

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201603215, Renfrewshire Council  
**Sector:** local government  
**Subject:** advertisement of proposals: notification and hearing of objections  
**Decision:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained about the redevelopment of a park which backs on to her property. Ms C also complained about how the council responded to her complaints.

Ms C complained that the layout of the redevelopment of the park had changed and that she had not been consulted on this matter. The council explained that the original plans were concept designs only, and that it was normal for the specifics of the design to evolve as the project progressed. Non-material variation permissions were sought for the movement of some park equipment. We took independent advice from a planning adviser. The adviser said that the council's response and explanation were reasonable and was satisfied that the correct permissions had been sought. We did not uphold this complaint.

In relation to Ms C's complaint about the way that the council had handled her complaint, we found that the council had not treated correspondence from either Ms C or her representative as complaints when they should have been. Therefore, we upheld this complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Ms C for not reasonably responding to her correspondence. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at <https://www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance>.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- The council should be clear about what process to put correspondence into. They should check this with the sender, if they are unsure. Correspondence should be replied to promptly, or the sender should be told why there will be a delay, or why no response will be issued.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.