

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201301290, Fife Council  
**Sector:** local government  
**Subject:** applications, allocations, transfers & exchanges  
**Outcome:** not upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Miss C complained that when she agreed to move a smaller new build house, the council told her they would cover the costs of her move under the transfer incentive scheme (TIS). She was then, however, charged much more than she had been led to expect for repairs to her former council property after she moved out. This used up a considerable amount of the money available under the TIS, and so some of the costs with which the council had said they would assist could not be met. She also complained about problems with items in her new home, and about the council's handling of her representations.

During our investigation we were provided with evidence that the council had explained to Miss C that they would assist with the costs of the move up to the maximum allowed under the TIS. They had also explained before the move that they would not be able to meet all of the costs involved. They had, however, offered to exceed the budget allowed under the TIS to meet the costs of new laminate flooring, but Miss C did not accept this offer. The council confirmed that there was no money available within the new financial year to meet the costs of floor coverings. They also provided details of the repairs required to Miss C's former property.

During our investigation the council took action to replumb Miss C's washing machine and to install a rotary dryer at her new property. They confirmed that a number of other issues had been identified relating to the new build houses and that the developer would address these. We were, therefore, satisfied that the council had responded to Miss C and addressed her concerns, in line with their complaints process. We did not uphold Miss C's complaints, although we made recommendations as we were concerned that administrative omissions meant that not all the information about what happened was available, including that there was no written record of their extensive communication with Miss C by phone and during meetings.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the council:

- remind staff of the need to ensure that the pre-transfer form is signed by the tenant prior to the transfer;
- consider keeping a written record of any phone call or meeting with a tenant where a decision/agreement is reached; and
- ensure that when a repair is cancelled a record of the reason for the cancellation is recorded.