

SPSO decision report

Case: 201201777, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

Sector: local government

Subject: policy/administration

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about the way in which Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) handled the tendering arrangements for a passenger ferry service. Mr C complained that SPT failed to consult appropriately before deciding to award a new contract, issued a misleading statement in their minute of a meeting, and failed to handle Mr C's complaints appropriately.

Our investigation did not find evidence to uphold Mr C's complaints. We found that Mr C had not identified any specific duty on SPT to consult, and there appeared to be no obligation for them to do so before the tendering exercise, although they had surveyed passenger numbers and usages of services. Mr C had told us that he was also aware that in answer to an information request, SPT had said that there had been no consultation. He said that this contradicted a minuted statement by a councillor at SPT's March 2012 operations committee meeting. However, we found that the statement was not in fact made by a member of the committee but by a councillor of a local authority that the ferry served, who had been invited to address the committee. Finally, on the complaints handling matter, we found that in pursuing his complaint Mr C had asked for a prompt response. The chief executive had, therefore, intervened - he had provided a prompt response, thus cutting short the published complaints procedure. The reply was informative, and although it was not to Mr C's satisfaction, we did not find it inappropriate and it did not disadvantage him.