

**SUBJECT: NEW SOCIAL SERVICES COMPLAINTS POLICY**  
**DIRECTORATE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S**  
**MEETING: SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISION**  
**DATE: 14 JANUARY 2015**  
**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS**

**1. PURPOSE**

1.1 To seek approval of the attached revised Social Services complaints policy.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 To approve the new complaints policy that Welsh Government introduced on 1 August 2014.

**3. KEY ISSUES**

3.1 Monmouthshire County Council's Social Care and Health is required to follow the new Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and The Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014.

**4 REASONS:**

4.1 Welsh Government said that it is committed to improving public services from a citizen's perspective and also from the perspective of how complaints are handled and resolved.

They issued a post consultation draft 'A guide to handling complaints and representations by local authority social services' on the 14 May 2014. The new Regulations and guidance came into force on 1 August 2014.

The new guidance replaces 'Listening and Learning' and supports the implementation of the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014.

It brings the process for social services in line with the Model Concerns and Complaints Policy and Guidance and the NHS Complaints Procedure Putting Things Right so that there's a more consistent approach to complaints handling.

**Statutory Basis and Scope:**

This guidance is issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. This means that local authorities must comply with it.

This new policy replaces the 2006 version of the Social Services complaints policy and procedure.

**5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 The legislation requires that external independent investigating officers must be appointed for formal Stage 2 investigations. For Children's Services complaints, as well as an independent investigating officer an independent person must also be appointed.
- 5.2 There is an existing budget of £17,503 for this work and we will endeavour to keep within the budget expenditure. However, we cannot forecast how many complaints will be made.

**6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 No implications have been identified in respect of this proposal.

- 7. **CONSULTEES:** Social Services DMT members, Head of Regulatory and Democracy services

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Welsh Government guide to handling complaints and representations by local authority social services

- 9. **AUTHOR:** Annette Evans, Customer Relations Manager

**10. CONTACT DETAILS:**

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