

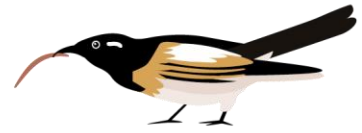


WEAVING THE
FUTURE, TOGETHER
KOTAHITANGA
ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS AND ISSUE RESOLUTION POLICY

ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL

March 2024



VERSION HISTORY

Date	Changes	By	Date Adopted
28/03/2024	Policy created	Nardia Gower	28/03/2024

COMPLAINTS AND ISSUE RESOLUTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Ōtorohanga District Council values feedback from the community. It's important that we know what we're getting right so we can keep doing it.

However, like any other public agency we will sometimes receive complaints.

We know that we provide a wide range of services and make decisions on situations where people might have conflicting opinions. We also sometimes make mistakes or fail to meet expectations.

Whatever the cause, we have a duty to ensure the community has a way to positively resolve issues before they escalate into serious problems. This will help us make better decisions, make our services better, and help us build a trusting, positive relationship with our community.

This policy aims to provide a framework and process to enhance customer satisfaction by supporting an organisational culture that is:

- open to feedback, including complaints
- focused on reinforcing good practices and resolving issues quickly, transparently and equitably
- committed to learning from our experiences so that we can keep improving our services and the way we do things.

SCOPE

This policy is relevant for all full and part-time employees, casual staff, and contractors.

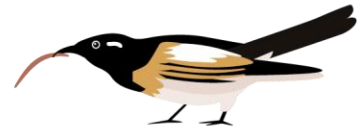
DEFINITIONS

Compliment

An expression of satisfaction, thanks or appreciation for something Ōtorohanga District Council or a specific elected or staff member has done.

Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction with council policy, decision, process, charge, employee/contractor conduct or quality of service which may or may not request a formal response.



This is different from:

- Request for service or information
- LGOIMA request
- Feedback as part of a formal consultation process
- Any internal complaint from one staff member against another
- A complaint over which the customer or council have begun legal proceedings or has already been heard by a court or tribunal
- Allegations against a contractor or staff member of serious misconduct such as sexual harassment, fraud or assault
- Insurance claims

OUR ISSUES MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Our issues management process needs to align with our council values. When managing customer issues or complaints we will:

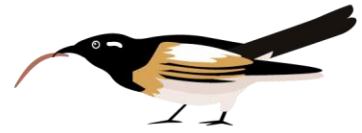
- Strive to resolve issues as soon as possible – preferably at the first point of contact
- Communicate clearly in a way that’s easy to understand
- Take ownership when we’ve failed to deliver or meet the expectations of our community
- Learn from complaints and use this learning to improve how we do things
- Deal with issues honestly and openly
- Keep records of all complaints, suggestions, and compliments
- Have an open mind and genuinely examine the issues raised
- Try and see things from the community’s perspective
- Be fair, equitable and act with integrity
- Sensitive complaints relating to or alleging staff conduct or behaviour will be handled confidentially by the relevant department Manager, in consultation with the Manager People and Capability and the relevant Group Manager and/or CE as needed

ISSUES RESOLUTION PROCESS

Complaints can be made via our complaints form, found on our website and at our offices.

Level 1 Issue

A member of the community expresses their dissatisfaction which is then resolved by a frontline staff member



Level 2 Issue

If there's no immediate resolution available, a formal response is needed, or the person raising the issue isn't satisfied, the issue will be referred to our issues resolution process. The council will then investigate with the intention of resolving the issue within 15 working days.

Level 3 Issue

If the issue still isn't resolved, or poses a large degree of risk, it may be drawn to the Chief Executive's attention. They may then either investigate, or direct a senior council officer to resolve an issue.

Level 4 Issue

If the council has followed its process and the person raising the issue still isn't satisfied, they have the option to refer their problem to the Ombudsman.

LEVELS OF SERVICE

Level	Action	Level of service	Form of action	Responsibility
1	First acknowledgment of complaint or compliment	Within 5 working days of the complaint / compliment being received	Email acknowledgement which sets out any response timeframes	Customer service, business support or relevant manager as appropriate
2	Response to the complaint or issue raised	Within 15 working days of the complaint being received, unless the complaint is complex	Letter or email setting out the actual response	Subject matter expert or relevant Manager or Group Manager as appropriate
3	Response to the complaint or issue raised	As advised to the complainant, case by case	e-letter setting out the actual response	CE or relevant Group Manager
4	Next steps if dissatisfied	n/a	Set out options if dissatisfied	CE

UNREASONABLE CONDUCT

If a person raising a complaint engages in unreasonable customer conduct (UCC), we will follow our UCC policy and processes.



RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- Employment Relations Act 2000
- The Local Government Official Information and Meeting Act (LGOIMA) 1987
- Privacy Act 1993
- The Local Government Act 2002
- The Resource Management Act 1991
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

RELATED DOCUMENTS, POLICIES AND PROCESSES

- Customer Charter (In progress)
- Unacceptable Customer Conduct Policy (In draft)
- Complaints Form

COMPLAINTS FLOW

