

SPSO decision report

Case: 201305510, Scottish Water
Sector: water
Subject: policy/administration
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that Scottish Water had failed to consult appropriately before deciding to construct a new water treatment works at a site neighbouring his property. He said Scottish Water had deliberately misled his parliamentary and local council representatives about the process used to select this site and that the site selection process had lacked transparency.

Scottish Water accepted that some of their responses to Mr C could have explained the site selection process more clearly. They said the construction of the treatment works was essential and that they had followed the appropriate site selection process, before consulting with the local community. They said they had followed their consultation code, which had been approved by the Scottish Government.

We found that Scottish Water were not obliged under their consultation code to consult with local residents during the site selection process. Consultation had been carried out prior to the construction of the new treatment works, which had received the appropriate planning permission. Although Scottish Water had acknowledged that they could have provided fuller responses to Mr C's enquiries, there was no evidence they had deliberately misled his elected representatives. We also found that the site selection process was an internal process and the evidence available showed it had been appropriately conducted in line with these internal procedures.