

SPSO decision report

Case: 201302921, South Lanarkshire Council
Sector: local government
Subject: aids for the disabled (incl blue badges), chronically sick & disabled acts 1970/72
Outcome: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Due to health problems, Mr C finds it difficult to climb the stairs in his house. He applied to the council for adaptations to his home, but they declined this. His case was considered at a social work complaints review sub-committee (CRC) but, again, no adaptations were agreed. Mr C complained that the CRC was not carried out in line with the relevant procedure. Specifically, he complained that although he was only allowed to bring one representative to the CRC, the social work department had three representatives. He felt that this was unfair and complained that he was also denied the opportunity to ask questions of the staff involved in his request for adaptations.

We found that the CRC was conducted in line with the relevant guidance. That said, we felt that the council could have provided Mr C with details of the number of attendees in advance of the hearing to avoid surprises. We were also satisfied that Mr C was allowed to ask questions at the hearing. However, we were critical that there was a lack of records showing what questions were asked, who responded and what the response was.

Recommendations

We recommended that the council:

- take steps to ensure that complainants are informed in advance about the number of staff who are normally present at CRCs; and
- share our comments about record-keeping with staff responsible for taking minutes of CRCs.