

Case: 201003016, Dumfries and Galloway Council
Sector: local government
Subject: complaints handling (incl Social Work complaints procedures)
Outcome: some upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about the actions of the social work department in dealing with him, his son with his former partner and the way the council dealt with his complaints to them about this.

Mr C complained that documents sent to him about his son and step-sons contained inaccuracies. We upheld this complaint but found that the council had already addressed these issues, and had taken remedial action to prevent a recurrence. They had also apologised to Mr C in various pieces of correspondence.

We did not uphold Mr C's other two complaints. One was about the arrangements for contact appointments for Mr C to see his son. In particular, one appointment had been cancelled without Mr C's knowledge or agreement and was not re-scheduled. Our investigation considered whether or not responsibility for these arrangements in fact lay with the council. We found that the arrangements were the responsibility of Mr C and his former partner, so the fact that the appointment was not re-scheduled was not the fault of the council.

Mr C's final complaint was that he was not satisfied with the outcome of a Complaints Review Committee (CRC). We explained to Mr C that when investigating complaints about social work our role is limited to looking at whether or not the council followed their own procedures for dealing with complaints, including the administration of the CRC process. Our investigation established that the CRC was administered in line with the council's process and that there were no unreasonable delays within the process. The council also implemented the CRC's recommendations and Mr C was informed of this in a timely manner.