

SPSO decision report

Case: 201300408, Dumfries and Galloway Council
Sector: local government
Subject: council tax
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C's council tax benefit claim was identified for review and the council wrote to her asking for information. Mrs C complained about the way they handled the claim, complaining that they had not administered it in line with the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006. She questioned the frequency with which she was being asked to provide payslips, and said she thought that it would be easier to calculate once a year using her P60 and business accounts, in line with the Regulations. She told us that after she complained before, there had been an agreement that she would be assessed every 12 months, but the council had now cancelled the benefit because she questioned why they wanted payslips so frequently. She also questioned why the claim was identified for a review, and the notice period for providing information.

After investigating her concerns, we were satisfied that the council's actions were reasonable and in line with the Regulations and the Department for Work and Pensions best practice guidance. We saw no evidence that anything went wrong in the council's handling of the claim, and considered it was reasonable in the circumstances for the council to request proof of earnings when they did, within the deadlines they did, and that they had explained on a number of occasions why they were doing this. We found that the council took Mrs C's concerns seriously, fully investigated, took appropriate action to try to resolve her complaint, and fully explained their position. Finally, we were satisfied that the council maintained adequate records in connection with the administration of the claim when she complained before