

Handling of Service Requests

1. Purpose of this document

- 1.1. To ensure the consistent handling and prioritisation of health and safety service requests.
- 1.2. To ensure an appropriate response is made to health and safety service requests.
- 1.3. To ensure accurate records are kept of health and safety service requests and the response made to them.

2. Scope of this document

- 2.1. This procedure only applies to complaints or enquiries made about activities or sites at which the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 applies.
- 2.2. This procedure does not apply to accidents or incidents reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (“RIDDOR”). Persons wishing to report an accident or incident under RIDDOR shall be advised to use the on-line reporting system at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor>.
- 2.3. A **complaint** is a concern, originating from outside the Council, in relation to a work activity for which the council is the enforcing authority, that is sufficiently specific to enable identification of the issue and the dutyholder and/or location and that either:
 - has caused or has potential to cause significant harm, or alleges the denial of basic employee welfare facilities, or
 - appears to constitute a significant breach of law for which Argyll and Bute Council is the enforcing authority.
- 2.4. Other enquiries that are handled under this procedure include:
 - requests for advice on health and safety matters from businesses themselves;
 - notifications of licensed asbestos work;
 - other enquiries about specific health and safety cases, e.g. a request for information about a notified RIDDOR report.

3. Performance standards

- 3.1. Acknowledgement: 3 working days of receipt of written / emailed / faxed requests.
- 3.2. Complete investigation: 20 working days of receipt of request.

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- 3.3. Note: Performance targets, which are set in service plans, account for the small proportion of more complex cases which require more than 20 working days for an investigation to be completed.
- 4. Receipt of service request**
- 4.1. Ordinarily, service requests will be received by the Contact Centre and notified by email to the area teams. A case should be created in Uniform by the Contact Centre in those cases.
- 4.2. Service requests received by telephone or in person shall be carefully recorded by the person dealing with the customer, who shall be responsible for ensuring that the customers' name, address and contact details are accurately recorded and checked with the customer before concluding the interview. This shall be in addition to a summary of the matter reported or requested.
- 4.3. Letters and faxes shall be date-stamped on receipt and scanned into Civica, to be indexed against the Uniform case.
- 4.4. All service requests shall be passed without delay to the officer responsible for the site. In the absence of the relevant officer, the Area Environmental Health Manager shall allocate the case.
- 5. Prioritisation**
- 5.1. Where the prioritisation of service requests is necessary, the criteria for selecting incidents reports for investigation can be used as reference.
- 6. Referral to other agencies**
- 6.1. Where a service request relates to a site enforced by another local authority or the HSE, the receiving officer or case officer shall make that referral without delay.
- 6.2. Referral by telephone shall be confirmed in writing or by email and a copy of the referral retained on file and attached to the case record in Civica.
- 7. Investigation**
- 7.1. Complaints shall be investigated in accordance with procedure HELA-P07 (*Investigation of Incidents and Complaints*).

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8. Recording in Uniform

- 8.1. The receiving or case officer shall enter the service request into Uniform as soon as possible after receipt of the complaint and in no case later than the same working day. The case officer is responsible for this record.
- 8.2. Health and safety service requests are allocated to one of the three following case types:
- **HSWUNS** – Health and safety complaint (to be used for reports of alleged breach of duty/complaints about health and safety)
 - **HSWADV** – Health and safety advice request (to be used for all health and safety requests **not** alleging a breach of duty, e.g. requests for advice from businesses and other enquiries about a health and safety case)
 - **ASBEST** – Notifications of licensed asbestos work
- 8.3. It is essential that service requests records in Uniform relating to commercial premises are properly linked to the commercial premises record using the commercial premises search function.
- 8.4. Full and accurate details of the progress in dealing with the service request, including all actions, must be logged on the IVA record. The elapsed time spent on each action shall also be recorded.
- 8.5. Once the investigation and necessary actions have been completed, the IVA record shall be completed and closed by the case officer.

9. Case records

- 9.1. Records of the request and investigation shall be placed in the premises file.
- 9.2. All documents shall be attached to the case record in Civica.

10. Communication with the customer

- 10.1. Where the customer is not anonymous, and the request has not been one for business advice, a closing letter shall be sent at the end of the investigation. This letter shall confirm:
- the outcome achieved;
 - a clear statement that no further action will be taken;
 - a statement that the customer should contact us again if not satisfied with our action.

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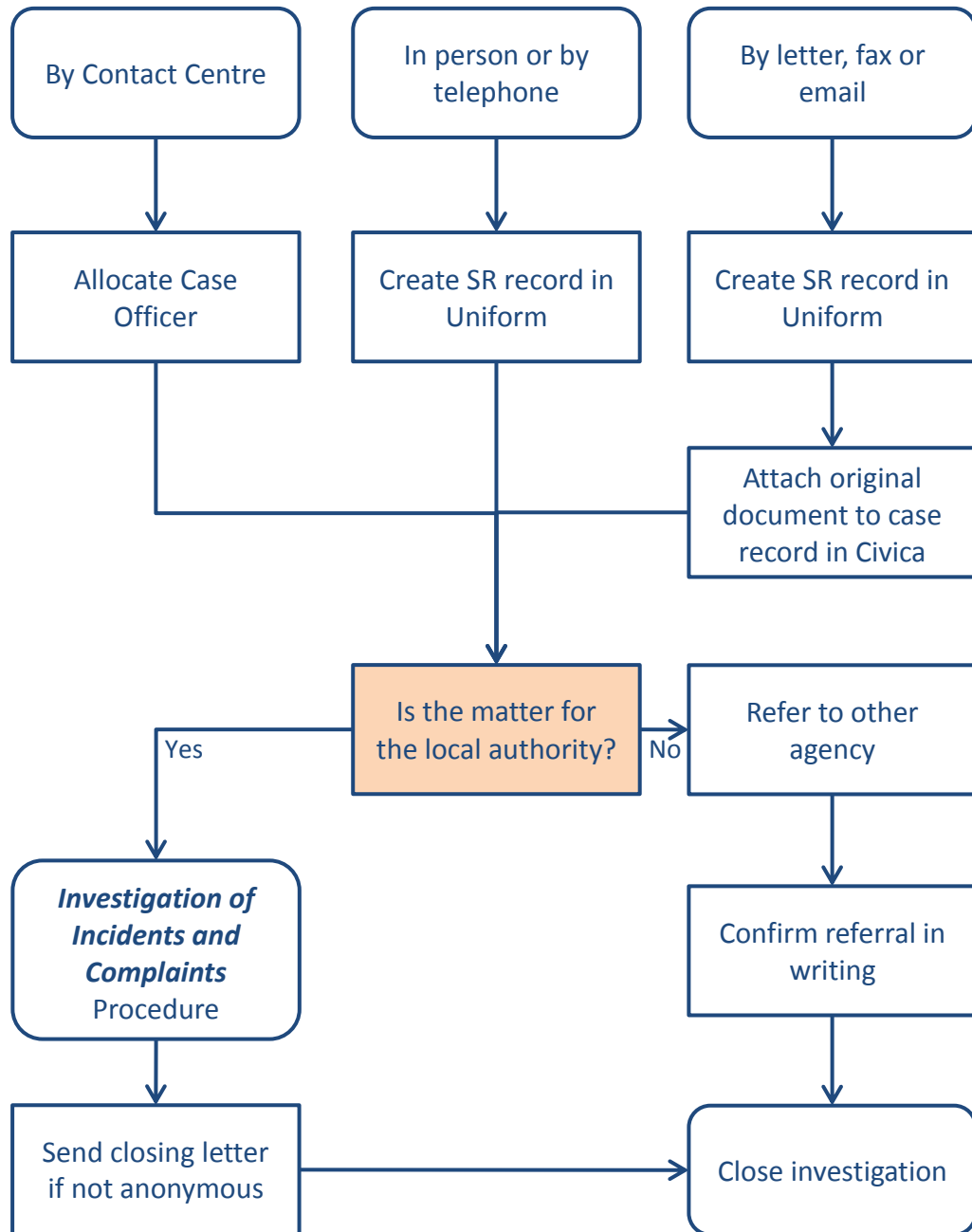
11. References

- 11.1. The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- 11.2. *The National Local Authority Enforcement Code – Health and Safety at Work, England, Scotland and Wales*, HSE, May 2013
- 11.3. HSE's Internal Operational Procedures for Investigation,
www.hse.gov.uk/foi/internalops/og/ogprocedures/complaints/index.htm
(accessed 28/02/2013)
- 11.4. Enforcement Policy Statement, HSE41 (rev1), HSE 2009

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APPENDIX A – Handling of Service Requests Flow Chart



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