of assurance levels over time from 2014/15 to 2017/18.

2.2 Identifying trends is particularly important given the prolonged austerity measures which may have impacted upon the control framework at Runnymede.

3. **Resource implications**

3.1 The audit service is budgeted for in the Council's annual budgets, with a small contingency to cover unforeseen audits.

4. **Legal implications**

4.1 None.

5. **Equality implications**

5.1 None.

(For information)

Background papers

Relevant Internal Audit working files and reports

8. **COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS 1 JUNE – 31 JULY 2018 (LAW AND GOVERNANCE)**

Synopsis of report:

To provide Members with a summary of the complaints and compliments received from 1 June – 31 July 2018.

Recommendation(s):

None. This report is for information.

1. **Context of Report**

1.1 The Council maintains a database of formal complaints which have been recorded (including those in which the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) has been involved), what they relate to and how they have been resolved. We maintain a similar database for compliments that have been recorded.

2. **Report**

2.1 The Council's Complaints Procedure regards complaints as 'an expression of dissatisfaction with a Council's action or omission, whether justified or not'. Requests for services, information and explanations of Council policy are not generally regarded as complaints.

2.2 Members are updated on complaints and compliments received at each scheduled meeting of this Committee rather than following the corporate KPI model or the financial year.

2.3 There were 13 formal complaints and 8 compliments recorded between

1 June – 31 July 2018. The table below shows the number of entries in each register from 1 June 2017 to 31 July 2018.

Complaints and Compliments

Business Centre	Complaints 2017			Totals by Business Centre	Complaints 2018		
	June - Aug	Sept - Oct	Nov - Dec		Jan - Mar	April - May	June – July
Corporate Services	1	4	0	5	2	1	1
Community Development	1	2	2	5	2	0	1
Environmental Services	5	5	4	14	4	1	3
Housing	4	7	4	15	9	3	4
Law and Governance	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Planning	3	5	4	12	7	3	3
Resources	3	4	0	7	5	3	1
Totals	17	27	14		30	12	13

- 2.4 In the last reporting period there were roughly the same amounts of both complaints and compliments.
- 2.5 Of the 13 complaints received, there were 5 upheld, or partly so. These were for Planning, Parking, Environmental Services and Housing Maintenance. 6 complaints were not upheld, and there are 2 overdue in Housing and Green Space which are in the process of being dealt with.
- 2.6 The 5 complaints which were upheld, or partly so, were about advice given by Officers in Planning, Customer Services (about Parking), Environmental Health, and one about works needed to a Council property, all of which have been rectified satisfactorily. Two complaints were about a development in the borough one of which was partly upheld after speaking to the contractors concerned. Three Complaints about members of staff in Housing and Environmental Health were not upheld as were the remaining ones which concerned dissatisfaction with the legislative position regarding Council Tax and one to Planning which was not a planning issue.
- 2.7 There were 8 compliments received between 1 June – 31 July 2018. These were for Housing (4) a mixture of compliments for individual members of staff and contractors, Parking (1) which concerned prompt action dealing with illegal parking which was perceived to be causing a risk to safety and Legal/Green Space (2) for dealing with the recent unauthorised encampments at Thorpe Green and Sayes Court. There was also a compliment received in July by Councillors Mrs Lay and Mrs Warner, as reported at the last meeting but this does not appear in the tables as Compliments and Complaints about Councillors are recorded separately.

Business Centre	Compliments 2017			Totals by Business Centre	Compliments 2018		
	June – Aug	Sept - Oct	Nov - Dec		Jan - Mar	April - May	June - July
Corporate Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Development	1	2	2	5	0	1	1
Environmental Services	3	1	5	9	10	4	1
Housing	3	0	0	3	5	1	4
Law and Governance	3	0	0	3	0	0	1
Planning	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Resources	6	3	1	10	1	0	0
Totals	16	6	8		16	7	7

- 2.8 At the last meeting Members were presented with a breakdown of complaints and compliments by Ward. This now shows the position from 1 June – 31 July 2018. Where a Business Centre only received compliments from a particular ward these are shown in bold. i.e. no bold means they received both complaints and compliments.

Ward	Number of Complaints	Number of Compliments	Business Centres
Addlestone North	0	0	
Addlestone Bourneside	4	2	Housing
Chertsey Meads	0	0	
Chertsey St Ann's	0	0	
Chertsey South and Row Town	0	1	Housing
Egham Hythe	0	0	
Egham Town	1	0	Environmental Services
Englefield Green East	2		Planning Environmental Services
Englefield Green West	2	1	Planning Housing Environmental Services
Foxhills	0	0	
New Haw	4	1	Community Development Commercial Services Planning
Thorpe	0	2	Housing Law and Governance
Virginia Water	0	0	
Woodham	0	0	

Out of Borough	1		Planning
Unknown/not recorded	0	0	

2.9 The recording and periodic review of complaints and compliments is a valuable tool for the Council to use to review performance and improve the delivery of services.

2.10 Compliments are also a useful performance tool. They highlight when things are working well and can be used to identify good working practices which can be shared across the organisation.

3. **Policy framework implications**

3.1 Members approved a new Customer Service Charter in December 2016. Officers had anticipated that this would go live early in the new financial year. However, this has been delayed. Under the new Complaints Procedure the response time for formal complaints will be reduced from 10 to 5 working days.

4. **Resource implications**

4.1 Responsibility for overseeing the registers of compliments and complaints is an important part of Corporate Governance and is undertaken by an Officer in Democratic Services on behalf of the Monitoring Officer and met from within existing resources. Accurate completion of the registers is the responsibility of those designated Officers across the organisation. There are a number of Officers that have access to the registers which spreads the workload.

5. **Equality implications**

5.1 The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to promote and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. We should at all times act in a way that is non-discriminatory through our policies and procedures and interactions with people.

5.2 Although Officers endeavour to collect data that might enable us to identify whether a complainant, or satisfied customer for that matter, has a protected characteristic for equality monitoring purposes, in practice hardly anyone is prepared to divulge such information.

(For information)

Background papers

The Complaints and Compliments Registers held on the Council's feedback drive and relevant (part exempt) emails in Democratic Services Outlook folders.

9. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18 (LAW AND GOVERNANCE)**

Synopsis of report:

To inform Members on the receipt and outcome of matters handled by the Commissioner for Local Administration (Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman) covering the year ending 31 March 2018.

Recommendation:

None. This report is for information.

1. **Context of report**

- 1.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman - the Ombudsman - does not normally consider a complaint unless a local authority has first had an opportunity to deal with the complaint itself.
- 1.2 The Council maintains a database of complaints which have been recorded (including those in which the Ombudsman has been involved), what they relate to and how they have been resolved. We maintain a similar database for compliments that have been recorded. The results since the last meeting of this Committee in July 2018 are reported elsewhere on this agenda.
- 1.3 Since June 2017 we have maintained a separate register for complaints dealt with by the Ombudsman. This is monitored on behalf of the Corporate Head of Law and Governance and we try to ensure that requests from the Ombudsman when investigating a complaint are dealt with in a timely manner.

2. **Report**

- 2.1 The Council's Complaints Procedure regards complaints as 'an expression of dissatisfaction with a Council's action or omission, whether justified or not'. Requests for services, information and explanations of general Council policy are not usually regarded as complaints.
- 2.2 In its Annual Review letter, dated 18 July 2018 (Appendix 'D'), which covers the period up to 31 March 2018, the Ombudsman reported that it had received 11 complaints and enquiries, all of which have been accounted for with reference to the Register. There were 4 cases where the Ombudsman referred the complainant back to us for local resolution but they did not pursue their complaint.
- 2.3 There were also 11 decisions made in the year ending 31 March 2018, for which we have 7 notices. The Ombudsman closed 4 cases after making initial enquiries of us. The information we provided in these cases satisfied the Ombudsman that there was no case to answer. There were 5 cases referred back for local resolution and the remaining 2 were not upheld after investigation.

- 2.4 The 11 decisions we have been notified of concern Environmental Services (1), Housing (2), Planning (4) and the remaining 4 are regarding Resources.
- 2.5 A breakdown by Ward and Business centre for 2017/18 for the 7 notices we received is shown below:

Business Centre	Ward and number of cases
Corporate Services (about Planning)	Out of borough
Planning	Foxhills, Virginia Water Out of borough
Resources	Chertsey Meads Foxhills Out of borough

- 2.6 The Environmental Services, Housing and one of the Resources cases were referred back for local resolution but the complainants did not contact us; therefore we do not know what the complaints were about just that the Ombudsman chose not to take the cases up for investigation.
- 2.7 Members are asked to note that as set out in the Ombudsman's letter, we might not necessarily hold the same information as the Ombudsman because some complainants never come back to us to pursue a complaint if the Ombudsman has decided the complaint is premature. This was the case for the two Housing cases and one Environmental Services. Therefore, they do not appear above because we did not receive notices for them but they do appear in the Ombudsman's spreadsheet at section 2.10 below because they dealt with them without needing to contact us.
- 2.8 Examples of the types of complaint we received this year include residents aggrieved by the handling of Housing Benefit applications and payments and complaints relating to the various stages of Planning applications.
- 2.9 Officers have extracted the following comparative data from the Ombudsman's website for Surrey authorities, including the County Council for 2017/18. Previous years are shown for comparison:

Authority	2015/16 complaints received and (number of decisions)	2015/16 complaints upheld	2016/17 complaints received and (number of decisions)	2016/17 complaints upheld	2017/18 complaints received and (number of decisions)	2017/18 complaints upheld
Elmbridge	18 (18)	4	27 (27)	1	20 (25)	3
Epsom and Ewell	19 (16)	4	15 (19)	2	15 (15)	1
Guildford	16 (17)	4	28 (29)	1	22 (19)	1
Mole Valley	14 (13)	0	3 (4)	1	20 (18)	1
Reigate and Banstead	21 (22)	4	18 (17)	2	16 (17)	1
Runnymede	13 (12)	1	12 (13)	3	11 (11)	0
Spelthorne	12 (12)	1	8 (9)	1	13 (11)	3
Surrey Heath	12 (10)	1	16 (16)	0	18 (15)	0

Surrey County Council	167 (163)	20	185 (188)	35	132 (139)	18
Tandridge	22 (25)	2	11 (12)	2	8 (9)	0
Waverley	26 (26)	4	23 (19)	1	18 (22)	2
Woking	12 (14)	2	20 (19)	0	12 (12)	0

2.10 Set out in the table below are the complaints received by each authority by Ombudsman category in 2017/18.

Authority	Benefits and Tax	Corporate Services	Env Services/ Public Protection/ Regulation	Housing	Planning	ASC	Highways	Education	Other
Elmbridge	2		7	2	8				1
Epsom and Ewell	2	1	5	1	4	1	1		
Guildford	3	3	3	5	7				
Mole Valley	5	2	2	1	10				
Reigate and Banstead	3	1	4	3	4		1		
Runnymede	3		1	2	5				
Spelthorne	3	2		5	2	1			
Surrey Heath	4	2	2	1	6		3		
SCC			5		2	48	23	53	1
Tandridge	2	2		4					
Waverley	1		4	4	7		1		1
Woking	2	2	1	1	4		2		

2.11 The tables show that we compare well with other authorities in Surrey; we share common themes and none are unusual in terms of numbers received.

2.12 The Ombudsman has provided a summary of their annual review with regard to local Government complaints. The Ombudsman received a total of 17,452 complaints and enquiries in 2017/18 compared with 16,863. In 2017/18 they issued 2,566 recommendations to remedy personal injustices compared with 2,428 in 2016/17. The Ombudsman also issues a number of public interest reports in order to share and promote best practice from which local authorities can learn. These tend to concentrate more on services provided by County Councils such as adult social care and children's services. However they have also issued reports on Temporary accommodation and waste and recycling which were shared with the relevant business centres.

2.13 The Ombudsman has published the following statistics for 2017/18:

- London accounts for the highest proportion of complaints, of all the regions, with 25% of all complaints being about London authorities
- London also has the highest uphold rate, with 63% of all detailed investigations being upheld
- The South East region has the lowest uphold rate at 48%

- The North East has the highest proportion of Children and Education complaints upheld, with the East Midlands having the lowest proportion
- The North West has the highest proportion of Adult Care complaints upheld, with the South East area having the lowest
- London also has the highest proportion of housing complaints (25%), and the highest uphold rate (68%)

3. **Policy framework implications**

- 3.1 The Council is 'customer-led' and strives for excellent customer service. Customer feedback, whether good or bad, is therefore very useful in ensuring standards are maintained and system improvements made.
- 3.2 Decision notices are promptly forwarded to the relevant Business Centre so that they can decide whether there needs to be a review of procedure or if there are ways to improve service delivery in order to avoid having matters referred to the Ombudsman even if 'no fault' has been found.
- 3.3 The Key Performance Indicator for Ombudsman matters reported to Corporate Management Committee now includes 'minor injustices'. In the first quarter of 2018/19 there were no such cases to report.

4. **Resource implications**

- 4.1 The Ombudsman register and Link Officer role is carried out using existing resources.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 This report fulfils the Council's Statutory duty under section 5(2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

6. **Equality implications**

- 6.1 Although Officers endeavour to collect data that might enable us to identify whether a complainant, or satisfied customer for that matter, has a 'protected characteristic' for equality monitoring purposes, in practice hardly anyone is prepared to divulge such information.
- 6.2 From a review of the matters referred to the Ombudsman it is indicated that in one case the protected characteristics of pregnancy and maternity and disability might be engaged as they were cited as applying to the individual. There is no suggestion however that the Council treated the person any differently because of a protected characteristic.

(For information)

Background papers

Relevant correspondence held on Law and Governance files including internal departmental emails and between the Council and the LG&SCO.

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following report under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the report in question would be likely to involve disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

(To resolve)

Part II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection.

a) Exempt Items

11. ADDLESTONE ONE – RISK REGISTER UPDATE

b) Confidential Items

(No items to be considered under this heading)

Standards and Audit Committee

Tuesday 18 September 2018

Appendices

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Runnymede Borough CouncilSTANDARDS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE24 July 2018 at 7.30pm

Members of the Committee Present: Councillors M G Nuti (Chairman), D E Anderson-Bassey (Vice-Chairman), M D Cressey, J R Furey, Mrs Y P Lay, P J Taylor and A P Tollett

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors A Alderson, S L Dennett and P Snow and Mr J Healy and Mr M Litvak (Independent persons)

172 FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman read the procedures to be followed in the event of fire or other emergency.

173 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 June 2018 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

174 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Alderson, S L Dennett and P Snow. There were no items of business for the Independent persons.

175 EXTERNAL AUDIT INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS ON AUDITING (ISA) 260 REPORT

The Committee noted the annual report by the Council's External Auditors (KPMG).

Members were advised that the report gave an unqualified opinion on the authority's financial statements and the value for money assessment. KPMG had examined those risks which were considered significant. These were:

- valuation of land and buildings
- investment properties
- pension assets and liabilities
- faster close
- fraud risk from revenue recognition
- fraud risk from management override of controls

KPMG reported there were no significant issues or concerns arising but agreed to clarify a point raised with regard to investment properties. It was reported that KPMG's key judgements in the following areas were balanced which was positive:

- Land and buildings and investment properties
- PPE: HRA assets
- Pension liability

KPMG had given a rating of 'cautious' with regard to NNDR provisions. This was because a number of NHS trusts had initiated court action with regard to the legality

of business rates paid. However, it was not known whether this would be relevant locally, hence the prudent judgement at this stage. Officers confirmed that the issue of Business Rates Retention was an on-going concern for which provision had also been made.

In respect of the audit opinion on Value for Money, KPMG had looked at the authority's delivery of budgets. Whilst they raised no significant issues, the Committee was concerned by the estimated underspend of approximately £95k becoming an outturn of an overspend of £688k. Some Members considered that more control needed to be exercised and as a result fewer supplementary estimates would be submitted to Committee for approval. Officers agreed to re-circulate the list of variances from the May 2018 outturn report.

The Committee discussed the potential implications of negative Revenue Support Grant but were assured that the Council was taking this risk into account when setting budgets.

KPMG had followed up on previous recommendations, both of which had been implemented with no new recommendations being made. Two minor adjustments to the financial statements had been agreed.

Officers agreed to update the Committee at the next meeting in September with regard to Section 106 monies, the split with Surrey County Council and the deadlines to utilise such funding agreements. Officers would confirm which the decision making Committee was with regard to this issue.

The Chairman thanked KPMG for attending the meeting to present their report. The Corporate Director of Resources and his team were also thanked for their work.

176 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2018/19

The Committee noted progress with 2018/19 Internal Audit plan. TIAA had completed two audits in the following areas: Commercial Property Redevelopment and Addlestone Town Centre Redevelopment. Both had received a substantial evaluation with no recommendations. TIAA were currently examining the five following areas: Business Continuity, HR – Recruitment, Building Services, the Runnymede Travel Initiative and Community Grants.

The Committee appreciated the additional column on the progress chart against the 2018/19 plan to show when the service area was last audited. TIAA agreed to include in their next progress report the start dates, anticipated and actual end dates for each audit in the 2018/19 programme.

The Committee did not think it productive for a service area to be able to ask for an audit to be postponed more than once. Therefore, TIAA were also asked to indicate how many audits had been postponed and the number of postponements for each business centre. Finally, TIAA were requested to provide an annual comparisons audit at the next meeting in September showing if services audited had either improved or worsened since their last audit.

The Chairman thanked TIAA for their Internal Audit work and reminded the Committee that TIAA would give the first half of their training session on how to conduct an audit at the next meeting in September. This would be followed up at the November meeting with a practical session auditing a service area to be confirmed.

177 COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS 1 APRIL – 31 MAY 2018

The Committee received its regular report on Complaints and Compliments that had been recorded centrally with the Corporate Head of Law and Governance.

Members noted that there had been 12 formal complaints recorded and 7 compliments between 1 April and 31 May. It was noted that only 2 complaints had been upheld. For the year ending 31 May 2018, there had been 100 complaints and 53 compliments. Every ward was represented as were all business centres and it was appreciated that front line services received more attention, both positive and negative.

The Committee discussed how long data should be kept for in order to better analyse trends and common themes. It was acknowledged that information should not be retained for longer than necessary. The Committee agreed that if anonymised, it would be appropriate to amend the document retention schedule with regard to complaints and compliments to retain information for a maximum of 5 years instead of 2 maintaining anonymity with regard to the matters reported to the Committee to comply with the Data Protection requirements. This would then cover for example a change programme or re-organisation and indicate whether or not it had been successful.

Officers agreed to record a letter of thanks reported by Councillor Mrs Lay from the Friends of the Hythe.

178 ADDLESTONE ONE RISK REGISTER – UPDATE

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussion would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

Officers reported that the vast majority of potential risks identified at the onset of the Addlestone One project had been eliminated. The remaining risks were discussed and Officers agreed to adjust the risk register to separate out one of the items discussed at the meeting.

Progress with letting the retail units was noted and the Committee was invited to attend the workshop at 6.30pm prior to the Corporate Management Committee on 26 July on Addlestone One for a fuller briefing.

Officers were requested to log all the closed risks to identify 'lessons learned' to be applied to future projects. The Committee was assured that mitigation measures were in hand and part of the daily monitoring of the project.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.40pm)



Runnymede Borough Council

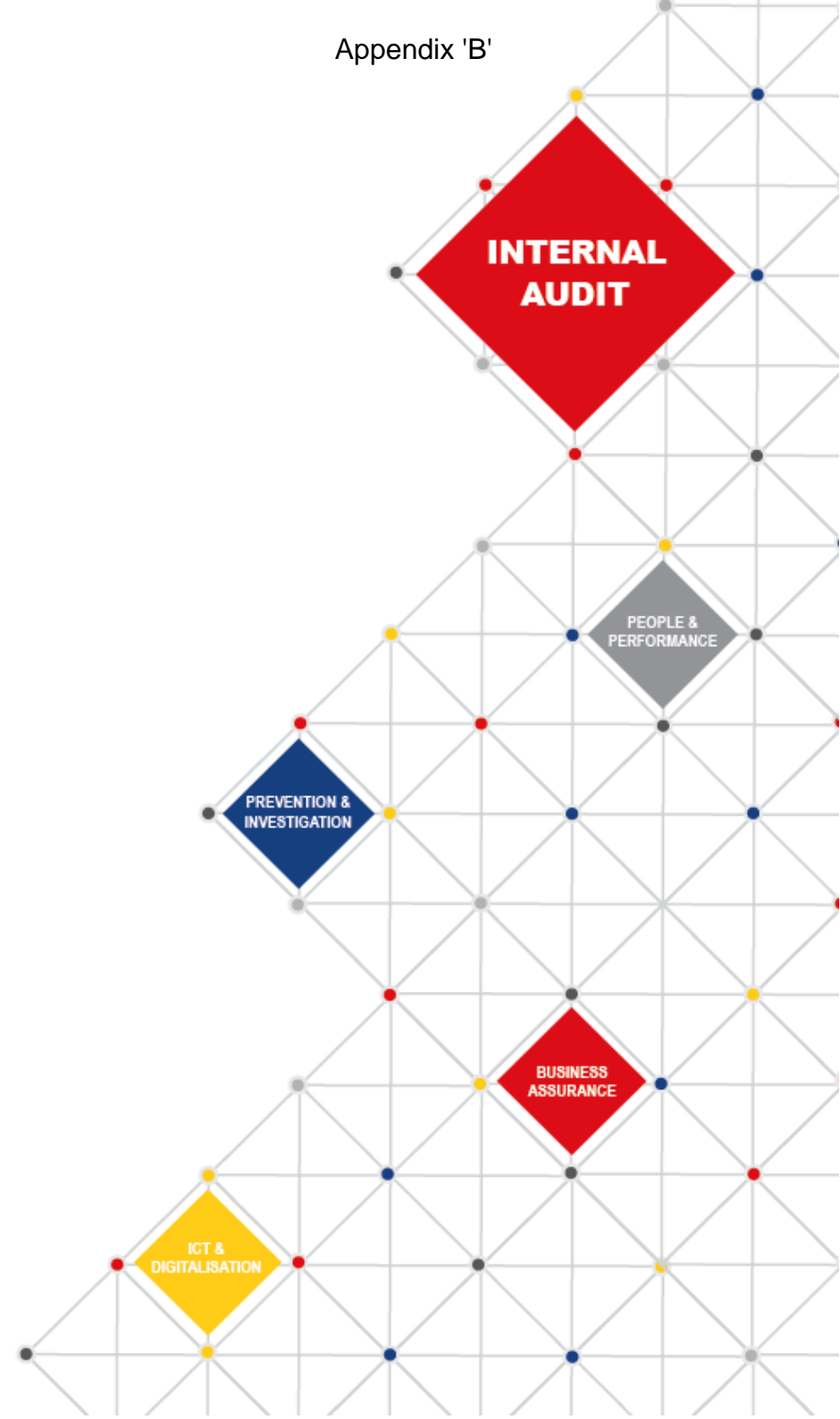
Internal Audit Progress Report 2018/19

Standards and Audit Committee

18 September 2018

FINAL

2018/19



INTRODUCTION

1. This summary report provides the Standards and Audit Committee with an update on the progress of our work at Runnymede Borough Council as at 17 August 2018.

PROGRESS AGAINST THE 2018/19 ANNUAL PLAN

2. Our progress against the Annual Plan for 2018-19 is set out in Appendix A. All Priority 1 and 2 recommendations made to the final reports identified in Section 4 below and their management responses are shown at Appendix B.

EMERGING GOVERNANCE, RISK AND INTERNAL CONTROL RELATED ISSUES

3. We have not identified any emerging risks which could impact on the overall effectiveness of the governance, risk and internal control framework of the organisation.

AUDITS COMPLETED SINCE THE LAST REPORT TO COMMITTEE

4. The table below sets out details of audits finalised since the previous meeting of the Standards and Audit Committee.

Review	Evaluation	Key Dates				Number of Recommendations			
		Start date	Draft issued	Responses Received	Final issued	1	2	3	OEM*
Whistle Blowing Incident follow up	N/A	27/06/18	18/07/18	18/07/18	23/07/18	-	-	-	-
Sheltered Accommodation	Reasonable	25/05/18	02/07/18	10/08/18	15/08/18	-	-	6	-
Community Grants	Reasonable	14/05/18	31/07/18	14/08/18	14/08/18	-	2	5	3

*Organisational Efficiency Matters (OEM). These are best practice or value for money issues identified during the audit

CHANGES TO THE ANNUAL PLAN 2018/19

6. There is one change proposed to the Annual Plan at this time:



- Additional Audit – Housing Section 106 – 8 days.

FRAUDS/IRREGULARITIES

7. We have not been advised of any frauds or irregularities in the period since the last summary report was issued.

LIAISON

8. We continue to liaise with the Corporate Director of Resources on a regular basis

PROGRESS ACTIONING PRIORITY 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

9. We have not made any Priority 1 recommendations (i.e. fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately) since the previous progress report.

RESPONSIBILITY/DISCLAIMER

10. This report has been prepared solely for management's use and must not be recited or referred to in whole or in part to third parties without our prior written consent. The matters raised in this report not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all the improvements that might be made. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended, for any other purpose. TIAA neither owes nor accepts any duty of care to any other party who may receive this report and specifically disclaims any liability for loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature, which is caused by their reliance on our report.



Progress against the Annual Plan for 2018/19

System	Planned Quarter	Days	Current Status	Comments	Date last time audited
Business Continuity	1	6	In Progress (estimated completion date to draft report 14 September 2018)		20 May 2016
Data Protection	1	6	Audit delayed by TIAA pending ICT General Data Protection Regulation audit outcome		8 May 2017
HR - Recruitment	1	6	In Progress (estimated completion date to draft report 14 September 2018)		Not previously audited
Whistle Blowing follow up	1	3	Final report issued 23 July 2018		N/A
Community Transport	1	5	Client has asked for further postponement due to unforeseen high workload and staff shortages.	Brought forward from 2017/18 due to TIAA rearranging auditors for this audit but now further delayed by client	17 February 2016
Housing Enforcement	1	6	Trying to get a start date with new Head of Housing	Brought forward from 2017/18 due to TIAA rearranging auditors for this audit	Not previously audited
Sheltered Centres	1	5	Final report issued 15 August 2018	Brought forward from 2017/18 due to TIAA rearranging auditors for this audit	Not previously audited
Building Services	1	5	Draft report issued 17 August 2018		28 October 2015
Runnymede Travel Initiative	2	5	In Progress (estimated completion date to draft report 7 September 2018)		20 July 2015
Planning Enforcement	2	6	Start date to be confirmed - on hold at the request of the client pending the outcome of the broader O & S service review of the Planning department.		Not previously audited
Community Grants	2	5	Final report issued 14 August 2018		11 August 2015
Housing Rents	2	8	Audit to be undertaken in quarter 3 alongside financial systems audits		26 April 2018 (annual audit)
Housing Repair and Maintenance	2	8	Scheduled start date 12/09/18 – estimated completion 28/09/18		6 December 2016

System	Planned Quarter	Days	Current Status	Comments	Date last time audited
Benefits and Council Tax Support	3	10			Q3 Annual audit
NDR	3	11			Q3 annual audit
Council Tax	3	11			Q3 annual audit
Accounts Payable (Creditors)	3	6			Q3 annual audit
Accounts Receivable (Debtors)	3	6			Q3 annual audit
Income – Cash and Bank	3	6			Q3 annual audit
Payroll	3	11			Q3 annual audit
Budgetary Control	3	6			Q3 annual audit
Project Management Toolkit	3	5			Not previously audited
Addlestone One (Town Centre Redevelopment)	4	6			Previously twice a year
Commercial Property	4	11			Now an annual audit
Commercial Rents	4	6			Now an annual audit
Procurement / Contracts	4	6			2 May 2018
Housing Section 106	4	8		Additional audit to plan	Not previously audited
ICT -Change Management & Control	4	6			
ICT - Mobile device security & management	4	6			
ICT - Members ICT	4	6			
Follow up	Q1/2 (19/20)	6		Follow up of all 2018/19 recommendations	N/A
Total		207			

KEY:

FINAL



	=	To be commenced
	=	Site work commenced
	=	Draft report issued
	=	Final report issued

Appendix B

Recommendations – Priority 1 and 2 recommendations

Audit Report: Community Grants
Report Issued: 14 August 2018

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
6	Compliance	Testing was carried out for a sample of 18 applications for Community First funding from 2017/18 and 2018/19 to date. In two cases the actual amounts paid varied from the amounts initially approved and set out on the assessment forms. It was noted that there is no additional process in place for the approval of variances between the authorised grant and actual amount paid.	A process be established to ensure that any subsequent variances between the authorised grant and the actual amount paid are appropriately approved.	2	<i>Community First applications are usually made on an estimate and not final costs. Grant is approved on the basis of Standing orders ie one quote for up to £750, two quotes for £750 - £3000 and three quotes for £3,001 plus. Members of the panel will be emailed by the Partnership and Policy Development Officer as soon as a variance is known, for approval.</i>	1 st September 2018	Suzanne Stronge
7	Compliance	In one case it was identified that the whole amount of the grant was not in fact required to be spent by the organisation for the particular project. It	A process be established to ensure that unspent monies are either returned to the Council, or in the	2	<i>Receipts are asked for from organisations so the variance can be identified. Future grant approval will contain a standard wording that unspent monies needs to be</i>	1 st September 2018	Suzanne Stronge



Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
		<p>was noted that there is no process in place to ensure that in such cases the monies are returned to the Council, or in the case of regular recipients, deducted from any subsequent funding.</p>	<p>case of regular recipients, deducted from subsequent grant funding.</p>		<p><i>returned to the Council. At the receipt stage actual expenditure will be checked against the approved grant and if there is an underspend, the Partnership & Policy Development Officer will ask the organisation to return the unspent grant and that future grant will be dependent on the unspent funding being returned.</i></p>		





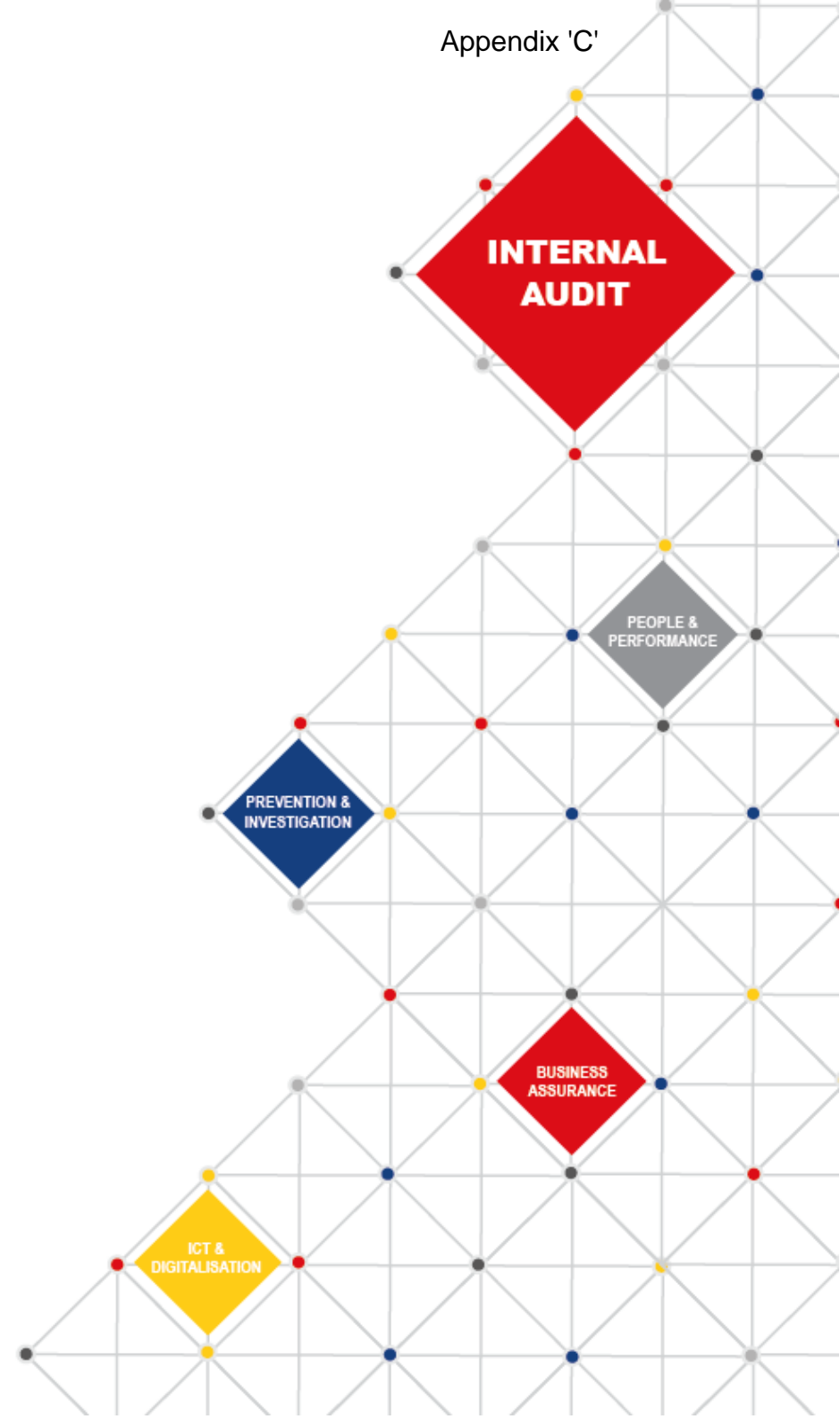
Runnymede Borough Council

**Internal Audit Comparison Report
Standards and Audit Committee**

18 September 2018

FINAL

2018/19



INTRODUCTION

1. The following report provides a comparison of assurance levels over time so that the Standards and Audit Committee can see any trends arising. This is particularly important given the prolonged austerity measures which may have impacted upon the control framework at Runnymede BC.

COMPARISON OF ASSURANCE LEVELS BETWEEN 2014/15 TO 2017/18

2. The comparison of the assurance levels between 2014/15 to 2017/18 are shown in table 1 below.

Table 1

Audit Area	Assurance Level 2014/15	Assurance Level 2015/16	Assurance Level 2016/17	Assurance Level 2017/18	Comment
Main Accounting	-	Substantial	-	Substantial	
Treasury Management	-	Substantial	-	Substantial	
Payroll	Reasonable	Substantial	Substantial	Reasonable	
Council Tax	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	
NDR	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	
Debtors	Reasonable	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	
Creditors	Reasonable	Reasonable	Substantial	Reasonable	
Housing Benefits and Council Tax Support	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	
Cash, Bank and Income	Substantial	Reasonable	Reasonable	Substantial	

Audit Area	Assurance Level 2014/15	Assurance Level 2015/16	Assurance Level 2016/17	Assurance Level 2017/18	Comment
Car Parking	Substantial	-	Reasonable	-	
Corporate Governance	-	Reasonable	Substantial	Reasonable	
Risk Management	-	Substantial	-	Reasonable	
Budgetary Control	-	-	Substantial	-	
Business Continuity	-	Reasonable	-	-	
Addlestone 1 – Town Centre Redevelopment	-	Reasonable	Substantial	Substantial	
Commercial Rents	-	-	No Assurance	Substantial	
Commercial Property Redevelopment	-	-	-	Substantial	
Data Quality	-	-	Reasonable	-	
Insurances	-	-	Reasonable	-	
Day Centres	-	-	-	Reasonable	
Grants	-	Reasonable	-	-	
Land Charges	Substantial	-	-	-	

Audit Area	Assurance Level 2014/15	Assurance Level 2015/16	Assurance Level 2016/17	Assurance Level 2017/18	Comment
Housing Rents	Reasonable	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	Audit planned for 2018/19
Housing Section 106	-	-	-	-	
Right to Buy	Substantial	-	-	-	
Building Services	Substantial	-	-	-	
Depot	-	-	Reasonable	Reasonable	
Waste	Reasonable	-	Reasonable	-	
Absence Management	-	Reasonable	-	Reasonable	
Licensing	-	Reasonable	-	-	
Customer Services	-	-	-	Substantial	
Procurement	-	Reasonable	-	Reasonable	
Safeguarding/Prevent	-	-	-	Substantial	
Runnymede Travel Initiative	Substantial	-	-	-	
Building Control	-	-	-	Substantial	

Audit Area	Assurance Level 2014/15	Assurance Level 2015/16	Assurance Level 2016/17	Assurance Level 2017/18	Comment
Housing Repair and Maintenance	-	-	Reasonable	-	
Electoral Registration	-	Substantial	-	-	
Freedom of Information	-	Substantial	-	-	
ICT Windows Active Directory	Substantial	-	-	-	
ICT Smart Phones	Reasonable	-	-	-	
ICT Infrastructure	-	Substantial	-	-	
ICT Disaster Recovery	-	Reasonable	-	-	
Information Governance	-	-	Reasonable	-	
Leisure	-	-	Substantial	-	
Community Transport	-	Reasonable	-	-	
Asset Management	-	-	Substantial	-	

- (-) an audit was not scheduled to be undertaken in this year.

3. **Summary of Assurance levels:**

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Substantial	10	12	12	14
Reasonable	6	11	8	8
Limited	0	0	0	0
No Assurance	0	0	1	0

4. There is no indication that the overall control framework at Runnymede BC has significantly reduced as a result of the continuing austerity. Further trends will be identified at the end of 2018/19 financial year.
-

Local Government & Social Care OMBUDSMAN

18 July 2018

By email

Paul Turrell
Chief Executive
Runnymede Borough Council

Dear Paul Turrell,

Annual Review letter 2018

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2018. The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received about your authority and the decisions we made during the period. I hope this information will prove helpful in assessing your authority's performance in handling complaints.

Complaint statistics

In providing these statistics, I would stress that the volume of complaints does not, in itself, indicate the quality of the council's performance. High volumes of complaints can be a sign of an open, learning organisation, as well as sometimes being an early warning of wider problems. Low complaint volumes can be a worrying sign that an organisation is not alive to user feedback, rather than always being an indicator that all is well. So, I would encourage you to use these figures as the start of a conversation, rather than an absolute measure of corporate health. One of the most significant statistics attached is the number of upheld complaints. This shows how frequently we find fault with the council when we investigate. Equally importantly, we also give a figure for the number of cases where we decided your authority had offered a satisfactory remedy during the local complaints process. Both figures provide important insights.

I want to emphasise the statistics in this letter reflect 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, some of whom 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.

Future development of annual review letters

Last year, we highlighted our plans to move away from a simplistic focus on complaint volumes and instead turn focus onto the lessons that can be learned and the wider improvements we can achieve through our recommendations to improve services for the many. We have produced a new corporate strategy for 2018-21 which commits us to more comprehensively publish information about the outcomes of our investigations and the occasions our recommendations result in improvements to local services.

We will be providing this broader range of data the first time in next year's letters, as well as creating an interactive map of local authority performance on our website. We believe this will lead to improved transparency of our work, as well as providing increased recognition to the improvements councils have agreed to make following our interventions. We will therefore be seeking views from councils on the future format of our annual letters early next year.

Supporting local scrutiny

One of the purposes of our annual letters to councils is to help ensure learning from complaints informs scrutiny at the local level. Sharing the learning from our investigations and supporting the democratic scrutiny of public services continues to be one of our key priorities. We have created a dedicated section of our website which contains a host of information to help scrutiny committees and councillors to hold their authority to account – complaints data, decision statements, public interest reports, focus reports and scrutiny questions. This can be found at www.lgo.org.uk/scrutiny I would be grateful if you could encourage your elected members and scrutiny committees to make use of these resources.

Learning from complaints to improve services

We share the issues we see in our investigations to help councils learn from the issues others have experienced and avoid making the same mistakes. We do this through the reports and other resources we publish. Over the last year, we have seen examples of councils adopting a positive attitude towards complaints and working constructively with us to remedy injustices and take on board the learning from our cases. In one great example, a county council has seized the opportunity to entirely redesign how its occupational therapists work with all of its districts, to improve partnership working and increase transparency for the public. This originated from a single complaint. This is the sort of culture we all benefit from – one that takes the learning from complaints and uses it to improve services.

Complaint handling training

We have a well-established and successful training programme supporting local authorities and independent care providers to help improve local complaint handling. In 2017-18 we delivered 58 courses, training more than 800 people. We also set up a network of council link officers to promote and share best practice in complaint handling, and hosted a series of seminars for that group. To find out more visit www.lgo.org.uk/training.

Yours sincerely,



Michael King
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Local Authority Report: Runnymede Borough Council
For the Period Ending: 31/03/2018

For further information on how to interpret our 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
0	3	0	0	1	0	2	5	0	11

Decisions made

				Detailed Investigations			
Incomplete or Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed After Initial Enquiries	Not Upheld	Upheld	Uphold Rate	Total
0	0	5	4	2	0	0%	11

Notes

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 that fault caused injustice that ought to be remedied.

Complaints Remedied

by LGO	Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO Involvement
0	0