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had happened in 2019. The care provider had also ceased trading. The Council included extracts from its case records in its letter to Mr B. It did not agree to waive the charges.

7. People must bring their complaint to us within twelve months of first becoming aware of the issue they are complaining about. The time limit runs from then and not from the date of the Council's final response to the complaint. Mr B should have complained to us by September 2020 but he did not complain until March 2021 so his complaint is late. As time goes by it becomes increasingly difficult for us to investigate complaints effectively. We have discretion to consider late complaints if there are good reasons. There has been delay by the Council in responding to Mr B's correspondence. But, in any case, there is insufficient information for us to reach a safe enough conclusion now on whether the Council is at fault by pursuing payment of the charges in question.

### **Final decision**

8. We will not investigate this complaint. This is because the complaint is late and there is insufficient information for us to reach a safe enough conclusion now on whether the Council is at fault by pursuing payment of the charges in question.

### **Investigator's decision on behalf of the Ombudsman**