

# Culture and Communities Committee

10am, Tuesday 12 September 2017

## Recommendations of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee of 30 August 2017

Item number	9.8
Report number	
Wards	All

### Val Tudball

Chair, Social Work Complaints Review Committee

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## Recommendations of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee of 30 August 2017

### Summary

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To refer to the Culture and Communities Committee recommendations of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee on consideration of a complaint against the social work service within Health and Social Care.

### For decision/action

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The Social Work Complaints Review Committee has referred its recommendations on complaints against the social work service within Health and Social Care to the Culture and Communities Committee for consideration.

### Main report

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- 1 Complaints Review Committees (CRCs) are established under the Social Work (Representations) Procedures (Scotland) Directions 1996 as the final stage of a comprehensive Client Complaints system. They are required to be objective and independent in their review of responses to complaints.
- 2 The CRC met in private on 30 August 2017 to consider a complaint against the social work service within Health and Social Care. The complainant and the service representatives attended throughout.
- 3 The complainant remained dissatisfied with the Council's response to his complaint regarding the decision of the social work department not to allocate a mental health social worker to him when social work allocation with the community care team had concluded in mid-November 2015.
- 4 The complainant believed that he should have been allocated a social worker from the mental health team when his social work support from the Area Practice Team concluded in November 2015. He felt that the input he had received from the Neighbourhood Support Service was insufficient.
- 5 Members of the Committee were then given the opportunity to ask questions of the complainant.
- 6 The presenting officer advised that the complaint had been investigated by a practice team manager who had reviewed relevant records and interviewed the previously allocated social worker and a senior social worker. No information had been found to support the complainant's assertion that he should have been allocated a mental health social worker when his social work allocation with the community care team had concluded in mid-November 2015.

- 7 The complainant had an allocated community psychiatric nurse at the time and the Neighbourhood Support Service was providing support.
- 8 The complainant was also receiving support from an external provider on a temporary basis for six months via housing consortium hours. The complainant was currently on the waiting list for further social work assessment to look at alternative support options to Penumbra.
- 9 The presenting officer confirmed that if a new social work need had arisen requiring a new assessment, that new referral would come to the mental health team and this had, in fact, been the case. The complainant was currently on the waiting list for further social work assessment to look at alternative support options. The correct procedure had been followed by the social work service.
- 10 Members of the Committee were then given the opportunity to ask questions of the presenting officer.
- 11 Following this, the complainant and the presenting officer withdrew from the meeting to allow the Committee to deliberate in private.

## Recommendations

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After full consideration of the complaint the Committee reached the following decisions/recommendations:

- 1) The Committee did **not uphold** the complaint set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report by the Chief Officer, Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 2) The Committee noted that a social worker was allocated for a particular need or function for a fixed period of time. The Committee noted that the complainant thought that Council policy indicated he should have been allocated a social worker as he had an allocated Community Psychiatric Nurse at that time. However, the Presenting Officer confirmed that no such policy existed. Therefore the complaint was not upheld.
- 3) The Committee were pleased to note, however, that the complainant was on the waiting list for a new assessment.

## Background reading/external references

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Agenda, confidential papers and minute of the Complaints Review Committee of 30 August 2017.