

SPSO decision report

Case: 201702471, West Lothian Council
Sector: local government
Subject: complaints handling (inc social work complaints procedures)
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that the council had unreasonably refused to progress his complaint about social work matters to a complaints review committee (CRC). The council said that a CRC was not the appropriate route for the issues raised by Mr C and did not fall within the remit of the committee. Mr C was unhappy with this response and brought his complaint to us.

We took independent advice from a social worker. We found that Mr C's complaint was eligible to be progressed to a CRC and, therefore, we upheld his complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr C for not holding a CRC. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at <https://www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance>.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- The council should now progress Mr C's complaint to a CRC.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.