

9 July 2025

*By email*

Mr Donald  
Chief Executive  
London Borough of Haringey

Dear Mr Donald

### **Annual Review letter 2024-25**

I wrote to you in May with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2025. In that letter I explained that where we had concerns about your organisation's complaint handling or to highlight exceptional performance I would write again, and I have set our experience of your organisation's complaint handling below.

As a reminder, [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.

This letter will be published on our website on 16 July 2025.

### **Your organisation's performance**

It is very disappointing to note that despite raising concerns in previous years including in our letter in 2024, the Council's responses to our enquiries and timely compliance with recommendations remains poor. This continues to cause us significant concern and adds to the frustration and distress caused to complainants.

Of 47 enquiries made during the year, 19 responses were outside the 20 working days we allow. In several cases, the Council took over 40 days to provide a response. We also had to remind the Council of our power to issue a witness summons to secure a response. This is not a step we take lightly.

The Council agreed to our recommendations in 45 cases during the year, however in ten of these cases the recommendations were completed outside of agreed timescales. We have raised this same concern on multiple occasions.

We have recorded delays relating to personal remedies, including issuing apologies and making payments. These should be simple to administer, and any delay causes additional frustration to complainants.

We have also recorded delays relating to agreed service improvement recommendations. I would encourage the Council to engage in discussion at the draft decision stage of our process if the timescales suggested for service improvement recommendations are not achievable or realistic. If the timescales we propose are not achievable, the Council needs to explain why this is the case before a decision is finalised.

I expect the Council to take further action to address the delays we and complainants have experienced during the year. I ask that you consider what action is needed to improve responses to our enquiries and ensure that recommendations are completed on time, as agreed. If there is any support my office can provide to help improve the situation, please do let me know.

### **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. We issued the guides alongside free [training resources](#) councils 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](mailto:training@lgo.org.uk).

Yours sincerely,



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