

# Making a complaint

## Introduction

This paper sets out our Local Trust complaints procedure for Big Local.

Before making a complaint to Local Trust about Big Local we ask that you try to sort out the problem with those who are directly involved. So, if your concern relates to a local dispute or differences of opinion please seek to resolve this locally, working with members of the Big Local partnership or steering group, or the locally trusted organisation, through the locally agreed processes. You can contact the Big Local rep for your area to discuss how you might do this.

We aim to treat each complaint or concern individually, openly and transparently, as well as in a timely fashion.

Please note that we cannot action complaints that are made anonymously because we believe complaints require a full review to enable a resolution. Where a complaint is made anonymously we will log the issues you raise as a concern but no action will be taken. The only exemption from this is whistleblowing which relates to fraud and corruption in which case you should report it to us and to the police.

## Submitting a complaint

If you would like to submit a complaint to us please submit it in writing with the following information:

- your name
- your preferred contact information, including email or postal address
- details of the complaint along with any evidence you have to support the complaint (please note that we cannot accept new evidence once the review starts)
- if possible, your suggested or preferred resolution, which is practical, achievable and in line with the Big Local approach, ethos and values (see our website for details about Big Local).

Please send this to Local Trust at:

Email: [biglocal@localtrust.org.uk](mailto:biglocal@localtrust.org.uk)  
Address: Local Trust  
Unit D, 15-18 White Lion Street  
London  
N1 9PD

## Acknowledgement

We aim to acknowledge receipt of your complaint within seven calendar days. If you have not received an acknowledgement within this time please make contact with us to ensure we have received your complaint.



## Reviewing complaints

When we receive your complaint, one of our programme managers will decide if it is appropriate to progress it to review in line with this complaints procedure.

If the complaint is not to be reviewed the programme manager or chief executive will notify the complainant giving the reasons for non-review.

If the complaint is to be reviewed the programme manager will make a decision on who will review the complaint based on the nature of the complaint and the details submitted. The programme manager will notify the complainant, as well as the individual(s) that will deal with the complaint.

Within seven days of receiving the complaint from the programme manager the individual(s) conducting the review will provide the complainant and programme manager with a date when the response will be provided.

The review process might include telephone conversations and face to face meetings with people involved in Big Local, both formally and informally. We recognise that every complaint is different and we also know that all reviews are different. All reviews will be reasonable and proportionate to the type of complaint being made and in furtherance of Big Local outcomes.

Once the review is complete we provide a response. We try to ensure that a response is provided to the complainant within 28 calendar days; sometimes it can be faster and sometimes it takes longer if there is a lot to review. The reviewer will keep both the complainant and programme manager updated if it becomes apparent that the review will take longer than 28 days.

Please note that it is usual for Big Local related activities and decisions to continue while the review takes place. Where this is not appropriate the programme manager will inform the Big Local steering group or partnership, rep and locally trusted organisation.

## The appeal process

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response they can make one appeal if:

- the review failed to address the complaint
- the review failed to take into consideration material evidence submitted at the time of the complaint
- new relevant evidence which could have changed the outcome of the review emerged during the review and is supplied to support the appeal
- the individual(s) conducting the review had a clear conflict of interest which became apparent during the review.

Appeals should be submitted in writing to Local Trust within ten calendar days of Local Trust's response to the complaint being circulated.

When an appeal is received, the programme manager, chief executive, the chair of trustees or another trustee will respond within ten calendar days to let the complainant / appellant know whether they consider there are sufficient grounds for the appeal to be considered. If they consider that there are sufficient grounds, they will arrange for a further review of the complaint and issue a decision within a further 28 calendar days. This decision is final and will include any action to be taken.



## Complaints identified as 'not for action'

In almost all instances complaints are made in good faith and reflect a real concern that the individual(s) have and we treat them seriously as described above. When it becomes clear the complaints are not made in good faith we have a process whereby a complaint can be marked 'not for action'. This might be because they are repeat or persistent complaints from the same individual(s), which have no substance or which have already been reviewed and concluded.

## Learning from complaints

We carefully monitor complaints and use the learning to inform the Big Local programme. We also keep our Local Trust board of trustees informed of the complaints that we receive, the findings, the outcomes and recommendations for future practice annually.

## Local Trust

Email: [biglocal@localtrust.org.uk](mailto:biglocal@localtrust.org.uk) | Website: [www.localtrust.org.uk](http://www.localtrust.org.uk) | Telephone: 020 3588 0565

Address: Local Trust | Unit D, 15-18 White Lion Street | London | N1 9PD

We will develop this document over time with input from the people using this material. If you have thoughts on how this document can be made more useful for you, particularly if you live in one of the Big Local areas, please let us know.

The endowment for the Big Local programme is held by the Big Local Trust and overseen by Local Trust. The Big Local Trust was set up by the Big Lottery Fund with a National Lottery grant of £196,873,499.

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