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Management Policy – HCC Customer Feedback Policy

Ko te Puutaketanga Purpose

As a public sector entity, Hamilton City Council is required by law to ensure feedback received from customers, citizens, ratepayers, visitors, and elected members in relation to administrative and operational matters are properly recorded and promptly addressed in a fair and reasonable manner.

As part of good governance culture, Council is expected to use the feedback performance data to plan continuous improvements in all aspects of service deliverables. Council is also required to maintain records on complaint outcomes and make it available for audit by the Auditor-General under section 16 of the Public Audit Act 2001 or under any other legislation applicable for public entities.

This customer feedback policy sets out how Council will adhere to good governance obligations in relation to complaints, compliments, and customer insights about our services as the territorial authority for the people of Hamilton.

Ko ngā Tikanga Whakahaere Kaupapahere Principles of Policy

When handling feedback, we commit to:

- Consider having to understand and address their thinking in relation to the feedback provided
- Address the feedback at the first point of contact
- Treat all customer feedback with equal priority and give a timely response
- Communicate in a way that is easy to understand
- Be fair and act with integrity
- Take a genuine, fresh look at issues raised
- Not to become defensive and assess issues on merits
- Be committed to learning from feedback outcomes and root causes

Ko te Whaanuitanga Scope

This Policy will explain:

- 1.1 Council's value statement
- 1.2 Channels and definitions
- 1.3 Customer Feedback model
- 1.4 Customer Feedback handling process
- 1.5 Customer Feedback handling principles
- 1.6 Roles and responsibilities
- 1.7 Record keeping and management reporting
- 1.8 Learning from feedback outcomes
- 1.9 Unreasonable complainant conduct policy
- 1.10 Related policies and governing legislation

The following shall be **excluded** from the customer feedback policy because Council handles them through dedicated processes to deliver quicker resolutions given their inherent nature and urgency.

Service request

Service requests as part of Council's ordinary services. These may include but are not limited to support for amenities and utilities including transport infrastructure, wastewater, storm water and other essential household and business support for general maintenance and wellbeing of Hamilton residents. Complaints about disturbance from noise or missed rubbish collections will be managed under the dedicated processes in the first instance. Where the problems persist, the matter could then escalate as a complaint requiring formal investigation under the customer feedback policy.

A complaint outcome may result in creation of a service order. Any service order raised to resolve a complaint would follow Council's work and budgetary schedules. Once a service request is raised, the complaint is deemed closed.

Infringements notices

Fines and penalties issued by Council are also excluded from the customer feedback framework.

Request for information

Requests for information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the Privacy Act 2020 are managed separately outside the customer feedback framework unless a complaint is raised about the way the information request was handled, processed, or information withheld without reasonable grounds.

Public Consultations

Public consultation on Council projects, policies or programmes are excluded from this customer feedback policy.

Feedback from public consultations held to solicit public submissions and objections will follow the prescribed process such as public forum or meetings.

Ko ngaa Tikanga

Policy

I. HCC Value Statement, Channels and Definitions

1.1. Our Value Statement

1.1.1. Enabling feedback

- Council will maintain a customer feedback framework which will be customer centric, visible, and accessible to the members of the community, our customers, ratepayers, and visitors.
- Information about Council's customer feedback framework and the feedback handling process will be published on our website.
- This vital information about the customer feedback framework will also feature prominently on Council's digital platform to encourage customer engagement and participation.

1.1.2. Responding to customer feedback

- Council will endeavour to respond promptly to customer feedback to achieve fair, reasonable, and timely outcomes from transparent and objective investigations. Council is committed to being accessible and responsive to all feedback providers.
- We will maintain impartiality, provide equitable remedies, and ensure the principles of procedural fairness are observed consistently. The customer feedback framework will ensure consistency in the handling of complaints across Council.
- Where complainants are dissatisfied with our decisions, we will review our decisions and allow for an appeal in a fair and reasonable manner. We will provide clear and logical explanations to support our decisions.
- If complainants are dissatisfied with the decision after our final appeal, we will assist the complainant to refer the dispute to the Office of the Ombudsman for an independent investigation.
- Given the ultimate purpose of Council's customer feedback framework is to attain consistency in the handling of complaints and to continuously improve service delivery standards, Council will demonstrate improvements implemented from feedback performance data across all business units.
- Council will support investigations conducted by the Office of the Ombudsman by; providing access to relevant information pertaining to Council policies, processes, and procedures to expedite fair and objective investigations.

1.1.3. Accountability and learning

- Council will collect and securely store feedback performance data including outcomes of complaints together with the root causes, trends, and other quantitative and qualitative data.
- This will include data about categories of complaints and sources of high-risk complaints. Feedback performance data will be used to assist Council to take corrective steps to mitigate re-occurrences of high-risk complaints.
- Council will ensure that the feedback management framework has reporting for tracking the progress of cases and analysing the outcomes. This will include identifying instances of double handling resulting in cases being transferred between multiple departments delaying outcomes beyond 30 days.
- Council must also monitor and analyse review outcomes and appeals to identify common trends and categories of complaints which are likely to take longer to resolve or are likely to go through the review and appeals process.

1.2 Channels, Definitions and Limitations

1.2.1. Feedback channels

- Hamilton City Council will actively promote the customer feedback framework to foster greater public engagement. Council will listen to the voice of the community to address systematic issues that may hinder Council from discharging its duty and obligations to acceptable standards.
- The city's diverse community creates the need to ensure multiple channels are available to facilitate customer complaints, compliments, and customer insights. Apart from face-to-face engagement at our service centres, the digital channels play a vital role to maximise the opportunity to hear from our customers, stakeholders, and visitors.

- Making the feedback handling process visible and accessible is an important feature of Council's commitment to respond when members of the public reach out to express dissatisfaction or offer customer insights.
- Council's website will provide easy-to-follow guidelines on how to lodge a complaint, offer compliments, or provide customer insights by completing the web-form online or alternatively through our dedicated email address: info@hcc.govt.nz

Channels	
Call Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • +64 7 838 6699 • Our team is available to take your call 24/7. • Email: info@hcc.govt.nz
Service Centre and other sites	<p>Sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 260 Anglesea St, Hamilton, 3240 Open 7:45 am – 5pm Monday to Friday • Hamilton Gardens • Hamilton City Libraries • Hamilton Pools • Hamilton Zoo • Waikato Museum • H3 • Visit Hamilton
By Post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamilton City Council Private Bag 3010 Hamilton, 3240
Digital Platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook • YouTube • LinkedIn • Instagram • The Antenno App • Google review
HCC website – Web Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Form for Compliments, Complaints, and Customer insights.
Mayor and the Elected Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email EMFeedback@hcc.govt.nz

1.2.2 Definitions (see [Definitions](#) for a comprehensive list)

Feedback informs Council about improvement opportunities and further enhances the quality of our services.

Feedback can be compliments, complaints, and customer insights. Complaints and customer insights help us to refine and improve our policies, processes, and systems. Compliments help us recognise when we are meeting or exceeding community standards for service and performance.

Customer compliment

Compliments are praise or congratulations about Council's services or performance.

Customer complaint

Complaints are expressions of dissatisfaction about service delivery or how we conduct our business that require investigation and resolution.

Customer insights

Customer insights are ideas on how we could improve our services or do our business differently. They can be categorised as follows:

- Fees & Charges
- Policy & Process
- Projects, Developments & Designs

Compensation request

Financial relief expected by the complainant to compensate, either partially or fully, for loss incurred by the complainant.

Any compensation request will be initially investigated by relevant business unit. When the request exceeds \$10,000 it will be escalated to Council's Insurance team.

II. Customer feedback model

The customer feedback model is designed to achieve the following measurable goals:

- (a) Compliance with the requirements of the Public Audit Act – which allows the Auditor-General to carry out performance audits, including examining the extent to which a public entity is carrying out its activities effectively and efficiently.
- (b) Council uses a centralised system and database to capture, store and process all information relating to customer feedback – single source of truth.
- (c) Council's feedback handling process is consistent with the principles of natural justice, as required under section 27(1) of New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990.
- (d) Council's feedback handling process delivers consistent, fair, and reasonable outcomes based on transparent and objective investigations conducted in a timely manner.
- (e) Council would review the feedback performance data to plan improvements to deliver better customer experience for the community of Hamilton.

2.1 Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

2.1.1 Feedback closure

- All customer feedback should be closed within ten (10) working days, counting from the date the feedback is logged on the system with required information based on the details on section 2.2.1 Information Needed. The SLA of 10 working days starts from the date the feedback is logged in the system. This will become the formal complaint open date from that point onwards the SLA of 10 working days apply.
- The outcome and conclusions must be drawn from objective, transparent and fair investigations conducted by knowledgeable and skilled staff members.

2.1.2 Feedback outcome review

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they are entitled to request a review of our decision. The complainant may provide further relevant information or evidence to assist the review process.
- The complainant must lodge the review request within five (5) working days from the date Council communicated the decision to them.
- The feedback owner must ensure the review process is completed after a fair and objective process considering all the relevant facts and evidence within five (5) working days from the date of the request lodged by the complainant.

2.1.3 Final appeal

- If the complainant continues to disagree with the outcome of the review, the complainant can lodge an appeal within seven (7) working days from the date the review outcome was communicated to the complainant.
- The appeal is the final opportunity for the parties to resolve the dispute. The appeal decision must be determined within seven (7) working days from the date of the request.
- The customer feedback manager will verify all the relevant facts of the case and previous decisions. This is to ensure any inadvertent omission of facts and/or evidence or misinterpretation of relevant legislation, business rules and policies are properly validated to make the final decision within seven (7) working days from the date the appeal was lodged.
- If the outcome of the final appeal is not accepted by the complainant, the complainant may escalate the matter to the office of the Ombudsman for an independent investigation.

2.1.4 SLA variations

- The feedback owner may require more time to complete the investigations where internal or external dependencies may exist.
- The complainant must be advised in writing that more time is required to conclude the case before the expiry of the standard SLA of ten (10) working days. The extension would allow additional ten (10) working days for investigations to conclude the outcome.
- The feedback owner must also outline the reasons why more time required to conclude the matter.
- The customer feedback manager may review all open complaints outside the SLA to verify the circumstances of the delay.

2.2 The Customer Feedback Handling Process

2.2.1 Information needed

The following information needs to be provided by customers so Council can investigate the complaint, offer resolution, or communicate with them in a timely manner:

- First and last name (mandatory)
- Email address or postal address/residential address (one of these)
- May also supply daytime phone number
- Preferred contact method
- Detailed description of the complaint, compliment, or customer insights
- Reference numbers of the complaint, compliment, or customer insights, where applicable
- Full names of staff members involved on the case, where applicable
- All supporting documents including photographs, legitimately obtained video footage or audio records, emails and letters relevant to the complaint
- An indication of the complainant's expectations on what could possibly resolve the complaint

2.2.2 The elected members' feedback process

- Under Council's customer feedback policy, complaints and feedback escalated through the elected members will be managed by Customer Service – Service Centre team via a dedicated mailbox: EMFeedback@hcc.govt.nz to ensure efficient handling of all elected member-initiated feedback. Information needed will be same as above details for customer feedback.
- The customer feedback manager will follow up on elected member-initiated complaints and disseminate reports to keep the elected members and the executive leadership team informed about the status of all active elected member-initiated complaints.
- All feedback lodged through elected members will be managed by the respective feedback owner. The feedback owner will provide updates to complainant.
- The customer feedback manager will update the Office of the Mayor and respective elected member on the outcome of the feedback.
- The elected member feedback has the same information requirement and Service Level Agreement of 10 days upon logging in the system.

2.2.3 Acknowledgement

- All feedback will be acknowledged via email by the end of the following working day upon receipt of the feedback
- If no email address has been provided by customer, the acknowledgement must be sent via post
- The acknowledgement will include a feedback reference number, the expected timeline for an outcome and customer services contacts information.

2.2.4 Feedback assessment – triage

- The gatekeeper would conduct a preliminary review to assess the level of reputational, legal, or financial risk for every feedback received before assigning the case to the feedback owner.

2.2.5 Investigation

- The feedback owner would carry out the following in a fair and objective manner consistently which will lead to a logical conclusion or outcome:
 - Gather information for validation and analysis
 - Consider material and factual evidence
 - Determine findings and validate theories

- Forming reasonable grounds for the findings
- Recommending a resolution or outcome to be swiftly communicated to the complainant by the feedback owner
- The feedback owner may seek guidance about the relevant legislation and policies impacting the complaint to ensure legal ramifications and public liability risk has been carefully assessed.

2.2.6 Communicating the investigation outcome

- Once the investigation is completed, the outcome will be communicated in a professional and objective manner. In doing so, we will use professional language and tone that demonstrates empathy, objectivity, and a resolution-driven attitude towards the complaint.
- The complaint outcome should include the following information:
 - the summary of the decision
 - the reasons for the decision
 - any remedial action taken or planned
 - information about the review and appeal process, as necessary
 - information about the escalation process to the Ombudsman's Office
- The communication must be clear, concise, and informative, setting out Council's decision. Any remedial or restorative action must be specified with a clear timeline and unambiguous description of the proposed resolution.

2.2.7 Escalation

Escalation process: Staff are expected to **escalate issues in the workplace raising awareness of the context to the right people to resolve a challenging situation early** and prevent reputational harm.

Internal escalations occurring between staff members where the customer enquiry is passed on to another staff member to deal with. In some instances, the customer may request another staff member who had previously dealt with the customer to handle the matter, but it is Council's prerogative to assign the staff as it may deem appropriate.

Customer Services Team Concern: These are flags raised internally by customer services team to bring matters which need to be highlighted to customer service team leaders and managers as a proactive step to mitigate risk.

High-risk escalation: Matters which are drawn to the attention of *executive* leadership team including insurance, governance, legal, risk, and comms, where legal, financial, or reputational risk is high.

2.2.8 Priority action to mitigate high-risk escalation

Feedback may create the need for priority action where compelling cause of action is apparent, in particular:

Where or if:

- there was an unreasonable delay
- inadequate advice, explanation, or reasons provided
- Council policies or procedures were not followed correctly
- Council process or policy were unfairly or inadequately applied
- factual or legal error has been established
- there was unprofessional behaviour or misconduct by a staff member or by an external contractor
- the act or decision subject to the complaint has been found to be unfair, unreasonable

or is deemed plainly wrong for public good.

2.2.9 Restitution principles and approach

- Remedy for breaches or failures must be fair and reasonable, and as far as possible, should aim to restore the complainant to their original position.
- Mistakes must be admitted without excuses or justification for getting it wrong and the focus must remain on putting it right.
- Acknowledging what has happened
- Providing an explanation, assistance, or reasons in proper context and on factual basis
- Providing an apology
- Acting swiftly if there has been a delay
- Reconsidering or changing a decision where there is a plausible reason
- Accepting request for appeal
- Amending records
- Where appropriate, providing financial remedy for loss incurred; and
- Changing policies, procedures, or practices as part of the continuous improvements journey

2.2.10 Legal risk assessment – escalation to governance

- Some feedback may carry legal or litigation risk for Council. Whenever this is identified, Council's governance and assurance team must be alerted.
- So long as the risk factor is appropriately escalated, the feedback owner may continue to work on the dispute and offer a resolution to mitigate the risk of litigation, delayed action, and cost.

2.2.11 The review process

- In some cases, complainants may disagree with Council's decision and may request a review based on new information or evidence or simply because they dispute our findings and conclusions.
- In keeping with the spirit of natural justice expectations under section 27(1) of New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, a complainant should be afforded an opportunity to seek a review of our decision to ensure the outcome has been concluded fairly based on supporting evidence and on the balance of probabilities.

2.2.12 The review process to consider

- The specific areas of disagreement which the complainant may consider to be unfair, unreasonable, inconsistent, or contrary to the relevant policy, business rule, bylaw or any legislation.
- Where practicable and pragmatic, the review should be undertaken by a person not previously involved in the case.
- Parties must be kept regularly informed about the progress of the review.
- Reputational risk to be assessed for escalation to higher management in a timely manner.
- Ensure all the relevant factual and documentary evidence and the related policies, business rules, bylaws or legislation are considered objectively and fairly.
- The review decision must be completed within five (5) working days from the date of the request.
- The review must be carried out on the merits, with a fair independent mind and based on documented and factual evidence only.
- Any actual or perceived conflict of interest must be declared and addressed.
- Avoid undue delay and, where beneficial, provide parties the opportunity to comment on the proposed outcomes.

2.2.13 The appeal process

- Where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the review decision, the complainant can appeal the decision which will be the final opportunity for the parties to resolve the dispute.
- The appeal decision must be determined within seven (7) working days from the date of the request.

2.2.14 Appeal to consider:

- The appeal is the final opportunity to amicably resolve the dispute before the complaint is referred to the Ombudsman's Office.
- The customer feedback manager will review the case file to validate the facts, supporting evidence with the relevant policies, business rules and legislation before making the final decision.
- The customer feedback manager will verify all the relevant facts of the case and previous decisions to ensure any inadvertent omission of facts and/or evidence or misinterpretation of relevant legislation, business rules and policies are properly validated.
- The customer feedback manager may seek more information from parties including comments from previous case managers of the file. The customer feedback manager shall make the final decision to uphold the previous decisions or amend, reverse the previous decisions based on his/her assessment in consultation with heads of business units or senior leadership team.
- The customer feedback manager shall set out clearly the reasons for the final decision and refer the complainant to the Office of the Ombudsman if the complainant wishes to escalate it further.

2.3 Customer Feedback Handling Principles

2.3.1 The office of the Ombudsman

The Ombudsman has the powers to investigate the case independently and either, uphold Council's decision, make recommendations to Council, and report the decision to the relevant Minister or the Mayor responsible and report the same to Parliament or in the annual reports, case notes, opinion and guides published by the Office of the Ombudsman.

They will investigate the complaints based on the following principles:

- Fairness
- Accessibility
- Responsiveness
- Efficiency
- Natural justice

2.4 Roles and Responsibilities

All staff members, management and external contractors of Council are responsible for creating an excellent customer experience for our customers, ratepayers, and visitors.

2.4.1 Creation officer

- The creation officer is the Council staff member who records and lodges the feedback, creating a case file reference number.

2.4.2 Gatekeeper

- The gatekeeper is the administrator in the respective business unit responsible for assessing and assigning the feedback and working closely with the feedback owner, managing the process towards a logical conclusion.

2.4.3 Feedback Owner

- The feedback owner is the staff member who assumes control of the end-to-end management of the feedback.
- The feedback owner has the overall responsibility to track the progress of the feedback and follow up with other internal and external stakeholders to bring the case to a logical conclusion as soon as practically possible.
- The feedback owner should act objectively, and impartially, be trained to receive, and deal with complaints, be well versed with the relevant legislation, regulations, policies, and procedures in all the administrative and operational areas.
- The feedback owner should have the delegated financial and administrative authority to act and make decisions concerning the complaint.
- If necessary, under certain circumstances, the feedback owner may seek approval from a senior staff member or re-assign feedback to another staff member with authority.

2.4.4 Customer feedback manager

- The customer feedback manager is responsible for reviewing and making decisions on appeals within seven (7) working days from the date of the request.
- The customer feedback manager assumes the ownership of the final appeals process and has the responsibility to validate all relevant documentary and factual evidence, interpretation of the relevant laws, policies, and business rules applicable to the dispute.
- The customer feedback manager may engage in negotiations with the complainant to mitigate risk and reputational damage.
- The customer feedback manager may seek guidance from the executive leadership team in circumstances where complainant shows problematic behaviour, or the litigation risk becomes elevated.
- The customer feedback manager may make recommendations to settle the dispute keeping in mind the best interest of Council.
- The customer feedback manager will make the final decision and may refer the dispute to the Ombudsman.

III. Reporting, Feedback Outcome and Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Policy

3.1 Record keeping and reporting

Council will maintain data and information relating to feedback recorded, investigation outcomes, reviews, appeals and referrals to the Office of the Ombudsman or to any other alternative tribunal or courts.

The official record should include:

- the original complaint
- details of all communications and case notes as a requirement under the Public Records Act 2005

The record should be securely preserved, and privacy of the parties protected, and the records must be archived for future reference, business continuity and compliance with the law.

3.2 Reporting and monitoring

The feedback performance data will be shared with Council leadership team through reports to increase visibility and planning capacity.

The regular reports would capture and report on:

- chronic service or process failures
- performance gaps in service level agreements
- people, culture, and staff behavioural issues
- resource and capacity limitations

Feedback performance reports

- Quantitative data on feedback, complaints, and compliments
- Categories of feedbacks based on business functional units
- Feedback ageing
- Closure rates and performance, (within SLA and outside SLA)
- Open feedbacks (within SLA and outside SLA)
- Feedback closure codes analysis
- Feedback root cause analysis
- Sub-task ageing report
- Review report within SLA
- Review report outside SLA
- Appeal within SLA
- Appeal outside SLA
- Decisions from the Ombudsman's Office
- Compensation and restitution
- Compliments
- Customer insights

3.3 Learning from feedback outcomes

The feedback outcome gives Council the opportunity to learn from problems highlighted through feedback outcomes captured in the various reports. It enables Council to swiftly take steps to improve internal processes and avoid poor performance getting entrenched in the system of governance.

The feedback performance data will become an integral part of the improvements planning process. Any systematic issues, governance and statutory irregularities should be identified, and appropriate remedial action taken quickly.

3.4 Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Policy

From time to time, the Council will encounter complainants who may act out of character in times of adversity and stress. Such complainants may become disruptive to Council's routine functions and may also impact staff morale and wellbeing.

The unreasonable complainant conduct policy intends to manage complainants who behave in ways that are inappropriate and unacceptable. Where the complainant is aggressive, verbally abusive, threatens harm and violence, engages unnecessarily with excessive calls and emails, makes inappropriate demands on time and resources, or refuses to accept our decision in relation to their complaint by displaying the following behaviour:

- Unreasonable persistence
- Unreasonable demands
- Unreasonable lack of cooperation
- Unreasonable arguments
- Unreasonable behaviours

When Council is satisfied that the complainant's conduct has fallen in one or more of the categories listed above, the Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Policy may be invoked to deal with the complainant to achieve the following:

- Ensure Council staff feel confident and supported in taking action to manage unreasonable conduct
- Act fairly, consistently, and appropriately when responding to unreasonable conduct
- Understand the types of circumstances when it may be appropriate to manage unreasonable conduct
- Make complainants aware of what constitutes unreasonable complainant

IV. Governing legislation

Related governing legislation

- Privacy Act 2020
- Local Government Act 2002
- Health & Safety at Work Act 2015
- Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987
- Official Information Act 1982
- Local Government (Rating) Act 2002
- Local Electoral Act 2001
- Biosecurity Act 1993
- Building Act 2004
- Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
- Dog Control Act 1996
- Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987
- Gambling Act 2003
- Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996
- Health Act 1956
- Land Transport Act 1998
- Land Transport Management Act 2003
- Prostitution Law Reform Act 2003
- Public Records Act 2005
- Public Works Act 1981
- Fencing Act 1978
- Rates Rebate Act 1973
- Rating Valuations Act 1998
- Reserves Act 1977
- Resource Management Act 1991
- Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941
- Transit New Zealand Act 1989
- Transport Act 1962
- Fair Trading Act 1986
- Consumer Guarantees Act 1993
- Credit Reporting Privacy Code 2020

Term	Meaning in this policy
Acknowledgement	An acknowledgment is confirmation to the customer that we have received their feedback.
Compensation request	Financial relief expected by the complainant to compensate, either fully or partially, for loss incurred by the complainant.
Creation Officer	The creation officer is the Council staff member who records feedback and lodges it into the CRM (Authority) creating a case file reference number.
Customer complaint/complaint	Complaints are an expression of dissatisfaction about service delivery or how we conduct our business that require investigation and resolution.
Customer compliment/compliment	Compliments are praise or congratulations about the Council's services or performance.
Customer enquiry	Informal request for information or assistance which does not get logged in CRM Authority as a formal complaint.
Customer Feedback Manager	The customer feedback manager is responsible for reviewing and making decisions on appeals and disputes to mitigate escalations to the Office of the Ombudsman.
Customer insights	Customer insights are ideas on how we could improve our services or do our business differently. They can be categorised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees & Charges • Policy & Process • Projects, Developments & Designs
Elected Members	Fourteen councillors and the mayor elected in the successive Council and Mayoral elections.
Escalation	Where an issue, blockage or challenge exists in the circumstances, investigation, or resolution of a feedback then staff must refer the feedback to higher authority.
Feedback	Feedback can be compliments, complaints, and customer insights. Complaints and customer insights help us to refine and improve our policies, processes, and systems. Compliments help us recognise when we are meeting or exceeding community standards for service and performance
Feedback Assessment	Review of the level of reputational, legal, or financial risk for every feedback received before assigning the case to the feedback owner.
Feedback Framework	The feedback framework comprises of the policies, procedures, systems, and reporting dashboards to record, respond, and implement improvements from all levels of customer engagement and complaints across Council.
Feedback Owner	The feedback owner is the staff member who assumes control of the end-to-end management of the feedback. The feedback owner has the overall responsibility to track the progress of the feedback and follow up with other internal and external stakeholders to bring the case to a logical conclusion as soon as practically possible.
Gatekeeper	The gatekeeper is the administrator in the respective business unit responsible for assessing and assigning the feedback, working closely with the feedback owner, managing the process towards a logical conclusion.
Infringements Notices	Fines and penalties issued by Council for breaches of bylaw.

Term	Meaning in this policy
Noise Complaint	Nuisance reported under the Resource Management Act (RMA), for “excessive” noise requiring Council’s intervention. All residents must ensure noise from their property does not reach an “unreasonable” level. The noise control officer would assess the noise level and take appropriate action.
Official Information Request	Request from a member of the public for information from Council under provisions of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, Official Information Act and the Privacy Act 2020.
Office of the Ombudsman	The Ombudsman is an officer of the New Zealand Parliament to independently look into complaints. The Ombudsman could either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uphold Council’s decision • make recommendations to Council • report the decision to the relevant Minister, the Mayor or to the Parliament • make references in the annual reports and articles published by the office of the ombudsman
Official Records	All records and data relating to feedback must be securely archived as required under the public records act 2005 to be made available on demand under the Official Information Act, Privacy Act or under the LGOIMA.
Service Request	Job order created to provide an administrative or operational service, ordinarily provided by Council, but may be required on an ad-hoc basis as a proposed complaint resolution.
Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Policy	This policy intends to manage complainants who behave inappropriate and unacceptable ways.

Ko ngaa Tohutoro

References

References may include:

- Customer Complaint Policy adopted in September 2019
- Ombudsman’s recommended guidelines for public sector entities
- Requirements/obligations under the Public Audit Act 2001
- Bill of Rights Act 1990