

Consultation Questions

Please use this version if you wish to respond by printing the consultation and filling in the responses by hand.

If you would prefer to complete a form electronically, please download the document called “SWF consultation questions” from our website, or contact us to receive a copy.

Respondent information form

This information must be completed and returned with your comments in response to the consultation to ensure that we handle your submission appropriately.

About you

Name:

Email address:

Organisation (if applicable):

Address:

Postcode:

Phone number:

Permissions

If you are responding as an individual, please fill in **section A**. If you are responding on behalf of a group or organisation, please fill in **section B**.

Section A	I am responding as an individual
Do you agree to your response being made available to the public, including on the SPSO website?	Please let us know your answer (yes or no):
Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to	Please let us know your answer (Option A, B or C):

Section A	I am responding as an individual
<p>the public on the following basis: (please select one option):</p> <p>a) Yes, make my response, name and address all available</p> <p>b) Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address</p> <p>c) Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address</p>	
<p>We may wish to contact you in the future to discuss the issues you raise, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for us to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?</p>	<p>Please let us know your answer (yes or no):</p>

Section B	I am responding on behalf of a group or organisation
<p>The name and address of your organisation will be made available to the public and may be included on the SPSO website. Are you content for your response to be made available?</p>	<p>Please let us know your answer (yes or no):</p>
<p>We may wish to contact you in the future to discuss the issues you raise, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for us to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?</p>	<p>Please let us know your answer (yes or no):</p>

Responses can be sent by email to: consultation@spsso.org.uk or by post to: SWF reviews consultation, Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, FREEPOST EH641, Edinburgh, EH3 0BR . Please respond by Friday 27 November 2015

If you have any questions, please contact us on 0131 240 8845.

Consultation Questions

We are keen to have as much feedback as possible, so please comment on any aspect of the documents. For each document there is a general question but we have also some specific questions which set out points on which we are particularly keen for views.

Questions on Annex A: Draft Statement of Practice

- 1. The draft Statement of Practice sets out our approach to handling Scottish Welfare Fund decision reviews. What are your thoughts about our approach?**

- 2. Should there be any changes to the principles (either to add or remove any of the principles we have listed)?**

Please let us know your answer (yes, no or don't know):

3. Do any of the individual sections of the Statement of Practice conflict with the key principles (Section A)?

Please let us know your answer (yes, no or don't know):

4. Have we correctly identified the minimum information that needs to be provided by us about how to apply for a review (Section B)?

Please let us know your answer (yes, no or don't know):

5. We have set out what we consider to be the minimum information we need to receive to start the process of a review (Section C) – do you agree this is the minimum we need?

Please let us know your answer (yes, no or don't know):

6. Relating specifically to Section D (Application for review by someone other than the applicant), do you agree with the general approach to obtaining consent?

Please let us know your answer (yes, no or don't know):

7. Do you have any comments on the additional matters about consent in the notes to Section D?

8. Do you have any comments on the proposed approach to evidence (section E)?

9. We have outlined our process for obtaining information (Section F). What do you think about the process?

10. If anyone refuses to be interviewed or to allow a visit, we say that we may take a negative inference from this (Section G). What do you think about this?

11. Local authorities can challenge mistakes at the end of the review process. However, if new information from a third party is likely to change a decision in the applicant's favour, should the ability to comment or challenge be extended to the local authority (Section H)?

Please let us know your answer (yes, no or don't know):

12. We have suggested the order in which we will approach decision-making (Section I). Do you agree with this?

Please let us know your answer (yes, no or don't know):

13. We have laid out what information we will include in all decisions (Section K). What other information should we include in this section (if any)?

14. Where there is a change in circumstances following the decision by the local authority (Section M), do you agree with the approach we plan to take?

Please let us know your answer (yes, no or don't know):

15. We have set out the timescales we intend to work to (Section N). What do you think about these?


16. We have outlined scenarios for an instance when we receive a possible complaint alongside a request for review (Section O). Are the scenarios clear?

Please let us know your answer (yes, no or don't know):

17. What should we let people know about the information they disclose to us (Section P)?

18. Do you have any other comments on particular sections of the draft Statement of Practice?

(Please use this section to also draw our attention to any points that haven't been covered in the previous questions. If you are commenting on a particular part of the Statement of Practice, please state which section(s) you wish to make comment on)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the respondent to provide their comments on the draft Statement of Practice.

Questions on Annex B: Draft rules on the conduct of oral hearings

19. Do you have any general comments on the rules?

20. Do you have any comments on the individual rules (please state which sections)?

21. Do you think there is anything else we should include in the rules?

22. What steps do you think we can we take to make sure oral hearings remain informal and accessible, particularly to an unsupported applicant?

Questions on Annex C: Proposed approach to an Equalities and Human Rights Impact assessment

23. What are your views on the general approach?

24. What other sources of information do you think would be useful for our analysis?

25. What issues in terms of equalities and human rights do you think we will need to consider in our analysis?

26. Do you know of examples of good practice that we could learn from?

27. How do you think we could best support improvements to the broader scheme?