

## News | November 2024

### New report highlights issues with Welfare Fund

On 19 November 2024 we published a report spotlighting concerns about the fairness and consistency of grants awarded through the Scottish Welfare Fund.

The report highlights issues with the distribution of the Fund, which provides grants to those in crisis.

It focuses on the application of the High Most Compelling (HMC) priority rating by some local authorities, which limits funding to individuals in severe crisis.

A **free webinar** which will include Glasgow City Council, the Ombudsman and others will be hosted at midday on **4 December 2024** discussing the report.

Rosemary Agnew, the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, said

“My report highlights an issue affecting those experiencing the most vulnerability in Scottish society.

I am seeing developments that are resulting in access to support differing between local authorities, potentially deepening inequalities across our country.

I recognise the challenges faced by the Scottish Government and local authorities, and through this report encourage constructive discussions to improve the Scottish Welfare Fund in the future.”

[Read the report](#)

[Sign up to the webinar](#)

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### Public service complaints

This month the Ombudsman published 22 decision reports. Sixteen these were about health services, three about health and social care and three about local government. We discuss two cases relating to children and families social services.

[Read more about the themes and trends from our findings.](#)

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## Scottish Welfare Fund reviews

Last month we made 59 decisions, 24 community care grants and 35 crisis grants. This month we highlight two cases involving reasonable adjustments.

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

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## SPSO Annual Report and Financial Statements 2023-24

We recently laid our Annual Report for 2023—24 before the Scottish Parliament. This describes our performance in detail, setting out achievement against key performance indicators, and includes our corporate governance report and financial statements.

[Read more on our annual report.](#)

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## Complaints Investigation Skills training

Do you handle complaints in your organisation? Want to improve your investigation skills and ensure fair, thorough outcomes?

Book a spot on our SPSO accredited [Complaints Investigation Skills course](#).

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

The course costs £85 pp and lasts around 5 hours.

Last remaining spaces available on

- Monday 2 December 2024
- Tuesday 3 December 2024

[Book now](#)

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## Coming soon: Consultation on the updated Statement of Complaints Handling Principles

Since the [Statement of Complaints Handling Principles \(the Principles\)](#) were approved by Scottish Parliament in 2011 the language and landscape of complaints handling has changed. To meet this changing landscape, the SPSO are in the process of updating the Complaints Handling Principles. We will be consulting on the wording of the Principles during December and January – watch this space and keep an eye out on [our website](#).

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