SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN
People Centred Improvement Focused

**2018-19 SWF Review Statistics**

The statistics below provide information about the reviews received from applicants in your area and compare these to the overall picture of reviews across Scotland. For comparison purposes, we have also included last year's figures.

We record cases as upheld where we change the council's decision. Uphold rates are therefore a useful indicator of how councils are performing as they illustrate how regularly we assess that a different decision should have been made. For councils with very low numbers of SPSO reviews, the uphold rates and comparisons are likely to be less representative. However, recording the uphold rates helps create a baseline for comparison in future years.

The average uphold rates in 2018-19 were (last year's figures in brackets):

- 32% (35%) for crisis grants
- 51% (52%) for community care grants.

The tables below summarise how we handled enquiries, cases that we closed before decision and decision outcomes. Examples of the reasons for closing applications before making a decision include where applicants have contacted us before asking for a first tier review, before receiving their first tier decision (premature) or have chosen to withdraw their review request (not duly made or withdrawn).

| Authority | West Dunbartonshire Council |
|---|---|
| Total enquiries | 7 (11) |

| | West Dunbartonshire Council – cases closed pre-decision | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | Community Care | Crisis | Total |
| Advice only | 0 (0) | 1 (0) | 1 (0) |
| Premature | 0 (1) | 2 (3) | 2 (4) |
| Referred back to council | 1 (1) | 0 (0) | 1 (1) |
| Total | 1 (2) | 3 (3) | 4 (5) |

| Application type | Total decision | Not upheld | Upheld | Uphold rate | National average uphold rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Crisis grant | 0 (1) | 0 (1) | 0 (0) | 0% (0%) | 32% (35%) |
| Community care grant | 3 (5) | 1 (4) | 2 (1) | 67% (20%) | 51% (52%) |
| Total | 3 (6) | | | | |

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**Suggestions for improvement**

Where we identify potential or actual failings, we record suggestions for improvement which we highlight directly to councils. We do this for all cases, whether or not we uphold them. For transparency, we include these in our decision letters to applicants.

We have outlined the findings we have recorded for your council broken down by the 'findings subject' and whether or not they were material to the decision. For clarity, findings which are material to the decision cause us to disagree with the overall decision, whereas non-material findings are general suggestions for improvement.

This information provides detail around the areas of your casework where we considered improvements could be made, and we anticipate this will be used for identifying areas of focus for learning. Examples of our findings are available via our online case directory at www.spso.org.uk/scottishwelfarefund/case-summaries. Councils have also been provided with detailed case by case feedback throughout the year.

We hope you find this helpful. If you would like to discuss this with them, or how we might provide learning support, please get in touch with the SWF team on 0800 014 7299.

| Authority | West Dunbartonshire Council |
|---|---|
| Total findings | 9 (14) |

| | Findings: Material to Decision | |
|---|---|---|
| Subject | % | Total |
| Guidance not followed | 50% (67%) | 1 (2) |
| Insufficient information/ inquisitorial failure | 50% (33%) | 1 (1) |
| Total | 100% (100%) | 2 (3) |

| | Findings: Not Material to Decision | |
|---|---|---|
| Subject | % | Total |
| Communication issues – written | 43% (36%) | 3 (4) |
| Guidance not followed | 29% (27%) | 2 (3) |
| Incorrect interpretation of information | 14% (9%) | 1 (1) |
| Internal council recording issue | 0% (9%) | 0 (1) |
| Positive feedback | 0% (18%) | 0 (2) |
| Timescales | 14% (0%) | 1 (0) |
| Total | 100% (*99%) | 7 (11) |

**percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding*