

Dispute Resolution Process

Where there is professional disagreement about any of the actions or decisions taken during a child protection process, representation can be made to the Social Work Designated Officer by any agency.

Complaints about individual practitioners involved in the child protection process should be made through existing single agency complaints procedures.

Staff from each agency should make their representations through their normal line management process.

The arrangements for challenging the decisions or the process of the Child Protection Case Conference are as follows:

- Where a member of staff from a constituent agency of CPC wishes to raise an issue about the process or a decision, they should make representation through their line management to the chair of the Case Conference.
- Parents/carers who wish to challenge the decisions of a Case Conference should be supported to write to the chair of the Case Conference.
- Children should also be supported to write to or speak directly to the chair of the Case Conference if they want to challenge a decision.
- Where dissatisfaction or concern remains following the response received from the chair, representation in writing can be made to the Chief Social Worker Officer.
- The CSWO on reviewing the case can either support the position of the Chair or determine that a review of the process and/or the decision is undertaken and may appoint a different Chair.

In cases where the Chair uses his or her professional judgement to make the final decision and no clear consensus can be reached, the decision making will be reviewed by a senior member of Social Work staff with no involvement in the case, within 15 calendar days, and their opinion will be included in the minutes:

- Affirming the Chair's decision.
- Recommending that a Review Child Protection Case Conference be convened.