

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201405213, East Ayrshire Council  
**Sector:** local government  
**Subject:** applications, allocations, transfers & exchanges  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Ms C submitted a housing application for relocation to a different property. She listed a number of areas where she would be prepared to live. She identified a property in her preferred area which was empty and expressed her interest in it to the council. She was told that the property was occupied, however, her interest in it was noted by the council. Ms C was subsequently contacted by the council regarding a second property in another area. She went to view it, but later declined it.

In the meantime, Ms C had learned that the first property had become available. However, she was told that as she had 'pre-accepted' the other property she had been taken off the allocations list pending her viewing of the other property. The original property was allocated to another applicant.

Ms C complained that she had never 'pre-accepted' the other property and had only agreed to view it. She also complained that her note of interest in the first property was not taken into account and the council provided her with inaccurate information regarding her status on the allocations list.

We found that although inaccurate information was issued to Ms C, this was then rectified appropriately. With regard to the allocations process, we accepted the council's position that a 'pre-acceptance' process is applied to all applicants. This means that one applicant cannot be offered two properties simultaneously, and ensures a fair and efficient process. We found that, whilst Ms C was temporarily taken off the allocations list while she considered the other property, this did not affect her chances of securing the first property. The first property was categorised for allocation to applicants with a priority need for which Ms C did not qualify. Whilst some of the council's communication could have been clearer, we were satisfied that Ms C's application was considered appropriately.