

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 202007481, West Dunbartonshire Council  
**Sector:** Local Government  
**Subject:** Council Tax  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

C complained about the council's handling of their council tax account. They had applied for a single person discount and a council tax reduction. C complained that the council failed to manage their account properly, did not communicate with them and issued warning notices for payment while the account was in dispute. C said that the council's handling of their account amounted to discrimination.

We found that there were significant delays throughout the council's assessment. However, we noted that this took place during the COVID-19 pandemic when services were disrupted. We found nothing to suggest the council were discriminating against C but considered that their communication was generally poor.

We were satisfied that C's council tax reduction entitlement was assessed reasonably, but we considered more could have been done to obtain the relevant information for the purposes of assessing C's application for single person discount. 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).
- Invite C to provide evidence of the date that they moved into the property and reassess the start date for their single person discount accordingly. The council should confirm to C what type of evidence they would accept as proof of the date of entry.

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.