Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Business plan 2025 to 2026

Since publishing this report, we have changed our name to the **Public Service Ombudsman**.

Our role and the service we provide remain the same.

Public Service Ombudsman

Business plan 2025 to 2026 (including outcomes and measures)

Our objectives are set out in **our strategy for 2025 to 2026**.

Activity	Objective	Owner	Deliverables (what we'll do)	Outcomes (what we want to achieve)	Measures (how we'll know if we've done it)

New Ombudsman
 	
We will support and raise the profile of our new Ombudsman.
	Business-critical enabler that supports our service and all parts of our strategy	Chief of Staff	• Support the onboarding and induction of our new Ombudsman
			• Understand the vision of our new Ombudsman to develop our 2026 to 2031 strategy
				• A smooth transition to a new Ombudsman
				• Key stakeholders know about the appointment
				• We understand the Ombudsman's vision and values
				• The Ombudsman is fully supported to perform their duties
				• Strong and stable leadership
					• Plan delivered successfully
					• Feedback from the Ombudsman
					• Staff survey questions:
					  • The Ombudsman and CEO are sufficiently visible
					  • I believe that the Ombudsman and CEO have a clear vision for the future of PHSO

Activity	Objective	Owner	Deliverables (what we'll do)	Outcomes (what we want to achieve)	Measures (how we'll know if we've done it)
Casework programme We will put people at the heart of the design and delivery of services at all stages of the complaints process, making sure that everything we do – from the initial inquiry to completing a case - creates a genuinely user-focused service. We will move to a digital-first approach for processing complaints, providing a convenient service that will be integrated across online, telephone and postal channels, enabling everyone to contact us and access our services in the way that works best for them. We will manage casework dynamically to make informed, strategic and transparent choices about which complaints we can take forward in a timely way with available resources, to maximise public value. We will make sure our complaints service is accessible, equitable and inclusive to all.	• Access • User experience • Impact	Chief Digital and Transformation Officer Director of Operations, Legal and Clinical	• Further develop our approach to systemic casework and the systemic casework teams • Expand our investigations methodologies, improve the quality of our recommendations and develop how we manage and report on compliance • Deliver business process improvements to the initial contact and triage stage of our casework, to prepare for digitalisation • Complete delegation testing, analyse the results and make recommendations	• We provide an easy-to-use digital service that supports and guides our audience through the complaints process via multiple channels • Calls and documents are digitalised and searchable for reporting, data analysis and quality assurance • We can prioritise complaints according to need and impact • We have lean, accurate casework processes with system-driven milestones and business rules that are fully integrated into an effective casework management system (CMS) • People are empowered appropriately, we release bottlenecks and improve timeliness • Data capture is automated and standardised in the system for reliable reporting and analysis • Caseworkers have the skills to deliver new forms of casework and are digitally confident • Reports are automated and available to all relevant people via dashboards • We monitor the impact of our recommendations on new complaints • Organisations we investigate will understand complaints coming to them through our analysis of their data	**Key performance indicators (KPIs)** • Reduced waiting times in the unallocated queue (unallocated complaints at initial enquiries and progress in the agreed forecast reduction in unallocated complaints at primary investigation) • Increase in recommendations complied with in target time (%) **Other measures** • Increase in number of systemic requests submitted for triage • Increase in systemic recommendations made

Activity	Objective	Owner	Deliverables (what we'll do)	Outcomes (what we want to achieve)	Measures (how we'll know if we've done it)
Digital Ombudsman We will deliver digital, data and technology projects that support our ambition to digitalise our services.	• Access • User experience • Impact	Chief Digital and Transformation Officer	• Deliver an optimised and accessible ombudsman.org.uk website • Develop self-service tools to access, explore and use published PHSO data • Provide an account that lets users log in, manage complaints and communicate securely • Make digital improvements to first contact and Intake modules • Develop capability to automate referrals to third parties • Develop a Public Value Model powered by artificial intelligence (AI) for better quality predictions	• We provide an easy-to-use digital service that supports and guides our audience through the complaints process via multiple channels • Calls and documents are digitalised and searchable for reporting, data analysis and quality assurance • We have robust knowledge of the complaints we do and do not receive • We can prioritise complaints according to need and impact • We have lean, accurate casework processes with system-driven milestones and business rules that are fully integrated into an effective CMS • People are empowered appropriately, we release bottlenecks and improve timeliness • Data capture is automated and standardised in the system for reliable reporting and analysis • Caseworkers have the skills to deliver new forms of casework and are digitally confident • Reports are automated and available to all relevant people via dashboards • Organisations we investigation will understand complaints coming to them through our analysis of their data • Our technology is sustainable, efficient and secure by default and design	**KPIs** • Increased efficiency of complaint handling (unallocated complaints at initial enquiries) • Improved user satisfaction (complainant feedback - overall satisfaction score) - likely to be seen from 2026 to 2027 **Other measures** • Improved user satisfaction (measured through feedback in user experience testing) • Increase in demographic data • Increase in MP referrals received **Outcome indicators** • Reduced manual resources to complete administrative or repetitive tasks • Improved forecasting and resource planning • Reduction in paper or unstructured data • Improved data quality/management information

Activity	Objective	Owner	Deliverables (what we'll do)	Outcomes (what we want to achieve)	Measures (how we'll know if we've done it)
Improving our data, technology and systems We will make continuous improvements to our back-office systems to make them more effective and efficient, and to improve data and reporting.	Enabler (digital and data)	Chief Digital and Transformation Officer	• Identify and deliver improvements to the iTrent HR system (requirements to be defined) • Develop and implement the 2025 to 2026 milestones of our data quality strategy	• Our technology is sustainable, efficient and secure by default and design • Data capture is automated and standardised in the system for reliable reporting and analysis	Measures will be set when the activity is scoped and will be monitored at project level. • Reduced manual resources to complete administrative or repetitive tasks • Reduction in paper or unstructured data • Improved data quality/management information • Improved timeliness of management information
Developing our people and culture We will take a planned approach to organisational development activities to support a high-performance culture where employees feel engaged and valued.	Enabler (our people and capability)	Assistant Director of People and Talent	• Create a learning and organisational development framework that responds to our objectives and measures impact and value for money • Refresh, launch and embed our values and behaviours framework • Review the staff survey responses and put in place and deliver organisational and local action plans. Feed these into organisational development plans where appropriate	• Our organisational development and annual training plans target the capabilities, skills and behaviours needed most by the organisation. They align with our strategy, show value for money and show how we have responded to feedback from staff and people who use our service • The activities we take forward following the staff survey results have a positive impact on the experiences of colleagues in the areas we target for improvement. We will need to refine these outcomes once the results are known and improvement areas are agreed	• Annual training and organisational development plans can be clearly linked to strategic and organisational demands and changes • Plans approved and on track • Staff survey results

Activity	Objective	Owner	Deliverables (what we'll do)	Outcomes (what we want to achieve)	Measures (how we'll know if we've done it)
Maintaining our casework queue within frictional levels We will manage increased demand for our service through our Public Value Model and efficiencies.	• User experience • Impact • Enabler (our people and capability)	Deputy Director of Operations	• Embed version 2 of the Public Value Model (launched in Q4 2024 to 2025), analyse data and produce recommendations on the casework that will have the biggest impact • Complete the rollout of our Early Consideration training and approach across the operation • Complete the recruitment, onboarding and training of new caseworkers and senior caseworkers	• We have robust knowledge of the complaints we do and do not receive • We can prioritise complaints according to need and impact • People are empowered appropriately, we release bottlenecks and improve timeliness • Caseworkers have the skills to deliver new forms of casework and are digitally confident • We are sufficiently resourced	**KPIs** • Reduced waiting times in the unallocated queue (unallocated complaints at initial enquiries and progress in the agreed forecast reduction in unallocated complaints at primary investigation) **Other measures** • Increase in number of cases allocated to complex and systemic casework teams • Increase in number of cases closed using Early Consideration approach • All vacancies filled in line with workforce plan • Percentage of caseworkers successfully passed through the academy
Publishing our casework We will streamline the publishing process so we can publish all suitable cases.	• Access • Impact • Enabler (communication)	Assistant Director of Digital Assistant Director of Transformation	• Identify and deliver ways to make sure our published information is depersonalised • Digitalise and automate the casework publication process – continuing our 2024 to 2025 commitment	• The publication process is automated • Pseudonymisation (removing personally identifying information) is as automated as possible • Our casework is transparent and available for everyone to read • We can use our published casework to increase engagement with organisations we investigate and external audiences • Most of our suitable casework is published on our website	**KPIs** • Increase in proportion of investigations published (%) **Other measures** • Increased engagement with our platform (measured through website analytics)

Activity	Objective	Owner	Deliverables (what we'll do)	Outcomes (what we want to achieve)	Measures (how we'll know if we've done it)
Our 2026 to 2031 strategy We will develop the 2026 to 2031 strategy based on the Ombudsman's vision.	Business-critical enabler that supports our service and all parts of our strategy	Director of Strategy	• Develop and approve our 2026 to 2031 strategy • Develop our strategy-level measures and metrics	• We have agreed five-year objectives • We have 3 to 5 strategic measures which we use to monitor success against our strategy	• 2026 to 2031 strategy developed and approved • Strategic measures will be available on the Balanced Scorecard

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