

Blaby District Council
Scrutiny Commission

Date of Meeting 4 February 2026
Title of Report **Annual Complaints Report**
Report Author Business Systems & Information Manager

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 The annual complaints report provides a summary of the Councils formal complaint handling performance, the nature and volume of complaints, and insight into cases reviewed and investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGSCO).

2. Recommendation(s) to Scrutiny Commission

- 2.1 To review the appended complaints report and consider any relevant comments, feedback, or suggestions relating to the Councils handling of formal complaints.
- 2.2 To review the Councils Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy and the associated web page information in order to be familiar with our current procedure and be able to comment on this where relevant (please see section 9 – Appendices)

3. Reason for Decision(s) Recommended

- 3.1 It is of value and importance that the Councils Scrutiny Commission has assurance of the organisation's formal complaint handling performance and the opportunity to comment and review this due to their commitment to ensuring better outcomes for our communities.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

The Local Government Act 1974 states that Local Authorities must have reasonable opportunity to investigate and respond to complaints before they are directed to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. For this reason, Councils (including Blaby District Council) establish a published complaints policy and have an internal procedure for handling complaints received.

When a council finishes its internal investigation and responds to a complaint, it is legally required to inform the complainant of their right to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman if escalations through the local procedure have been exhausted.

Blaby District Council has a two-stage formal complaints process, which is outlined in our Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy, and aims to resolve all complaints amicably without requiring further escalation to the Ombudsman.

Prior to a formal complaint process, the Council will aim to resolve any issues to an individual's satisfaction before they become a complaint if they can be dealt with quickly and efficiently by the relevant service area. These types of issues are regarded by the Council as 'Service Requests' or 'Informal Service Level Complaints'. These issues are not recorded or monitored by the Council's Information Governance team and do not form part of this report.

The appended report provides an overview of the Council's complaint handling performance, the nature and volume of formal complaints received, and an insight into cases reviewed and investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGSCO).

In February 2024, the LGSCO published a Complaint Handling Code for Council's. Although the LGSCO consider the code to be 'best practice' and 'important advice and guidance' it is not a statutory requirement for Councils to adhere to. However, the 'Code' does state the following.

'We may make a finding of maladministration where local councils policies and procedures depart from the Code without sufficient explanation. We may also make a finding of maladministration where a local council, without good reason, does not meet the standards in the Code when responding to an individual complaint.'

When reviewing the 'Complaints Code' after its publication, Blaby District Council found that our current Policy and procedures already met most of the advice and recommendations outlined in the code and that we typically handle and respond to complaints received in an effective, timely and compliant manner.

However, the Council has identified some ways in which it can improve and comply further with the LGSCO Complaints Code. These are outlined in the appended report.

4.2 Proposal(s)

That Scrutiny Commission members review the appended complaints report, and consider any relevant comments, feedback, or suggestions relating to the Councils handling of formal complaints.

To do this within the context of our current Complaints, Comments and

Compliments Policy and the Local Government & Social Housing Ombudsman's 'Complaint Code'.

4.3 Relevant Consultations

In writing this report, the author has consulted with the Corporate Services Group Manager, who also acts as the Councils Monitoring Officer.

The author has also reviewed the guidance for annual complaint reports outlined in section 8 of the LGSCO's Complaints Code.

4.4 Significant Issues

There are no significant issues addressed as part of this report.

4.5 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities and there are no areas of concern.

5. Environmental impact

5.1 There are no environmental impacts of this report or the Councils complaint handling processes.

6. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

6.1 There are no additional costs associated with this report or the Councils complaint handling processes. Resource and associated operational costs are outlined in the Councils annual budget.

7. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

7.1

Current Risk	Actions to reduce the risks
The Council does not meet the expectations of the Local Government Ombudsman (LGSCO) in its handling and response to formal complaints.	The Council has a published Complaints Policy, outlining its definition of a complaint, how they can be made, and the procedure for handling them. This is supported by robust internal processes ensuring compliance with our policy commitments.

8. Other options considered

8.1 No other options are relevant for this report.

9. Appendix

9.1 Appendix A – Annual Complaints Report Summary

9.2 Appendix B – [BDC Feedback and Complaints Web Page](#) (which contains a link to the Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy).

9.3 Appendix C – [Complaint Handling Code - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

10. Background paper(s)

Not applicable.

11. Report author's contact details

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