

SPSO decision report

Case: 201305160, Dumfries and Galloway Council
Sector: local government
Subject: complaints handling (incl social work complaints procedures)
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C said that a social work services complaints review panel had made several recommendations setting out action to be taken by social work services concerning her son and grandchild. She complained that the council failed to implement three of the recommendations.

The evidence supplied by the council showed that they had in fact implemented the disputed recommendations, but we had concerns that they were unable to provide documentary evidence to support all of their actions. When we raised these concerns, the council told us that they had recently formalised how they keep track of actions to be taken following recommendations made at a panel, and from 1 April 2014 introduced plans for improved recording of actions and learning. As they had already put in place an appropriate process, we did not make any formal recommendation on this. We were also concerned that the council did not currently update complainants about actions taken following panel recommendations, unless they specifically asked for this. During our contact with them about the case, the council said they may consider in future notifying complainants, either verbally or in writing, when panel recommendations have been carried out. We told them that we would welcome this change.