

SPSO decision report



Case: 201004256, The Highland Council
Sector: local government
Subject: policy/administration
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C cares for his sister, who has Down's Syndrome. He complained that Social Work Services had stopped providing road salt to him. They had provided this for about ten years, to allow him to keep the pavements around his property clear of snow in the winter. Mr C said he would not be able to provide the care that his sister needs if either he or his wife slipped on ice. He said the council had ignored the criteria for receiving community care services, specifically that of 'carers' health being put at risk'. Our investigation found, however, that the criteria on which Mr C relied in making his complaint referred only to social work clients whose needs had been assessed. In this case, Mr C's sister had not had a needs assessment carried out when the salt was first provided, and he refused to allow her to be assessed now. We concluded that it was therefore reasonable for the council to take the action that they had.