

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL – 30 MARCH 2017

STARRED ITEM FROM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 21 MARCH 2017

5. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SOCIAL WORK STATUTORY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES FROM 1 JANUARY 2016 TO 31 DECEMBER 2016 and NEW SOCIAL WORK COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCESS

There had been circulated copies of a joint report by the Chief Social Work Officer and Service Director Neighbourhood Services, providing information on the number and types of complaints received by Social Work from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016, summarising the changes arising from 113 complaints and improvement actions. The report was presented by the Service Director, Jenni Craig, who summarised the main points and answered questions. During 2016 there had been 113 complaints received which was an increase of 22.82% from the previous year. Of those received 36% were not upheld. The report detailed the nature of the complaints and improvements identified for 2017 arising from complaints-based intelligence. The report also outlined the new statutory social work complaints provisions introduced by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsmen (SPSO) and sought approval of the revised Social Work complaints handling procedure (SW CHP). Following a period of consultation the SPSO had published 'The Social Work Model Complaints Handling Procedure' together with associated guidance for implementation. This would provide a standard approach to handling customer complaints about Social Work services across Scotland. Adoption and implementation of the standardised SW Model CHP was required from 1 April 2017 and would coincide with the implementation of a new National Health Service Model CHP bringing both social work and National Health Service (NHS) services into line with the existing local authority standard CHP. A new SBC SW Model CHP was attached at Appendix 1 to the report. It followed in its entirety the SPSO SW Model CHP. The new CHP moved from a 3 or 4 stage process to a 2 stage process and removed the stage in the current complaints procedure for consideration by a Complaint Review Committee. In considering the report's recommendations Ms Craig asked that recommendation (c) be removed.

DECISION

- (a) NOTED the annual report information on Social Work Statutory Complaints procedures from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016.**
- (b) AGREED:-**
 - (i) to approve the Social Work Model Complaint Handling Procedure (SW CHP), as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, for all complaints relating to Social Work services whether they were delivered through Scottish Borders Council, ALEOs or the Health and Social Care Partnership, from 1 April 2017; and**
 - * (ii) to recommend that Council disband the Social Work Complaint Review Committee once the process for all social work care complaints raised before 1 April 2017 had been completed.**