



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Officeholders – SPSO and Child-friendly Complaints

By correspondence

Reference: SPCB (2021) Paper 73

Executive summary

1. The Minister for Children and Young People, Clare Haughey MSP has written to the Presiding Officer outlining details of a proposed agreement between the Scottish Government and the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to develop and implement a child friendly complaints process in Scotland. A copy of the Ministers letter of 15 November is attached at Annex A.

The SPCB is invited to agree that the Presiding Officer responds as per the draft letter at Annex B.

Issues and options

2. The SPSO has been asked by the Scottish Government as the Complaints Standards Authority for Scotland (CSA), to develop a child-friendly complaints process, prepare guidance and monitor and report on how the complaints are being handled. The Scottish Government will meet the costs until 31 March 2024.

The costs are estimated to be-

	Child-friendly complaints	£
2022/23	Set-up costs	155,475
2023/24	1 st year running costs	111,250
2024/25	Ongoing which will be met by charging public bodies for training	34,750

Governance

3. The proposal has arisen from the UNCRC Bill which would enable children and young people to challenge breaches of their rights in the courts. The Scottish Government's policy intention is that resolution could be achieved at a

much earlier stage and without recourse to the courts and this would be achieved through child friendly complaints procedures.

Resource implications

4. Scoping, set up and the first year's running costs will be met by the Scottish Government.

Ongoing costs for a 0.5 FTE member of staff, comms support and support for the online digital platform are estimated at £34,750. The SPCB is invited to agree that these costs can be included in the SPSO's overall budget from 1 April 2024 and funded by the SPCB.

Publication Scheme

5. This paper will be published in accordance with the SPCB's publication scheme.

Decision

6. The SPCB is invited to agree-
 - (i) that ongoing funding of £34,750 from 1 April 2024 can be included in the SPSO's budget which the SPCB will fund; and
 - (ii) the Presiding Officer replies to the Minister as set out in the draft reply at Annex B.

Officeholder Services

November 2021