

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201805349, Dumfries and Galloway Council  
**Sector:** local government  
**Subject:** child services and family support  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr and Mrs C complained that the council failed to follow a reasonable process in deciding to alter the foster carer's mileage allowance. The decision to change the mileage rate was a discretionary decision which the council were entitled to take. However, where there is a complaint that the discretionary decision was made without following a reasonable process, our office are entitled to investigate.

The council did not provide evidence that they had followed a reasonable process when altering the mileage rate. As no evidence was provided to support the specific mileage rate identified, or evidence of research to support the council's view that the new rate covered fuel costs for foster carers prior to the decision being made, the complaint was upheld.

### Recommendations

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- The council should ensure that they provide a clear rationale to support changes which directly affect foster carers.
- Make clear guidance available to foster carers for what the different allowances cover.

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.