

1: Mr Anderson

Mr Anderson made an application for a Crisis Grant as he has lost his ESA on the bus journey back from withdrawing the full amount from the Post Office. Mr Anderson explained he had not reported the loss as he is experiencing harassment from the local police following an allegation of assault he made against one of the policemen who arrested him two months ago.

As this is Mr Anderson's third application for lost money (including money lost on a bus journey) in 10 months his application is refused.

When the case worker explains her decision to Mr Anderson over the phone, he becomes very distressed and can be heard crying on the phone. He also says that he is being threatened by a neighbour who has said he will kill him if he doesn't hand over the money he is due him and he is desperate for the money because of this. Mr Anderson says that life is becoming unbearable for him and he might as well 'put an end' to it all now. The member of staff tells Mr Anderson she will need to contact the police if he is threatening to kill himself. Mr Anderson hangs up and the staff member is extremely concerned about him and asks their manager what to do.

2: Mrs Clerk

Mrs Clerk makes an application for a Crisis Grant following a major flood in her flat. She is advised over the phone by the Welfare Team assistant that she is not entitled to a grant because her level of savings is just too high. Mrs Clerk becomes very angry and repeatedly criticizes the Council, threatening to go to her MSP about this. She also puts her husband on the phone who demands to be put through to someone more senior and makes abusive comments to the staff member. After several minutes of trying to calm the situation the member of staff ends the call.

Mrs Clerk calls again and is put through to a manager. She says that the staff member falsely accused her and her husband of using inappropriate language. The manager does not accept this is true and when Mrs Clerk becomes abusive they terminate the call.

Mrs Clerk calls repeatedly throughout the day at 20 minute intervals to complain and asking to speak to the chief executive. Staff continue to refuse to accept phone calls from Mrs Clerk and hang up on her.

Mrs Clerk contacts the Chief Executive by letter and says that her behaviour is a direct result of the prescription medication she needs to manage a mental health condition, and not something she can control and staff should not have terminated her calls.

3: Ms Telford

Ms Telford is a single parent living with her two sons 7 and 23. The 23 year old has severe learning difficulties and a number of physical health issues. Ms Telford has made 11 applications for Community Care Grants over the past two years. Three of her applications have been successful. Ms Telford's previous applications have often been difficult to understand and she failed to provide further information or explanations requested by staff on several occasions. She also failed to arrange for the fitting of a carpet previously awarded.

Ms Telford is making a 12th application which includes a number of items previously awarded to her 18 months ago including replacement beds and bedding and a washing machine and cooker. Ms Telford has applied by email stating she needs these items because her son has ruined everything and they have nothing.

The welfare team member emails to ask if they can discuss her claim and she replies to explain she has no working phone at the moment. Staff ask if she can attend in person and she replies that she is too busy with her son who is in hospital now.