

**Executive Board**  
**21st October, 2019**

**Ombudsman's Annual Letter 2018/19 Carmarthenshire County Council**

Purpose: To receive the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter 2018/19

**Recommendations/key decisions required:**

**To receive the Annual Letter 2018/19 and to assess performance and consider any actions thereupon.**

**Reasons:**

Each year the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) provides each Welsh local authority with a letter in the form of a factsheet with accompanying data. It is provided to assist in reviewing performance.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted NA

Exec Board Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Councillor Emlyn Dole**

Directorate

Name of Head of Service:  
Linda Rees Jones

Designations: Head of  
Administration and Law

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Executive Board

21st October 2019

### Ombudsman's Annual Letter 2018/19 Carmarthenshire County Council

1. Annually the PSOW provides to each County Council a letter in the form of a factsheet supported with accompanying data. It is provided to assist in reviewing performance.
2. This year's Letter is attached to this summary. Some of the selected headlines for 2018/19 are:
  - There has been an increase in complaints received by the PSOW relating to local authorities nationally;
  - Complaints received and investigated increased against Carmarthenshire from 25 in 2017/18 to 49. In 2016/17 the number was 44;
  - To provide some context for local authorities, the PSOW includes within his data "average adjusted figures" (adjusted by population distribution). The adjusted figures can be compared with the actual performance figures, and are used in Tables A and C of the Letter;
  - Whilst there has been an increase in complaints received and investigated, the figure remains below the adjusted figure for Carmarthenshire – Table A;
  - There have been no reports issued against Carmarthenshire, and generally performance compares favourably with the adjusted outcomes - Table C;
  - Table B deals with complaint volumes in terms of subject/service area. Planning, complaints handling and housing generate the largest volumes, however this is also the position nationally with planning and housing traditionally accounting for the largest numbers. As already mentioned, there have been no reports issued;
  - Table D deals with PSOW intervention. Intervention includes cases upheld by the PSOW, and cases where there are early resolutions and settlements. Whilst there has been an increase this year, the figure of 8% remains low against national percentages;
  - Code of Conduct figures at Tables E and F are highlighted by the PSOW as relatively high this year. He advises that the majority of the complaints relate to an individual Community Council. He also considers that there may be opportunities to promote awareness and the importance of the Code with community council colleagues, and commends that to the Authority.
3. Finally, the PSOW has a new governing Act. It is the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019, as passed by the National Assembly for Wales. He will be implementing new powers that exist within the Act over the coming year.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?

YES - the PSOW's Annual Letter 2018/19

# IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: **Linda Rees Jones**

**Head of Administration and Law**

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
<b>NONE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>NONE</b>

## 1. Legal

The PSOW's Annual Letter asks that the annual letter be presented in order for performance to be reviewed. The letter in its entirety is attached to this report.

# CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Linda Rees Jones

Head of Administration & Law

(Please specify the outcomes of consultations undertaken where they arise against the following headings)

## 1. Scrutiny Committee

N/A

## 2. Local Member(s)

N/A

## 3. Community / Town Council

N/A

## 4. Relevant Partners

N/A

## 5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

N/A

## Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
The PSOW's Annual Letter 2018/19	CCOM-848	<a href="https://www.ombudsman.wales/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Carmarthenshire.pdf">https://www.ombudsman.wales/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Carmarthenshire.pdf</a> <a href="https://www.ombwdsmon.cymru/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/08/Carmarthenshire-CYMRAEG.pdf">https://www.ombwdsmon.cymru/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/08/Carmarthenshire-CYMRAEG.pdf</a>
The PSOW Annual Report 2018/19	CCOM-848	<a href="https://www.ombudsman.wales/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Annual-Report-and-Accounts-2018-2019-Final-ENG.pdf">https://www.ombudsman.wales/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Annual-Report-and-Accounts-2018-2019-Final-ENG.pdf</a> <a href="https://www.ombwdsmon.cymru/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/07/Annual-Report-and-Accounts-2018-2019-Final-CYM.pdf">https://www.ombwdsmon.cymru/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/07/Annual-Report-and-Accounts-2018-2019-Final-CYM.pdf</a>