

Appropriate Adult service consultation

Responses to consultation on establishing a statutory Appropriate Adult service were overwhelmingly supportive, analysis has shown.



Appropriate Adult services ensure vulnerable people with communication difficulties are supported during contact with police – for example during interviews and other police station procedures.

Appropriate Adults can assist victims, witnesses, suspects and accused in police investigations who are aged 16 and over and have communication difficulties as the result of a mental disorder. They are independent to the police and their role is to provide reassurance to the person they are supporting and facilitate communication between that person and the police if required.

Currently Appropriate Adult services are provided by local authorities on a non-statutory basis, and the way in which services are delivered varies across the country. Making this service statutory will enhance and regulate provision of support for adults who need it at a vital stage in the criminal justice process.

Between April and July, the Scottish Government consulted on a proposed model for the delivery of such a service, who should receive support and what that support should be.

The analysis of responses, published today, found that contributions came from a wide variety of stakeholders and responses were supportive of proposals.

Respondents included organisations currently involved in Appropriate Adult service delivery, justice sector bodies and groups who work with and represent individuals with lived experience of conditions which could result in them requiring additional support when in contact with the police. Among these respondents there was broad agreement on the proposed model for the service and a clear desire to work together to help establish and implement the service.

Commenting on the consultation responses, Justice Secretary Humza Yousaf said:

“It is essential that vulnerable people with communication needs receive the support they require during police procedures, regardless of where they are located in Scotland.

“Respondents to our consultation recognised this, and we are grateful to each of them for sharing their knowledge and opinions with us. Work on establishing the service will now carry on.

“At the same time, the Scottish Government will continue to assess types of communication support which could be given at other stages of the criminal justice system, and for those under the age of 16, and build upon the work that is being done in setting up the statutory Appropriate Adult service.”

Work to develop the statutory Appropriate Adult service continues. It is scheduled to go live during 2019.

[Read the report on the consultation responses.](#)

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