Public Services Reform (Social Work Complaints Procedure) (Scotland) Order 2016

Angus Council - People Directorate

1. **Do you support the new regulations?**
   
   Yes, in principle we support the proposed regulations. They will provide clarity for service users and enhance objectivity for complaints that cannot be resolved locally.

2. **What are your views on Local Authority Complaints Review Committees being replaced?**

   We welcome the CRC’s being replaced. The CRC’s have a challenging role that is undertaken by volunteers. We are very grateful to them for their commitment over an extended period of time.

   However, we believe that it is time for a new system that will see all councils moving to a model complaints handling procedure (CHP). This will support the intention to align NHS and Social Work Services complaints.

3. **What are your views on the SPSO being given a new role to investigate social work complaints?**

   We support the SPSO being given a new role to investigate social work complaints. This will provide an objective, standardised approach and promote consistency of response to complaints. It should also support learning from complaints and enable analysis and trends to be identified.

4. **What are your views on the SPSO being given a remit to consider the professional judgment of social work staff?**

   It is essential that the SPSO has access to specialist knowledge and advice in relation to social work issues. If this were available, we would support this approach. The alternative is to maintain, or establish, separate systems, which does not help service users.

5. **What are your views on how these proposals relate to the approach currently taken to complaints relating to the NHS and the consideration of complaints relating to Integrated Joint Boards?**

   It is important that the complaints system is accessible to service users. We support the move towards a fully aligned NHS/Social work services complaints process using the model CHP. However there are key areas of difference between the organisations which are highlighted in the work and challenges being undertaken within the IJB’s. The social work services processes have as a focus on frontline resolution process; whereas the NHS has a top down approach to complaints.

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