

News | February 2026

Paul McFadden, Ombudsman, to speak at conference

Paul McFadden, Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, will be speaking at the Public Sector Complaints Conference, by Holyrood Insight on 24 February.

He will be reflecting on the shift toward person-centred, rights-based approaches across Scotland's public services; highlighting the risks posed by rising complaint volumes, including pressure on resources, threats to people's rights, and difficulties in identifying emerging patterns. He will also set out what organisations can do now to protect the sustainability and quality of public services.

Find out more: [Public Sector Complaints Scotland Conference](#)

Public service complaints

Our findings

This month, the Ombudsman published 12 decision reports and made 12 recommendations to public bodies. Two of this month's health cases highlighted the importance of clear communication, particularly around diagnosis and managing expectations.

[Read more about our findings](#)

Training

Complaints Investigation Skills

With our March training dates now sold out, we are pleased to announce the remaining dates for our 2026 Complaints Investigation Skills training course.

This interactive SPSO trainer-led course equips you with the knowledge to conduct robust investigations, ask the right questions, assess evidence, and make informed decisions.

The course runs for around five hours and costs £100 per person.

Book your spot now:

- Tuesday 3 March: **Sold out**
- Wednesday 4 March: **Sold out**
- [Monday 1 June](#)
- [Tuesday 2 June](#)
- [Tuesday 1 September](#)
- [Wednesday 2 September](#)
- [Monday 30 November](#)
- [Tuesday 1 December](#)

[Book now](#)

Good Complaints Handling

Our Good Complaints Handling online training has been refreshed to reflect the updated [Statement of Complaints Handling Principles](#).

This self-guided course is aimed at staff handling complaints at stage 1 of the [Model Complaints Handling Procedure \(MCHP\)](#) but would be useful for anyone involved in complaints handling looking to develop their knowledge.

The course takes around 45 minutes to complete and costs £50 per person.

[Book now](#)

Child Friendly Complaints

Our Child Friendly Complaints online training is designed to support public service organisations handle complaints from and involving children and young people.

Tailored for complaints handlers and frontline staff, the course shows how organisations can put children and young people's rights at the heart of the complaints process.

The course takes around 45 minutes to complete and costs £50 per person.

[Book now](#)

Scottish Welfare Fund

Last month, we made 53 decisions, 11 on community care grants and 42 on crisis grants.

Of these, 18% of community care grants were upheld and 26% of crisis grants were upheld.

[Read more in our Scottish Welfare Fund update and case studies](#)