

SPSO decision report

Case: 201202602, East Renfrewshire Council

Sector: local government

Subject: council tax (incl community charge)

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained that the council had written, without her permission, to her GP about a council tax exemption, which had been granted many years previously on the basis of her mental health disorder. Having obtained the opinion of Ms C's GP the council then removed the exemption, generating a large council tax bill. Ms C said that this was unreasonable given that the council knew she was unwell. The council requested repeat information and forms from Ms C before agreeing to reinstate the exemption.

Our investigation found that, although distressing for Ms C, the actions of the council had not been unreasonable. A query over Ms C's entitlement to an exemption had arisen and the council had a right to investigate. Once they were satisfied that Ms C did qualify for the exemption, having reasonably requested further evidence from a different clinician, it was reinstated.