

SPSO decision report

Case: 201402300, Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority
Sector: local government
Subject: policy/administration
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority failed to handle his planning application appropriately. He felt they had inappropriately contacted other organisations about his application and that they also failed to handle his complaint appropriately.

Mr C felt the park authority's position with his planning application differed to their position with others. We took independent planning advice from our planning adviser and reviewed the evidence which, taken together, we did not consider indicated that the application had been handled inappropriately, and so did not uphold this complaint. Although we noted Mr C's concerns about the park authority's contact with other organisations, our adviser said the park authority's regular contact with other agencies reflected common practice (particularly between planning and roads authorities). We did not consider the evidence pointed to an administrative failing and, therefore, we did not uphold his second complaint.

Mr C had originally complained to the park authority by email, which they said they appeared not to have received. The park authority also said they appeared not have received Mr C's subsequent email (he re-sent his original complaint). Mr C said he received no notification that his emails were not sent properly, but the park authority said they would not receive notification that somebody had tried to email them unsuccessfully. Instead, they said Mr C's phone call (around four months after his original email) alerted them to his complaint. The evidence did not confirm whether the original emails had been sent successfully and we considered, once the park authority were aware of the matter, their handling of the complaint was reasonable. Mr C had been in touch with other park authority staff members throughout this time about separate matters and we considered he could have raised his concerns with the park authority sooner, if he felt there was a delay in them responding to his complaint. We did not uphold this complaint.