

SPSO decision report

Case: 201906053, The City of Edinburgh Council
Sector: Local Government
Subject: neighbour disputes and anti-social behaviour
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained about the council's lack of action in relation to reports of anti-social behaviour about a neighbour made by C and their family over a number of years.

The council had accepted in their complaint response to C that there had historically been a failure to appropriately record and take action on reports of anti-social behaviour, and we considered this failing to be unreasonable. We therefore upheld the complaint. We noted that following the case being taken over by a new officer and a new manager, the council had acted appropriately, including meeting with C and their family and taking action on the reports of anti-social behaviour. We considered that much of this, potentially, could have been done at an earlier point, however, we acknowledged that things now appeared to be being handled in line with relevant guidance and took this into account when making recommendations.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C and their family for failing to appropriately record and take action on reports of anti-social behaviour and the impact this had on them as a family. The apology should include an acknowledgement that, had appropriate recording taken place, this may have resulted in earlier action being taken. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- Reports of anti-social behaviour should be recorded and acted on in line with the antisocial behaviour policy.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- Complaint responses should be transparent regarding the failings that have been identified in complaint investigations.

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.