

Special Guardianship Orders: Amending regulations and code of practice (WG32590)

Contribution by ADSS Cymru

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General Comment

The Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS Cymru) is the professional and strategic leadership organisation for social services in Wales and is composed of statutory Directors of Social Services and the Heads of Service who support them in delivering social services responsibilities and accountabilities; a group of more than 80 social services leaders across the 22 local authorities in Wales.

ADSS Cymru welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposals the Welsh Government has set out in its White Paper Consultation. ADSS Cymru understands why the changes have been proposed because of the gradual shift in how special guardianship orders are now used. ADSS Cymru welcomes the changes in principal but there are two key areas that require some additional clarification.

Timelines

Understanding the proposed timelines in relation to the due diligence and reporting mechanism that local authorities must comply with regarding the suitability of the applicants to be special guardians, is very important. There must be careful consideration of the time that it will take to make the appropriate assessments in this process, particularly given the additional matters that will be added to the new regulations.

To ensure that the process is robust, ADSS Cymru believe that a reasonable time period is 12-16 weeks, with the upper-end of the timescale being more realistic.

Support Services

ADSS Cymru believes there needs to be further clarity about the support services required for 'a child of the special guardian or prospective special guardian.' We would query why additional support services would need to be identified for the individual child(ren) who are already members of the family of the special guardian or prospective special guardian, given that a whole family assessment is already carried out.

To enable us to understand the rationale of this proposal, we would welcome a further explanation as to why this is required.



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