

Case: 201101349, North Lanarkshire Council
Sector: local government
Subject: tenancy rights and conditions
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

The council carried out a survey of a sample of tower block residents about the service provided on estates. It asked for views on services, security and amenity issues.

About a couple of years later, they told residents that they had decided to make changes to improve service and security. This included removing existing residential caretakers and installing a CCTV (camera) monitoring system linked to a control room.

Mrs C and Mrs B complained on behalf of a number of tower block residents, who had signed a petition against the change. They complained that the council failed to consult with all residents before making changes to residential caretaking services and that residents were denied an opportunity to take part in the survey on which the decision was made. Mrs C and Mrs B said that the council had not addressed their complaint fully and properly and that there was a delay in responding. They wanted the council to undertake a further survey with all residents.

We upheld two of the complaints. We found that the council had failed to respond fully to Mrs C and Mrs B's request for details of the criteria used for the survey and the breakdown of the results. There was also a delay in responding to the complaint. We did not, however, uphold complaints that the survey was not properly carried out; that the majority agreement of residents should have been obtained; or that the council failed to address the residents' request for information about the survey and the cost involved, and for a review of the decision.

When we told the chief executive of the council of the decision, we also pointed out that the council had failed to provide us with all the information we asked

for; and we sought assurances that there would not be a recurrence of this in future.

Recommendations

We recommended that the council:

- write to Mrs C and Mrs B with a full response to the outstanding issues from their letter of complaint and offer them an apology for their failure to do so when responding to their complaint; and
- review the handling of this complaint to ensure that the council's complaints procedure is being effectively managed.