

SPSO decision report

Case: 202302784, Aberdeen City Council
Sector: Local Government
Subject: Child services and family support
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained about communication from the council's social work department relating to C's involvement in the Looked After Child (LAC) review process. C held parental rights and responsibilities for their child. C raised concerns about not being invited to attend a review meeting and not receiving a legible copy of a relevant report in advance of the meeting. In their response to the complaint, the council explained a watermark was incorrectly applied in the wrong font colour and apologised for this error.

We found that C was reasonably informed of the arrangements for the LAC review meeting and how they could contribute to it. In the month prior to the review meeting, the council's Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) contacted C. The role of an IRO is to work autonomously to manage and chair LAC reviews for children who are looked after and accommodated by the council. The IRO told C by email that there would be no option for C to attend the LAC review meeting, and C could submit their views via a proforma. C received a copy of the relevant report prior to the review meeting.

We found that the council had reasonably acknowledged, apologised for and rectified the error of the incorrectly applied watermark. Overall, we found that the provision of the relevant report, proforma that invited C's views and email correspondence demonstrated that the council intentionally communicated with C in line with their responsibilities to seek the views of C as a person holding parental rights and responsibilities, in line with the relevant legislation and the council's procedure. On this basis, we did not uphold this complaint.