

**CABINET  
20 NOVEMBER 2018**

**ANNUAL LETTER 2017/18 – PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES**

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**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 To invite Cabinet to note the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales' 2017/18 Annual Letter for Torfaen County Borough Council.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet notes the Annual Letter of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales attached as appendix one to this report.

**3. Background**

3.1 As Cabinet will recall, a detailed review of the complaints received by the Council during the last financial year was discussed at their Corporate Performance Session in September 2018. The report included information taken from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales annual report.

3.2 Since that session, the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales has issued his Annual Letter for the Council.

3.3 The letter states the complaints received by the Ombudsman concerning Torfaen have decreased significantly in the past year, from 23 to 15, and requests that it is presented to Cabinet to assist Members in their review of the Council's performance.

**4. Issues identified**

4.1 The Annual Letter contains a factsheet giving a breakdown of complaints data relating to the Council. This year it also contains a new set of statistics regarding Ombudsman interventions. These include all cases upheld as well as early resolutions and voluntary settlements.

4.2 In summary, 15 complaints concerning the Council were received by the Ombudsman in the following areas:

- **Adult Social Services - 3**

- i. Action taken by a care provider (older people)
- ii. Provision of residential care (older people)
- iii. Services for vulnerable adults with learning difficulties or mental health issues

- **Children's Social Services - 4**

- i. Child protection investigation
- ii. Contact arrangements

- iii. Child's welfare
- iv. Court Action

- **Complaints Handling - 1**

- i. Refusal to deal with a complaint

- **Education - 2**

- i. Both complaints related to school transport

- **Planning and Building Control - 4**

- i. Complaint about the planning department
- ii. Failure to take enforcement action
- iii. Handling of a planning application
- iv. Enforcement of unauthorized development

- **Various Other -1**

- i. Handling of data

4.3 Full details of these complaints were included in the analysis considered previously by the Cabinet at their Corporate Performance Session, there were no investigations.

## 5. Implications

5.1 There are no specific policy or resource implications arising directly from this report.

## 6. Action to be taken following decision

6.1 The information presented in the Annual Report will be shared with all service areas to ensure lessons are learnt and service improvements delivered.

## 7. Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that Cabinet notes the Annual Letter of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales attached as appendix one to this report.

<b>Appendices</b>	Appendix One – Annual Letter from the Public Services Ombudsman Wales for Torfaen County Borough Council
<b>Background Papers</b>	Report to the Council's Corporate Performance Assessment Session (September 2018) - Analysis of complaints received by the Council during the 2017/18 financial year

**For a copy of the background papers or for further information about this report, please telephone:**

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