

Appendix 2

Explanation of Terminology used by the LG&SCO

When the LG&SCO takes a decision on complaints and enquiries received, any decisions are categorised as follows:

- **Upheld** – these are complaints that have been investigated and where it has been decided that an authority has been at fault in how it acted, which may or may not have caused an injustice to the complainant. Alternatively, the authority may have accepted that it needs to remedy the complaint before the LG&SCO makes a finding of fault. If the LG&SCO decides that there was a fault that caused an injustice, she will usually recommend that the Council takes some action to redress matters.
- **Not Upheld** – the LG&SCO has investigated a complaint and has decided that the Council has not acted with fault.
- **Advice Given** – these are cases where advice is provided explaining why the LG&SCO will not deal with the complaint, for example because the body that is the subject of the complaint was not within the LG&SCO's scope or the LG&SCO had previously looked at the same complaint from the complainant or alternatively another agency was better placed to help the complainant.
- **Closed after initial enquiries** – this arises when the LG&SCO has made an early decision not to investigate a complaint. This is usually because the complaint is outside the LG&SCO's jurisdiction or it is considered inappropriate to pursue. It may be that an early assessment of the complaint indicated that there was little injustice to the complainant or that an investigation would achieve little.
- **Incomplete/Invalid** – these are complaints that have insufficient information provided by the complainant to enable the LG&SCO to decide what should happen with their complaint or alternatively the complainant has indicated that they no longer wish to pursue a complaint.
- **Referred back for local resolution** – the LG&SCO works on the principle that it is always best that complaints are resolved by the service provider wherever possible. In addition, the Local Government Act 1974 requires the LG&SCO to give Councils an opportunity to try and resolve a complaint before any formal investigation.