

# **Vexatious/unreasonable/persistent community trigger requests policy**

## **INTRODUCTION**

A small minority of people requesting a community trigger may act in a way that is persistent, vexatious or unreasonable:

- To persist unreasonably with a request or
- To make requests in order to make cause aggravation or annoyance rather than to genuinely seek to resolve a grievance (vexatious); or
- To be abusive, offensive or threatening.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to staff on how to manage persistent, vexatious or unreasonable requests. The policy relates to all forms of communication to staff.

## **WHEN IS A REQUEST PERSISTENT, VEXATIOUS OR UNREASONABLE?**

The following list<sup>1</sup>, provides examples of behaviour relating to a community trigger request that may be considered to be persistent, vexatious or unreasonable;

- Refusing to specify the grounds of a request, despite offers of assistance;
- Refusing to co-operate with the trigger request process;
- Refusing to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a trigger procedure;
- Insisting on the request being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with a trigger procedure or with good practice;
- Changing the basis of the request as the investigation proceeds;
- Denying or changing statements he or she made at an earlier stage;
- Introducing trivial or irrelevant new information at a later stage;

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<sup>1</sup> Based on a list drawn up by the Local Government Ombudsman in relation to complaints

- Raising numerous, detailed but unimportant questions; insisting they are all answered;
- Covertly recording meetings and conversations;
- Submitting falsified documents from themselves or others;
- Making excessive demands on the time and resources of staff with lengthy phone calls, emails to numerous council staff / councillors, or detailed letters every few days, and expecting immediate responses;
- Submitting repeated requests with minor additions / variations that the person making the request insists make these 'new' requests;
- Refusing to accept the decision;
- Persist in seeking an outcome which we have explained is unrealistic for legal or policy (or other valid) reasons
- Refuse to accept documented evidence as factual
- Repeatedly arguing points with no new evidence;
- Using abusive, threatening or offensive language.

## **CLASSIFICATION**

The decision to classify a request as persistent, vexatious or unreasonable should be made by the Community Safety Team Leader.

Detailed, chronological notes should be kept by ASB Co-ordinator.

## **WHAT ACTIONS CAN BE TAKEN WHERE A REQUEST IS JUDGED TO BE PERSISTENT, VEXATIOUS OR UNREASONABLE?**

### **Initial notification**

When a persistent, vexatious or unreasonable request has been identified, it will not be progressed. This outcome and the associated reasons why should be explained to the requestor by the Community Safety Team Leader, usually by email or letter.

Requests refused on persistent, vexatious or unreasonable grounds must be recorded and reported to JATAC.