

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 202204333, Dundee City Council  
**Sector:** Local Government  
**Subject:** Neighbour disputes and anti-social behaviour  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

C complained about the council's handling of reports they made about their neighbours' antisocial behaviour. They reported a number of incidents to the Police and to the council's Antisocial Behaviour and Private Sector Services teams. Although C's reports were investigated, they were dissatisfied with the action that was taken by the council. C complained that the council failed on multiple occasions to respond to their contacts or took an unreasonable length of time to respond. C submitted a formal complaint to the council. Again, they considered that the council took an unreasonable length of time to respond to their concerns and inappropriately assigned an individual who was involved in the matters they complained about to conduct the investigation.

We found that although the council communicated clearly and regularly with C regarding their ongoing reports of antisocial behaviour, more could have been done to explain their assessment of the situation and the reasons why no formal action was being taken. We found that the council failed to follow their complaints handling procedure. There were delays in responding to C's complaint and it would have been better practice for the complaint to be investigated by someone with no involvement. On balance, we upheld C's complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for the issues highlighted in this decision. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at [www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets](http://www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets).

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

- Staff should handle complaints in line with the Model Complaints Handling Procedure, ensuring that wherever possible the complaint is investigated by someone not involved in the complaint.
- The council should ensure that when customer contact is escalated to a formal complaint, it is dealt with under the complaints handling procedure.

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.