

SPSO decision report

Case: 201905509, Renfrewshire Council
Sector: Local Government
Subject: kinship care
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

C became a kinship carer to their family member (A) and complained that the council had failed to provide appropriate and accurate information about kinship care payments and had dissuaded C from applying. C also complained that information about the council's policy on kinship care assistance was difficult to find and the policy provided to them in 2019 was out of date and did not include reference to changes in legislation that took place in 2009 and 2015.

The council said that C was provided with information and advice about kinship care payments, however C had decided not to pursue an application as they did not want to share their financial information.

We found evidence that C did not pursue an application for kinship care payments as they did not wish to share their financial information. We did not find any evidence that C was dissuaded from making an application. We did not uphold this complaint. However, our investigation found that the council's policy on kinship care assistance was significantly out of date and was not updated between 2005 and 2020. Therefore, we upheld this aspect of C's complaint.

Recommendations

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

- The council should consider how they will conduct an audit of all kinship carers known to them (informal/formal kinship carers and those or may or may not have a Section 11 Residency Order) and ensure they were given accurate information and are aware of their rights. If it is found they have not been given the information or assistance they are entitled to, this should be remedied.

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.