

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201100278, Dumfries and Galloway Council  
**Sector:** local government  
**Subject:** complaints handling  
**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained that the council failed to respond to his written complaint about a road layout. Our investigation found that the council had contacted Mr C to discuss his concerns. The officer who spoke to him said the matter would be dealt with the following week. Mr C said he was happy with this and the council closed their complaint file. When we looked at the correspondence, however, it became clear that as a result of the discussion the officer thought that Mr C was complaining about problems in a different place. The officer, therefore, arranged for work to be carried out in an area that was not mentioned in Mr C's original letter. As Mr C had said during the discussion that he was happy the work was going to be done, the complaint was closed without replying to the original point. We, therefore, found that the council had not answered Mr C's complaint. We also noted that it would have, in any case, been appropriate to respond in writing to complete matters. Had this been done it is possible that the misunderstanding could have been resolved then. As a result of this we upheld the complaint and recommended that the council respond to the points raised in his letter. The council have now done so.

### Recommendations

We recommend that Dumfries and Galloway Council:

- respond to the point raised in Mr C's letter; and
- apologise for failing to respond to Mr C's letter