

ANGUS COUNCIL

SCRUTINY & AUDIT COMMITTEE – 22 NOVEMBER 2016

REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

REPORT BY RICHARD STIFF, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this report is to note that the review of the complaints handling procedure has taken place and an amended complaints handling procedure will be submitted to a future committee in due course.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Scrutiny & Audit Committee note that the required review has taken place and that an amended Complaints Handling Procedure will be presented for approval in 2017 in view of forthcoming changes in the national arrangements for the investigation of social work complaints by the SPSO.

2. BACKGROUND

On 1 April 2013, the council adopted a complaints handling procedure in line with recommendations by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). This 2 stage model replaces the previous 3 stage internal complaints process.

In February 2015, an Internal Audit of Complaints Management was carried out and it recommended that a review of the Complaints Handling Procedure be carried out to determine whether the reporting arrangements detailed within the Complaints Handling Procedure still reflected the requirements of the council.

3. REVIEW

A review of the Complaints Handling Procedure has been carried out and since implementation in 2013, social work complaints are now managed in line with the council's Complaints Handling Procedure except that these complaints continue to have a Stage 3 appeal to the Complaints Review Committee.

Social Work Complaints

Notification has been received from the SPSO advising that from 1 April 2017, there will be a two stage model complaints handling procedure for social work services and the SPSO will be able to consider social work professional judgement as part of a complaint.

The procedure for social work complaints will be closely aligned to both the existing local authority procedure and the NHS complaints handling procedure.

For those unhappy with an outcome of the internal process there will be a signposting to the SPSO.

Once the detail of the guidance and procedure is published by the SPSO the Council's Complaints Handling Procedure will be updated and brought to Committee for approval.

4. RISK/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/HUMAN RIGHTS EQUALITIES

There are no specific risk issues, financial implications, human rights implications or equalities issues associated with this report.

5. CONSULTATION (IF APPLICABLE)

The Strategic Directors of Children and Learning, Communities and Resources, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Head of Corporate Improvement and Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

**RICHARD STIFF
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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List of Appendices: none