

Support where Big Local areas are experiencing difficulties or conflict

This document sets out our approach when Local Trust is made aware of issues within a Big Local area. This does not cover the handling of formal complaints, guidance on which is available separately on our website.

Our approach

When concerns are raised with us or we become aware of issues in a Big Local our approach is to support those who are directly involved to resolve the issue locally, as our experience is that this leads to better and more lasting positive solutions. This may include the Big Local Rep but not direct involvement from Local Trust. We may decide that some external support is required to help resolve issues but will usually only consider this once it becomes clear that developing a local solution has not been successful.

If you contact us with a concern about Big Local we will direct this to those who are actively involved, which includes members of the Big Local partnership and the locally trusted organisation for them to consider. We will also share your correspondence with the Big Local Rep, as they act on our behalf in areas.

Please note that if you do not explicitly give us permission to share your concerns we will ask you for it. If you do not give it then we will not take action. The only exemption from this is whistleblowing which relates to fraud and corruption and in which case you should report it to us and to the police.

If you are a worker on Big Local, we expect you to raise any concern (or complaint) with your employer, which is often the Locally Trusted Organisation, and for them to follow their own organisational policies and procedures in line with the terms and conditions of grant.

Contractors providing goods, works or services should direct any issues to the relevant client. Local Trust will not engage in resolving disputes between contractors and LTOs or other organisations involved in the delivery of Big Local.

Supporting resolutions

There might be some circumstances where additional support would be helpful in supporting Big Local to move forward positively. When this is the case a member of the programmes team will refer the matter to an external support partner who will contact the relevant parties to set-up phone calls and/or meetings. This could be mediation; an external review; an interim independent chair; or other advice and guidance we feel appropriate. This may

include the person(s) who raised the issues, the Big Local partnership and the locally trusted organisation.

This process might include telephone and face to face conversations and facilitated meetings with the people involved, ongoing direct support, or a combination of the both. In extreme circumstances where the partnership cannot develop a local solution Local Trust may direct the actions and/or objectives the partnership should work towards.

Please note that it is usual for Big Local related activities and decisions to continue while these supporting actions take place. Where this is not appropriate a member of the programmes team will inform the Big Local partnership and locally trusted organisation.

Communications identified as 'not for action'

In almost all instances communications 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 that concerns 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 persistent or vexatious correspondence from the same individual(s), have no substance or which have already been responded to and concluded.

Learning

We carefully monitor the support we provide areas to use the learning to inform the Big Local programme.

Submitting concerns

If you would like to express a concern we advise that you initially contact the Big Local Partnership, Rep or LTO depending on the nature of your concern. If you remain concerned you can submit your concern in writing to info@localtrust.org.uk or by post with the following information:

- your name
- your preferred contact information, including email or postal address details of the concern along with any evidence
- your permission to share your concerns with those directly involved in Big Local, including the partnership and locally trusted organisation

Without this information we will not be able to take any action.

We aim to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence within two working days and provide a fuller reply within 20 working days. The timeframe may vary depending on the complexity of the issues raised and exceptionally we may take more time if we need to discuss the matter with other people or organisations involved in the Big Local. We will let you know if that is the case.

Complaints

Submitting a concern to Local Trust is different to submitting a formal complaint. Please see our complaints guidance for further information.

Local Trust

Email: info@localtrust.org.uk | Website: www.localtrust.org.uk | Telephone: 020 3588 0565
Address: Local Trust, CAN Mezzanine, 7-17 Great Dover Street, London SE10 4YR

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