

SPSO decision report

Case: 201704421, The Highland Council
Sector: local government
Subject: complaints handling
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that the council failed to provide a reasonable response to his correspondence about planning and enforcement and other issues in relation to land near his home.

We took independent advice from a planning adviser. We found that, in general, the council had tried to address the issues Mr C raised in his correspondence. However, we identified a number of failings:

- the council did not provide an adequate explanation to Mr C about their delay in progressing matters in relation to a planning breach
- they did not advise him that he should notify them of a planning breach through their electronic enforcement system
- their response could have been clearer in relation to whether action that was being taken would resolve the enforcement issues
- their response incorrectly stated that the enforcement case must be suspended until planning applications had been determined
- they did not provide an adequate response to his comments about aggregation in relation to procurement
- they should have taken further action in relation to comments made in advertising by one of their contractors
- they failed to keep him updated on the delay in responding to his complaint.

In view of these failings, we upheld Mr C's complaint.

Recommendations