

SPSO decision report

Case: 201500997, The Highland Council
Sector: local government
Subject: bus stops, shelters, signs, road furniture
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about the time taken to install a warning sign on the road near his home, about the council's communication with him, and their handling of his complaint.

We looked at the council's file on Mr C's complaints and concluded that, in the circumstances, they had taken an unreasonable time to install the sign (it had taken eight months from the date it was agreed that the sign should be installed). The council failed to respond to Mr C's requests for progress updates or took an unreasonable time to do so, and they did not give him a detailed explanation for the delay in installing the sign, which he specifically asked for. We also found that the council failed to follow the complaints procedure, and their responses to him did not always include clear apologies. We upheld Mr C's complaints.

Recommendations

We recommended that the council:

- provide us with evidence of action taken to prevent the incorrect prioritisation of road sign requests;
- provide us with evidence of improvements made in record-keeping and task handover management;
- refresh their understanding of the complaints procedure;
- reflect on the handling of stage 1 of Mr C's complaint, taking account of the complaints procedure; and
- familiarise themselves with our guidance on apology.