

SPSO decision report

Case: 201402995, Angus Council
Sector: local government
Subject: Applications, allocations, transfers & exchanges
Outcome: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C's home was being repossessed and he applied to the council for housing. The council initially concluded that Mr C was not homeless or threatened with homelessness and decided it was reasonable for him to continue living in his home. Mr C complained about the way his housing assessment was handled and the council acknowledged that the service he received could have been better. The council took steps to address the issues prior to Mr C bringing his complaint to us and we were satisfied there was no evidence to suggest that Mr C's housing application has been affected. In addition, Mr C was made an offer of housing, which he accepted, shortly after referring his complaint to us. We concluded that the council's handling of Mr C's application for housing was reasonable and we did not uphold the complaint.

We also looked at the council's handling of Mr C's complaint. We were satisfied that his complaints were investigated appropriately by the council and they provided clear responses. The council acknowledged there were issues and took appropriate steps to address them. For example, when Mr C's housing application was closed down, the council acknowledged that more information should have been gathered and because of that, they agreed to review the decision. However, the council did not inform Mr C of his right to refer his complaint to us and they should have done that. Nonetheless, the information available confirmed that Mr C brought his complaint to us in the same month he received the council's final response. Therefore, even though he was not referred to us by the council, the failure to do so did not adversely affect his right to come to our office. We were satisfied that, on balance, the council's overall handling of Mr C's complaint was reasonable.

Recommendations

We recommended that the council:

- apologise to Mr C for failing to advise him of his right to refer his complaint to us.