

Scottish Welfare Fund

Local authority survey report

2021-22

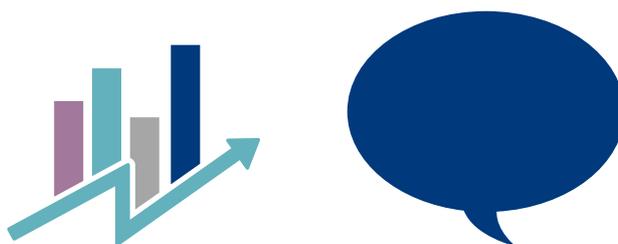
Executive summary

We received feedback from...



12 out of 32 local authorities

We analysed this using both...



quantitative and qualitative data

We identified two main areas for improvement:



encouraging dialogue around our decisions and reconsideration process



increasing awareness of our Support and Intervention Policy

And four actions to support learning to be considered by SPSO:

- publish more case summaries
- provide training sessions
- issue performance statistics
- support to improve decision letters



Impact of our findings

We found that most respondents record their findings and identify recurring trends. However, analysis shows that it is not uncommon for us to issue repeat findings to local authorities.



"Best practice is extracted from SPSO decisions and shared with staff."

It was less common for local authorities to report that they update internal training records, and provide performance information to senior managers as a result of SPSO's findings.



67%

of local authorities reported no barriers to actioning SPSO's findings.



2

authorities commented on specific cases where they disagreed with SPSO findings.

Recommendations



Take action as appropriate where we issue repeat findings



Ask councils to make senior management teams aware of SPSO's findings

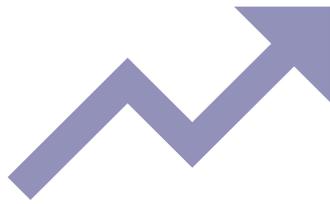


Encourage councils to engage with us where they disagree with our decision and/or face barriers implementing our findings.

Our communication

75%

said that our decision cover letters were clear



while...

83%

said that they contained the right amount of information

The majority of respondents said they would prefer the opportunity to call/email to discuss cases on an ad hoc basis as opposed to contact from us with every decision.



There was an appetite amongst most authorities to receive statistical information from SPSO on either a quarterly or annual basis.



Recommendations



Undertake analysis of the feasibility of sending statistics to local authorities within available resources.

Learning and improvement



1

council was aware of SPSO's Support and Intervention Policy

"Template letters would be great"

Strong appetite for support across various methods: case studies, workshops, seminars and training materials.

Recommendations



Increase awareness of our Support and Intervention Policy.



Plan and deliver learning activity to support local authorities to improve their practice.

Our service standards and values

Commitment	Service standards
A. We will communicate effectively with you	Respect and dignity Keeping you informed Timeliness Clarity Accessibility Understanding
B. We will work openly and fairly	Transparency Fairness Impartiality and independence
C. We will carry out our duties competently and responsibly	Expertise Explaining our scope Reaching sound outcomes Ensuring impact Handling information Putting things right

We asked respondents, across a number of statements, to rate how strongly the service they received aligned with our standards.



Feedback across all service standards was almost exclusively positive or neutral with the exception of two responses relating to timeliness and impartiality and independence.