

SPSO decision report

Case: 201403611, Argyll and Bute Council
Sector: local government
Subject: refuse collection & bins
Outcome: some upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C reported that the council stopped his refuse collection. He said that he was later informed that a neighbour had denied the council refuse vehicles access to the private road running past his home. The council then made new arrangements for refuse collection via a concrete plinth at the end of the private road. Mr C was unhappy that his service had been changed and he told us that he had not been told the reason for the change or given any kind of notice. Mr C was also unhappy as it had taken the council approximately six weeks to organise a new collection location. In addition Mr C felt that the council had not communicated effectively with him and in particular had not adhered to his request to only be contacted in writing.

We upheld Mr C's complaint that the council had unreasonably delayed organising a new collection point, but we did not make any recommendations as the council had already offered an apology within their final response.

We did not uphold Mr C's complaint that the council had not informed him of a change of service prior to it taking place. This was because the council provided evidence that they had met with Mr C at his home prior to the change to tell him that his refuse collection would be disrupted. Soon after they told Mr C that the reason for this was that a neighbour had denied access to the private road. We also did not uphold Mr C's complaint about the council's communication with him. Although there was matters of communication that could have been managed more effectively by the council, they did keep Mr C informed about the refuse situation.

Finally, we found that Mr C's request for the identity of the neighbour who had denied access to the private road was dealt with as a Freedom of Information issue and the council communicated effectively about the progress of this request. We explained to Mr C that he should direct any dissatisfaction he had with the outcome of that request to the Scottish Information Commissioner.