

Local Government & Social Care OMBUDSMAN

9 July 2025

By email

Mr Robinson
Chief Executive
Worcestershire County Council

Dear Mr Robinson

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 out 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

In last year's letter, I raised concerns about your Council's complaint handling, so it is disappointing to report similar issues this year. We have raised concerns about delay in complying with agreed recommendations for several years and there has been no notable improvement.

Your Council agreed to, and implemented, our recommendations in 25 cases during the year, however in seven of those cases the actions were completed outside of agreed timescales.

I am aware there has been continued positive engagement with my office, as noted in last year's letter and officers have set out the steps taken that will hopefully ensure timely compliance with recommendations. Officers have also committed to be proactive in cases where there might be delays in responding to our enquiries and draft decisions. It is encouraging to see this level of engagement and I thank your officers for the reassurance they are providing that our concerns are being addressed. I hope to see a sustained improvement in the year ahead.

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](mailto:training@lgo.org.uk) 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.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amerdeep Somal', followed by a horizontal line.

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