



Risk and Assurance Committee Agenda

8 October 2026

WESTLAND
District Council | Te Kahui o Poutini





Risk and Assurance Committee

Meeting to be held on **Thursday, 8 October 2026** commencing at **9.30 am** at the Hokitika Westland RSA, 22 Sewell Street, Hokitika and via Zoom

Chairperson:	David Ward
Members:	Her Worship the Mayor
	Councillor Martin
	Councillor Mackenzie
	Kaiwhakahaere Tumahai

In accordance with clause 25A of Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002, members may attend the meeting by audio or audio-visual link.

Council Vision

By investing in our people, caring for the environment, respecting the Mana Whenua Cultural heritage, and enabling investment, growth, and development we will enrich our district and the people that reside here.

Purpose

The Council is required to give effect to the purpose of local government as prescribed by section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002. That purpose is:

- (a) To enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and
- (b) To promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future.

Council seeks to meet its obligations under the Local Government Act 2002 and the achievement of the District Vision adopted by the Council in June 2025, which are set out in the Long Term Plan 2025–2034.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

2. WHAKAPUAKITANGA WHAIPĀNGA DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members need to stand aside from decision-making when a conflict arises between their role as a Member of the Council and any private or other external interest they might have. This note is provided as a reminder to Members to review the matters on the agenda and assess and identify where they may have a pecuniary or other conflict of interest, or where there may be a perception of a conflict of interest.

If a member feels they do have a conflict of interest, they should publicly declare that at the start of the meeting or of the relevant item of business and refrain from participating in the discussion or voting on that item. If a member thinks they may have a conflict of interest, they can seek advice from the Chief Executive (preferably before the meeting). It is noted that while members can seek advice the final decision as to whether a conflict exists rests with the member.

3. NGĀ MENETI O TE HUI KAUNIHERA MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Risk and Assurance Committee Meeting Minutes – 13 August 2026 (6 - 11)

4. ACTION LIST (12)

5. CHAIR’S REPORT (13 - 15)

Independent Chair to speak to the report.

6. PŪRONGO KAIMAHI STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Safe Driving Policy (16 - 24)
General Manager District Assets to speak to the report.

6.2 Customer Complaints Management Policy (25 - 35)
Quality Assurance Manager to speak to the report.

6.3 Customer and Community Conduct and Communications Policy (36 - 44)
Quality Assurance Manager to speak to the report.

6.4 Remote IT Access Policy
Acting General Manager Business Enablement to speak to the report.

7. KA MATATAPU TE WHAKATAUNGA I TE TŪMATANUI RESOLUTION TO GO INTO PUBLIC EXCLUDED

(to consider and adopt confidential items)

Resolutions to exclude the public: Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

The general subject of the matters to be considered while the public are excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of the resolution are as follows:

Item No.	General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under Section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
1.	Confidential Minutes – 13 August 2026	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)
2.	Process for Loans	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)
3.	CE's Report	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)
4.	Risk Register	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)
5.	Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Prevention Policy	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)
6.	Cyber Security	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)

Item No.	General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under Section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
7.	Protected Disclosures Procedure	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)

This resolution is made in reliance on sections 48(1)(a) and (d) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interests or interests protected by section 7 of that Act, which would be prejudiced by the holding of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:

Item No.	Interest	Section
1, 2, 3, 7	Protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.	(S. 7(2)(a))
5, 6, 7	Avoid prejudice to measures that prevent to mitigate material loss to members of the public	(S. 7(2)(e))
4, 7	Maintain legal professional privilege	(S. 7(2)(g))
4	Enable any local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.	(S. 7(2)(h))
6	Prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage	(S. 7(2)(j))

**DATE OF NEXT RISK AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – 4 FEBRUARY 2027
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 36 WELD STREET, HOKITIKA AND VIA ZOOM**



RISK AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE RISK AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF WESTLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 36 WELD STREET, HOKITIKA AND VIA ZOOM ON THURSDAY, 13 AUGUST 2026 COMMENCING AT 9:30am

The Committee Meeting was live streamed to the Westland District Council YouTube Channel and presentations are made available on the council website.

1. MEMBERS AND APOLOGIES

Chairperson:	David Ward
Members:	Her Worship the Mayor Councillor Martin Councillor Mackenzie Kaiwhakahaere Tumahai

NGĀ WHAKAPAAHA APOLOGIES

Apology received from Kaiwhakahaere Tumahai.

Moved Her Worship the Mayor, seconded Chair Ward and **Resolved** that the apology from Kaiwhakahaere Tumahai be received and accepted.

STAFF PRESENT

B. Phillips, Chief Executive; D. Maitland, Quality Assurance Manager; S. Lewis, Chief Financial Officer; J. Warren, Senior Human Resources Advisor; S. Hewett, Governance Administrator.

2. WHAKAPUAKITANGA WHAIPĀNGA DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The updated Interest Register had been circulated. There were no changes made to the Interest Register.

3. NGĀ MENETI O TE HUI KAUNIHERA MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Risk and Assurance Committee Meeting Minutes – 7 May 2026

Moved Her Worship the Mayor, seconded Councillor Martin and **Resolved** that the Minutes of the Risk and Assurance Committee Meeting held on **7 May 2026** be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

4. ACTION LIST

Independent Chair David Ward provided the following updates to the Action List:

- **Item 2: Risk Register**
Will be presented back to committee in October.

- **Item 3: Protected Disclosure Policy**
Item on today's agenda and can be closed.
- **Item 4: Westland Heritage Park Health and Safety Plan**
The Health and Safety Advisor has been working with the staff at Westland Industrial Heritage Park, and this item can now be closed.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Independent Chair spoke to the report, highlighting the work that has been done so far on the policies and their framework. The Chair noted to the committee that each policy should now be assessed as to its current need and whether it aids staff in their ability to perform their roles, rather than keeping outdated policies for the sake of tradition.

Moved Chair Ward, seconded Her Worship the Mayor and **Resolved** that the Chair's Report be received.

6. PŪRONGO KAIMAHI STAFF REPORTS

Quarterly Financial Report

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) spoke to the report, going through page by page with the committee. The following items were discussed in the report:

- Year-end financial close is underway. No financial figures are available at this stage, with reporting expected to resume in October once final numbers are available.
- Audit has provided advance notice of areas of focus. No significant concerns or unexpected issues were raised.
- Long Term Plan (LTP) engagement is currently underway. One councillor workshop has been held, with a second workshop to follow community engagement. The Draft LTP is expected back to the risk and assurance committee for review in February 2027.
- Draft 2025/26 Annual Report responses have been incorporated into performance measure reporting. Performance measures will be reviewed through the LTP process to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
- Community hall facilities have been improved; however greater communication with communities is needed to encourage increased utilisation and community-generated revenue opportunities.
- Depreciation revaluation is expected to show a significant variance compared with previous reporting; however, no significant impact on the Annual Report is anticipated as the effect has already been accounted for. Final figures are subject to a valuation report conducted by BECA.
- The Timely Processing performance measure was not achieved due to one certificate being issued one day late out of 173 certificates processed.
- Work is continuing on the future management of water assets and the implications for Council from 1 July 2027. In addition to this finance staff are assessing the impact of stranded overheads associated with water services and will incorporate findings into the LTP.
- Council is currently carrying higher debt levels than immediately required as part of a strategy to secure borrowing at lower interest rates before subsequent rate increases.
- Council's investment policy limits exposure to a single institution to \$10 million. Current holdings with Westpac exceed this threshold, and approval is being sought to increase the limit to \$15 million.

Moved Her Worship the Mayor, seconded Chair Ward and **Resolved** that:

1. The report be received.
2. The Committee receive the Quarterly Financial Report Q4 April - June 2026.

Draft Policy and Bylaw Framework

The Independent Chair introduced the report, noting that the policy framework and the risk register were the two key items identified by the Committee as requiring attention. The Quality Assurance Manager then presented the report, advising that the framework's purpose is to establish a consistently applied, organisation-wide policy framework, including a formal policy development and review process.

Moved Her Worship the Mayor, seconded Councillor Martin and **Resolved** that:

1. The report be received.
2. The Risk and Assurance Committee endorses the Draft Policy and Bylaw Framework and recommends to Council that it be adopted as the required way of working.

Policies for Adoption

The Quality Assurance Manager spoke to the report which highlights a number of policies being updated to be in line with current best practices. The following policies were discussed:

- **Sensitive Expenditure Policy**
The Committee agreed to the addition of a clause expressing “a prudent approach to expenditure” to encourage fiscal conservativeness.
- **Proactive Release Policy**
- **Customer and Community Conduct and Communications Policy**
The Committee agreed on an amendment to Section 3.3 paragraph 2 to the following:
“Any elected member who wishes to implement any steps in this policy should first notify the Mayor and Chief Executive, who will arrange for an employee(s) to assist the elected member.”
- **Elected Member, Iwi Representative and Staff Interaction Policy**
The Committee agreed to the following amendments:
 - o **Section 5e:** “Elected Members’ and Iwi representatives’ primary point of communication is via the Office of the Chief Executive and the Mayor, with the exception being instances outlines in this policy.”
 - o **Section 5g:** Remove the word “either”
 - o **Section 5l:** “Significant or ongoing issues may be raised with the Mayor to address with the Chief Executive through the Chief Executive Review Committee.”

Moved Councillor Martin, seconded Her Worship the Mayor and **Resolved** that the report be received.

Moved Councillor Mackenzie, seconded Her Worship the Mayor and **Resolved** that:

1. The committee has reviewed the Sensitive Expenditure Policy and recommends it to Council as the required way of working, subject to the amendment as stated above.
2. The committee has reviewed the Proactive Release Policy and recommends it to Council as the required way of working.

Moved Councillor Martin, seconded Chair Ward and **Resolved** that:

1. The committee has reviewed the new Customer and Community Conduct and Communications Policy and recommends it to Council as the required way of working, subject to the amendment as stated above.

2. The committee has reviewed the new Elected Member, Iwi Representative and Staff Interaction Policy and recommends it to Council as the required way of working.

Councillor Mackenzie recorded his vote against this motion.

Treasury Management Policy

Brett Johanson, Executive Director - Corporate Treasury, and Rajeev Verma, Associate Director - Corporate Treasury, from PwC joined the meeting at 11:30am to present a Treasury Management Update to the committee.

Following the presentation, the CFO spoke to the Treasury Management Policy, highlighting the following:

- The policy has been drafted in conjunction with the treasury experts at PwC to ensure it is robust.
- The policy incorporates the Investment Policy and Liability Management Policy into one.
- Amendment suggested to reflect the transfer of debt that will happen when three waters goes to Coast Waters. This would then be removed at the next review after the assets have been transferred.
- Amendment suggested to raise maximum exposure from \$10 million to \$15 million.

Moved Councillor Mackenzie, seconded Councillor Martin and **Resolved** that:

1. The report be received.
2. The committee endorses option 1 and recommends to Council that the Investment Policy and Liability Management Policy be merged into the Treasury Management Policy with the amendments proposed in sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.3 as follows:
 - a. 3.2.1 - Under the Liability Management section, Liquidity and Funding Risk Control Limits, add the following sentence, "Where the non-compliance relates specifically to Local Water Done Well matters, the breach is accepted, and retrospectively reported to Council."
 - b. 3.2.3 Under the Counterparty Credit Risk section, the matrix guide amount relating to NZ Registered Bank maximum exposure has been increased from \$10m to \$15m.

8. KA MATATAPU TE WHAKATAUNGA I TE TŪMATANUI

RESOLUTION TO GO INTO PUBLIC EXCLUDED

(to consider and adopt confidential items)

Moved Chair Ward, seconded Councillor Mackenzie and **Resolved** that the Risk and Assurance Committee confirm that the public were excluded from the meeting in accordance with Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 at 12.20 pm.

The general subject of the matters to be considered while the public are excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of the resolution are as follows:

Item No.	General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under Section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
1.	Confidential Minutes – 7 May 2026	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure

Item No.	General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under Section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
			of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)
2.	Policy Updates	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)
3.	CE's Report	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)
4.	Business Continuity Plan	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)
5.	Cyber Security Deep Dive	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)
6.	Insurance Deep Dive	Good reason to withhold exist under Section 7	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists. Section 48(1)(a)

This resolution is made in reliance on sections 48(1)(a) and (d) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interests or interests protected by section 7 of that Act, which would be prejudiced by the holding of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:

Item No.	Interest	Section
1, 2, 3, 4	Protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.	(S. 7(2)(a))
1	Avoid prejudice to measures protecting the health or safety of members of the public.	(S. 7(2)(d))
5	Avoid prejudice to measures that prevent to mitigate material loss to members of the public; and	(S. 7(2)(e))
1	Maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through: (ii) The protection of such members, officers, employees, and persons from improper pressure of harassment.	(S. 7(2)(f))
1	Maintain legal professional privilege.	(S. 7(2)(g))
1, 6	Enable any local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.	(S. 7(2)(h))
5	Prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage.	(S. 7(2)(j))

Moved Her Worship the Mayor, seconded Councillor Martin and **Resolved** that the business conducted in the 'Public Excluded Section' be confirmed, and accordingly, the meeting went back to the open part of the meeting at 1.38 pm.

**DATE OF NEXT RISK AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – 8 OCTOBER 2026
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 36 WELD STREET, HOKITIKA AND VIA ZOOM**

MEETING CLOSED AT 1.38 PM

Confirmed by the Committee at their meeting on 8 October 2026.

David Ward
Chair

Date: 8 October 2026

8 October 2026 Risk and Assurance Committee Action List

Item No.	Date Added	Item	Action	Completion Target Date	Officer	Current Status	Date and Next Steps	Status
2	27.03.2026	Risk Register	Update the risk register separating out operational items from governance	7.05.2026	Quality Assurance Manager	The risk register was discussed item by item and the committee agreed which items should be operational and which are governance or both in the public excluded section of the March meeting. Items deemed operational are to be removed		Open

Noting Report to Committee



DATE: 08 October 2026

TO: Risk and Assurance Committee

FROM: Risk and Assurance Independent Chair

Independent Chair's Report

1. Summary

This report is prepared for the purpose of enabling the Independent Chair to raise matters for Committee information and consideration of potential further action and also to introduce key items on today's agenda.

Council seeks to meet its obligations under the Local Government Act 2002 and the achievement of the District Vision adopted by the Council in June 2025, which are set out in the Long Term Plan 2025 -2034.

2. Performance Reporting and Public Accountability

I recently attended an Audit Office Forum which addressed Central Government's Finance and Expenditure Committee report on performance reporting and public accountability. I was particularly interested in this topic as for many years I have been engaged in a sector which spends considerable time compiling and producing quality reports and future planning documents that go largely unread by members of our community. I have often asked the "why" questions around our readers and their areas of interest.

The forum noted that performance reporting doesn't actually work unless there is a demand customer. We need to ensure that we inform our audience about what we do, and where it is considered helpful, to provide additional layers of reporting to identify our areas of responsibility.

There were several areas highlighted that audit and risk committees might like to consider now, including:

- Are we creating enough demand for meaningful performance information, rather than simply accepting the reporting we receive?
- Does our performance framework clearly connect spending and activity with the outcomes and impact the organisation is trying to achieve?
- What information and evaluations will we need in two or three years to assess performance and value for money, and are we putting the systems and capability in place now to collect it?
- Where outcomes depend on several organisations, are we looking beyond our own entity and asking how performance is understood across the wider system?

We also need to further consider questions we may have of our organisations management such as drivers for demand, where we want to be in the future, accessibility of information, our ability to collect meaningful information, and what is the value we are getting for the money we receive. We may also wish to consider the opportunity cost for spending ratepayers money, and ask is there a better way?

We will watch with interest as these suggested outcomes are debated and further consider how they may impact on a sector already facing pressures from a significant breadth of suggested changes ahead.

3. Davison Report

At the Chief Executives request I have reviewed the recently released Davison Report for consideration and benefit of the Risk and Assurance Committee.

Following the tragic event at the Mount Maunganui Beachside Holiday Park, Central Government engaged retired judge Davison to undertake an external review of the matter and to make any appropriate recommendations.

The review identified that the local Council knew of the landslide risk and there were recommendations to develop a trigger action response plan to manage that risk. These recommendations had not been implemented by the date of the tragedy.

The review found that failure to implement these recommendations was systemic, no person had been allocated ownership of the risk, responsibility was not clearly recorded and the matter was not escalated.

There are learnings for all owners of similar facilities. And indeed any public building used by the community or by Council staff. The recommendations also give added weight to the importance of our risk register, the regularity of review of that register and the role of key positions within the organisation.

The Davison report made a number of recommendations which I believe our Council would be well advised to consider. These include:

- Mandatory recording of identified risks to life
- A central register of geotechnical and natural hazard reports
- Risk assessment against defined tolerability criteria
- Trigger Action Response Plans for populated sites
- Scheduled monitoring of known hazard sites
- Geotechnical assessment before physical works on or above populated areas.
- Single, accountable ownership of every risk to life

We have recently had an approach from our insurers offering to assist Council in the identification of risks of the nature referred to in the Davison report. It is my view that that we escalate this matter to Council, with the recommendation that in the first instance Council engages with its insurers to understand the nature of their offer, and associated costs, and to understand how identification of such hazards can be integrated into Councils risk register.

I have been advised by the Chief Executive that she has instructed staff to review any previous assessments, starting with 36 Weld Street, then to follow for the rest of the Council buildings affected. The Chief Executive as the responsible and accountable office for the Health and Safety Act and the Local Government Act is the decision maker in terms of actions needing to be taken as a result of the current review process

Where Council has knowledge of low ratings it must take responsible action to minimise risk. This action could include relocating staff while assessments are undertaken. It may also impact of ability to deliver Council services to the community.

Prompt action, and clear media releases on cause and effect will be important. Whilst this action is a potential disrupter of service, it is also the actions of a responsible employer and local authority keeping its community safe.

4. Policy Review

During our previous meeting we took significant time to consider and recommend to Council the adoption of a number of policies. This matter was undertaken to give clear guidance to staff. Elected members of Council, and our community on a range of matters.

We will continue that theme today with consideration of further policies, with a view to making further recommendations to Council for adoption.

5. Draft Annual Report

On today's agenda is a paper outlining some of the key matters within Councils 2026 Annual Report.

As I am writing this report to the Committee, I am aware that the external audit process is underway and probably won't be completed by the date of today's meeting. However, the reason for inclusion on today's agenda is to give our Chief Financial Officer the opportunity to address and pertinent items that may have materialised during the external audit field work of draft annual report compilation work undertaken thus far.

6. Recommendation

6.1. That the Independent Chair's report be received.

David Ward

Independent Chair, Risk and Assurance Committee

Report to Committee



DATE: 8 October 2026

TO: Risk and Assurance Committee

FROM: General Manager District Assets

Safe Driving Policy

1. Summary

This report recommends that the Committee endorse the Safe Driving Policy. The Policy sets out clear responsibilities and guidelines for the supply and use of Council vehicles that promote sensible and safe use and aims to mitigate vehicle operation risks.

2. Background

The Safe Driving Policy provides a clear framework to:

- Set clear guidelines for Council to provide safe vehicles for staff, from good procurement process, regular maintenance and the supply of health and safety equipment in all vehicles.
- Set clear guidelines for Council staff to ensure responsible and safe use that mitigates health and safety risks associated with the operation of vehicles and protecting both the staff and the public.
- Provides Council and staff with clear operational procedure that ensures vehicle use is tracked and reported on accordingly.
- Ensure that Council complies with all relevant legislation related to vehicle use, including but not exclusive to, the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and the NZ Transport Agency Road Code.

3. Current Situation

Council already has a Safe Driving Policy in place which was due for review. This has now been completed and the policy has been updated in accordance with current Council policies and procedures and in line with the governing legislation.

4. Options

The Committee may endorse the policy as recommended, amend it before endorsement, or decline to endorse it.

4.1. Option 1: Endorse the Safe Driving Policy.

4.2. Option 2: Amend the Safe Driving Policy and then endorse it.

4.3. Option 3: Do not endorse the Safe Driving Policy.

5. Assessment of Options

The assessment below compares each option's benefits, constraints, financial implications, and significance and engagement considerations.

5.1. Option 1: Option 1 is the preferred option as it provides Council and vehicle users with clear expectations in their respective roles with regards to the responsible supply and use of Council vehicles.

5.2. Option 2: is at the Committee's discretion.

5.3. Option 3: is not recommended as the current Safe Driving Policy would continue to be used which may not fully reflect up to date internal Council procedure and reporting processes and may fall out of date of best practice health and safety standards.

6. Financial Implications

Adopting the policy is not expected to have any significant direct financial implications. Any implementation costs, including communication and employee awareness activities, can be accommodated within existing operational budgets.

7. Significance and Engagement Assessment

This policy is assessed as having low significance under Council's Significance and Engagement Policy and therefore is not required to undergo public engagement before adoption.

8. Risk Assessment

There are no risks associated in the endorsement and adoption of this policy however failure to adopt the updated policy could lead to following risks:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact
Vehicles provided for staff use are not adequately equipped with Health and Safety equipment.	Medium	High
Increase in preventable health and safety incidents due to a lack of clear guidelines for vehicle use.	Medium	High
Inconsistent booking and reporting processes become inconsistent.	Medium	Medium

All risks mentioned above would be mitigated through adoption of this policy.

9. Preferred Option(s) and Reasons

The preferred option is Option 1: the Committee endorses the updated Safe Driving Policy for adoption by the Council. This option ensures that both staff and Westland District Council have clear guidelines for the responsible provision and use of Council vehicles and mitigates associated risks.

10. Recommendation(s)

10.1. That the report be received.

10.2. That the Committee endorses the updated Safe Driving Policy for adoption by Westland District Council

Erle Bencich
General Manager District Assets

Appendix 1: WDC Safe Driving Policy



Safe Driving Policy

Version:

Date:

DOCUMENT CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	COMMENTS

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

	DATE	POSITION
REVIEWER		
APPROVER		

DOCUMENT CUSTODIAN AND REVIEW DATE

	POSITION	REVIEW PERIOD	NEXT REVIEW DATE
CUSTODIAN	Quality Assurance Manager	3-yearly or sooner if required by legislative, regulatory, or organisational changes	

Contents

1. Policy Context	4
2. Policy Objectives	4
3. Definitions	
4. Policy Statement	4
5. Reporting	
6. Questions	
7. Relevant Documents and Legislation	5
8. Policy Owned by	5

DRAFT

1. Policy Content

This policy outlines how Westland District Council (WDC) will continue to provide a safe environment and promote a safe driving culture by encouraging sensible use of Council vehicles, and any other vehicles used for Council business.

2. Policy Objectives

This policy's objectives are to set clear guidelines and expectations for the procurement and use of council vehicles in a way that promotes the safety of employees, elected members and any other vehicle users as well as members of the public.

The policy also sets out standards to ensure risks associated with vehicle operations are effectively managed and reported with the goal of fostering a culture of safety, accountability, and responsible use.

3. Definitions

- **Council:** Westland District Council (WDC).
- **ANCAP:** Australasian New Car Assessment Program
- **Warrant:** Warrant of Fitness

4. Policy Statement

4.1 Westland District Council Responsibility

- Maintain Council vehicles to ensure they are safe to drive through regular service and repair as necessary.
- Register and warrant vehicles when due.
- Full Insurance cover.
- Not require persons to drive under conditions which are unsafe, such as snow, flooding.
- Purchase Vehicles that are fit for purpose of use required with scheduled replacements.
- Vehicles must meet ANCAP testing standards, achieving a rating as set within All of Government Contracts framework.
- Fit vehicles with appropriate emergency equipment, such as first aid kit, fire extinguisher, and any other emergency equipment required for the vehicles use.
- Provide safe driver training for task specific roles.

4.2 Employee Responsibility

- Hold and carry a current full driver licence for the class of vehicle they are driving.
- Report immediately any driving infringements to their line manager. Driver fines are the responsibility of the driver.
- Notify their line manager of changes to the licence, including but not limited to suspension, cancellation or limitations.

- Lone drivers must stay in overnight accommodation if driving and non-driving time exceeds 10 hours in one day.
- When more than 1 licenced driver travelling together, driving and non-driving time may exceed 10 hours in one day, provided the driving is shared.
- Drivers are encouraged to take regular breaks for at least 10 minutes after 2 hours of continuous driving, or at any other time if feeling the effects of fatigue.
- Never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including prescription and over the counter medication that cause drowsiness.
- A pre & post journey check of the vehicle should be carried out, to ensure it is warranted and registered and is in a good state of repair.
- Report vehicle defects to the fleet manager before or after use.
- Comply with all traffic legislation, including wearing a seat belt at all times.
- Smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes, is not permitted in Council vehicles.
- Report any incident, accident or near miss even when no personal injury was sustained, using the current Health and Safety process.
- Return the vehicle with a minimum of 3/4 a tank of fuel.
- It is not permitted to make or receive calls or text messages from a mobile phone whilst driving unless using a hands-free device. Staff should pull over to the side of the road where safe before using a mobile phone.
- Council vehicles are not permitted to be used for personal use, unless a vehicle is provided as part of an employment contract.
- Vehicle interiors must be clean on return, remove all items not belonging to the vehicle.
- Vehicles should be reverse parked into angled parking spaces or in garage space. Parallel parking must follow the NZ Road Code.
- Serious breaches of this policy and misuse of Council vehicles may result in disciplinary action.
- Picking up of hitchhikers is prohibited.

4.3 Transporting Goods

- Items must be secure while driving, loose items may become missiles during emergency braking or in an accident. A cargo net or other proprietary restraining device should be used to secure the items.
- Hazardous goods must be transported in accordance with relevant regulations.
- Loads must not be carried for which the vehicle is not suited.

4.4 Type of Use

- Travel outside the district is allowed for short periods of less than 4 working days, with the exception of utility or heavy duty vehicles. Where no suitable vehicle is available other transport can be arranged in line with the sensitive expenditure policy.
- Pool vehicles are available for all approved staff for Council related travel; vehicles will be permitted to be taken home overnight if it is being used in line with an officer's duties or Council Business and it is more efficient to do so. It is not permitted to leave vehicles in Hokitika airport parking overnight.
- Staff must book vehicles through the ERoad Ubookit system, link on the Council Intranet page.
- The vehicle must not carry more passengers than it is certified to.
- The vehicle must not be used in conditions for which it was not designed, such as off-roading.

4.5 ERoad System (GPS)

- Vehicle tracking devices are installed in all Council vehicles and staff must log in and out of the ERoad system for each journey. Driver reports are viewed regularly for unsafe driving and breaches of vehicle use.
- Any fault or damage of the ERoad device should be reported your manager immediately. Do not interfere with the ERoad device

5. Reporting

Any vehicle faults or missing health and safety equipment is to be reported to the Transportation Manager to remedy. Any incidents involving vehicle use, including near misses, will be reported through Council's Health and Safety Incident reporting process, any of which are deemed to be high risk will then be brought to the attention of the Risk and Assurance Committee for review in accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference.

6. Questions

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Transportation Manager in the first instance.

7. Relevant Documents and Legislation

Staff Code of Conduct
New Zealand Transport Agency Road Code
Health and Safety Policy
Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
Working Safely with Hazardous Substances 2017
Sensitive expenditure policy

8. Policy owned by

This Policy is owned by the Transportation Manager.

Report to Council



DATE: 8 October 2026
TO: Mayor and Councillors
FROM: Quality Assurance Manager

WORKPLACE POLICY – CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. Summary

This report recommends that the Committee endorse the Customer Complaints Management Policy. The policy establishes a clear, transparent and accessible process for receiving, assessing, resolving and learning from complaints, supporting consistent service delivery and accountable decision-making.

2. Background

The Customer Complaints Management Policy provides a framework to:

- Enable customers to raise complaints when they are dissatisfied with any aspect of Council's services. Complaints will be resolved in a fair, timely and confidential manner in order to achieve positive outcomes for customers and staff.
- Provide a clear, transparent and accessible process for receiving, managing and resolving complaints.
- Ensure all complaints are assessed and investigated consistently, objectively and in accordance with relevant legislation, Council policies and procedures.
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement by using complaint information and customer feedback to identify opportunities to improve services, processes and customer experiences.
- Support positive relationships between Council and the community by demonstrating accountability, responsiveness and respect when addressing complaints.
- Ensure that complainants are treated fairly, courteously and without discrimination throughout the complaints management process.
- Encourage the early resolution of complaints wherever possible to achieve efficient and satisfactory outcomes for all parties.
- Enable Council to monitor complaint trends and identify systemic issues, risks and opportunities for organisational learning and service improvement.

3. Current Situation

Council already has an operational Customer Complaints Management Policy and procedure in place which was due for review. The review has now been completed and updated to clarify complaint-handling responsibilities, escalation pathways, and expected timeframes.

4. Options

The Committee may endorse the policy as recommended, amend it before endorsement, or decline to adopt it.

4.1. **Option 1:** Endorse the Customer Complaints Management Policy.

4.2. **Option 2:** Amend the Customer Complaints Management Policy and then endorse it.

4.3 **Option 3:** Do not endorse the Customer Complaints Management Policy.

5. Assessment of Options

The assessment below compares each option's benefits, constraints, financial implications, and significance and engagement considerations.

5.1 **Option 1** is preferred because it provides continuity of service.

5.2 **Option 2** is at the Committee's discretion.

5.3 **Option 3** is not recommended. Option 3 is not recommended because, while the supporting complaints management process is already established and available for use, the absence of an adopted policy may create uncertainty regarding Council's commitment to consistent complaint handling, governance expectations, roles and responsibilities, and continuous improvement. Adoption of the policy provides a clear framework and accountability for the management of customer complaints across Council.

6. Financial Implications

Adopting the policy is not expected to have any significant direct financial implications. Any implementation costs, including communication and employee awareness activities, can be accommodated within existing operational budgets.

7. Significance and Engagement Assessment

This matter is assessed as having low to moderate significance under Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

While the proposal relates primarily to an internal governance framework, the policy requires the Council to act in accordance with established management procedures.

Staff will be informed of the policy through existing internal communication channels.

Following adoption, the policy will be communicated to employees and will be supported by the internal Standard Operating Process. Council has an established Customer Complaints Management process that is already available and ready for operational use.

8. Risk Assessment

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
The policy is misunderstood or applied inconsistently across Council.	Medium	Medium	Provide staff training, practical guidance and templates; assign clear complaint ownership; communicate escalation pathways and expected response timeframes; and monitor implementation for consistent application.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Customer complaints are not acknowledged, assessed, investigated or resolved consistently and within expected timeframes.	Medium	High	Use a central complaints register, standard acknowledgement and communication templates, defined assessment and escalation criteria, service timeframes, and regular management review of overdue or high-risk complaints.
Council does not adopt or maintain an effective Customer Complaints Management Policy.	Medium	High	• Approved Customer Complaints Management Policy and Procedure. • Centralised complaints management system/register. • Defined complaint handling responsibilities and escalation pathways. • Staff training on complaint management requirements. • Complaint KPIs monitored and reported to Senior Leadership Team and Council. • Regular trend analysis to identify systemic issues and service improvements. • Periodic policy review to ensure legislative and best-practice compliance.

9. Preferred Option and Reasons

The preferred option is Option 1: Endorse the Customer Complaints Management Policy to be adopted by Council. This option will continue with Council's commitment to delivering quality services that meet the needs and expectations of its customers through accessibility, employee wellbeing, and effective service delivery to the community.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That the report be received.

10.2 That the Committee endorses the Customer Complaints Management Policy and recommends it be adopted by Council.

Diane Maitland
Quality Assurance Manager

Appendix 1: Customer Complaints Management Policy



Customer Complaints Management Policy

Version: 2

Date: 14 September 2026

DOCUMENT CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	COMMENTS
2	14 September 2026	Revised and updated previously policy which was due for review in June 2025.

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

	DATE	POSITION
REVIEWER	14 September 2026	Strategy and Transformation Manager Quality Assurance Manager Executive Assistant
APPROVER	14 September 2026	Chief Executive

DOCUMENT CUSTODIAN AND REVIEW DATE

	POSITION	REVIEW PERIOD	NEXT REVIEW DATE
CUSTODIAN	Quality Assurance Manager	3-yearly or sooner if required by legislative, regulatory, or organisational changes	14 September 2029

Contents

1. Policy Context..... 3

2. Policy Objectives 3

3. Definitions 3

4. Policy Statement4

5. Reporting 5

6. Questions 5

7. Relevant Documents and Legislation5

8. Policy Owned by.....5

9. Complaint Management Procedure 6

1. Policy Context

This policy outlines Westland District Council's (WDC's) commitment to delivering quality services that meet the needs and expectations of its customers. WDC welcomes feedback from customers as this provides opportunities for learning and improving services. **This policy should be read alongside the Complaint Management Procedure as attached as schedule 1.**

2. Policy Objectives

This policy's objectives are to:

- Enable customers to raise complaints when they are dissatisfied with any aspect of Council's services. Complaints will be resolved in a fair, timely and confidential manner in order to achieve positive outcomes for customers and staff.
- Provide a clear, transparent and accessible process for receiving, managing and resolving complaints.
- Ensure all complaints are assessed and investigated consistently, objectively and in accordance with relevant legislation, Council policies and procedures.
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement by using complaint information and customer feedback to identify opportunities to improve services, processes and customer experiences.
- Support positive relationships between Council and the community by demonstrating accountability, responsiveness and respect when addressing complaints.
- Ensure that complainants are treated fairly, courteously and without discrimination throughout the complaints management process.
- Encourage the early resolution of complaints wherever possible to achieve efficient and satisfactory outcomes for all parties.
- Enable Council to monitor complaint trends and identify systemic issues, risks and opportunities for organisational learning and service improvement.

3. Definitions

- **Complaint:** Any expression of dissatisfaction about the services Council provides or the actions of a staff member that cannot be resolved at the first point of contact.
Examples include:
 - Taking too long to take action, or failing to take action.
 - Not following policy, procedures or rules.
 - Not making a decision in the prescribed manner.
 - Providing incorrect or misleading information.
- **Electronic Complaint:** A complaint received via email or other electronic communication.
- **Unreasonable conduct and communications:** As defined in the Customer & Community Conduct and Communications Policy.
- **Investigating Officer:** The Council Officer assigned responsibility for investigating a complaint, determined by the Office of the Chief Executive.
- **Verbal Complaint:** A complaint received by telephone or in person.

4. Policy Statement

4.1 Procedure on receipt of a complaint

All complaints must include the name and contact details of the complainant.

Complaints submitted anonymously will not be accepted, as the Council is unable to acknowledge, investigate effectively, or provide a response to the complainant.

Every effort will be made to resolve a complaint received verbally, electronically or by post at the first point of contact following the Complaints Management Procedure, which is a separate document to this policy.

Where a complaint cannot be resolved at the first instance, the receiver will escalate the complaint as per the Complaints Management Procedure.

4.2 Support for complainants

Complaints can be made on behalf of another person. The support person must provide their contact details and written consent from the complainant authorising them to act on the complainant's behalf.

If the assistance of an interpreter is required to facilitate the issue, Council will work with the complainant to arrange this.

4.3 Exceptions

There are exceptions to what constitutes a complaint under this policy. Examples may be, but are not limited to:

- Criticisms or disagreement with Council policy or decisions.
- A complaint where the customer or Council has started legal proceedings or has taken court action.
- A complaint that has already been heard by a court or tribunal.
- Insurance claims.
- Any other complaint where another formal process has been commenced.
- Where another formal complaints process exists, e.g. a statutory requirement.
- Where a formal right of appeal already exists.

The management of such complaints falls outside this policy, with each situation suitably managed given all the circumstances.

4.4 Unacceptable actions by complainants

Council acknowledges that customers may behave out of character in times of distress. However, Council will not tolerate abusive behaviour towards staff, verbal or otherwise.

A complainant's actions may be deemed to be unacceptable if, for example:

- They are abusive to Council staff.
- They persistently make the same complaint, despite it having been fully investigated under the complaints policy or persist in seeking an unrealistic outcome.
- They repeatedly change aspects of the complaint or the desired outcome part-way through an investigation

5. Reporting

All complaints will be investigated and dealt with in confidence, consistent with the needs of the investigation. Monitoring of compliance with the policy will be undertaken to enable the policy to be adequately reviewed and revised.

The Office of the Chief Executive will be responsible for the production of an annual monitoring report for key stakeholders, covering, but not limited to:

- Quantitative data on the use of the policy.
- Unsuccessful complaint outcomes.
- Areas identified for service improvement.

The procedure for responding to a complaint is outlined in the Complaints Management Procedure.

6. Questions

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Office of the Chief Executive.

7. Relevant Documents and Legislation

- [Privacy Act 2020](#)
- [Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 \(LGOIMA\)](#)
- [Protected Disclosures \(Protection of Whistleblowers\) Act 2022](#)

Note: Any legislation referred to should be interpreted as meaning the Act and its amendments.

Staff are also referred to:

- Customer and Community Conduct and Communications Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

8. Policy owned by

This Policy is owned by the Office of the Chief Executive.

Schedule 1

Standard Operating Procedure – Complaint & Service Request Handling Process (Complaint Management Procedure)

DOCUMENT CONTROL			
VERSION	DATE	COMMENTS	
2	9 September 2026	Revised and updated	
DOCUMENT APPROVALS			
ROLE	DATE	POSITION	
REVIEWER	September 2026	SLT	
APPROVER	September 2026	Chief Executive	
DOCUMENT CUSTODIAN AND REVIEW DATE			
ROLE	POSITION	REVIEW PERIOD	NEXT REVIEW DATE
CUSTODIAN	Quality Assurance Manager	3-yearly or sooner if required by legislative, regulatory, or organisational changes	September 2029

Initial contact is made via a Request for Service, Complaint, or Snap Send Solve.

A LGOIMA Request is via a separate process.

1. Complaint Lodged

- o A complaint is submitted. This is completed online from our website.
- o The complaint is sent to the Office of the Chief Executive (CE).
- o An acknowledgement email is sent to the submitter.
- o Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

2. Report an Issue (Service Request)

- o A request goes through an initial triage process by Customer Service.
- o If it's a weekend or out-of-hours, a prompt will appear for the submitter about urgency and out-of-hours contact information.

3. Determining Request Type:

- o The requestor classifies the submission as either a **Complaint** or a **Service Request (SR)**.
- o If it's a SR, the Customer Service Officer (CSO) enters the information into the Service Request system and an email with details is sent to the customer.
- o If it's a complaint, it is forwarded to the Office of the CE.

4. Escalation Process:

- o Complaints are forwarded to the Office of the CE.
- o The customer is informed by the Office of the CE that their complaint is under review.

5. Snap Send Solve

- o Follows the Service Request process.

6. LGOIMA Requests

- o Follows the LGOIMA process.

7. Related Policies

- [Customer Complaints Policy](#)



Customer & Community Conduct and Communications Policy

Version: 2

September 2026

DOCUMENT CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	COMMENTS
1	13.08.26	Risk and Assurance Committee Meeting
2	24.09.26	Council Meeting

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

	Title	DATE
REVIEWER	Quality Assurance Manager	28.07.26
APPROVER		

DOCUMENT CUSTODIAN AND REVIEW DATE

	NAME	REVIEW PERIOD	NEXT REVIEW DATE
CUSTODIAN	Quality Assurance Manager	3 yearly or sooner if required by legislative, regulatory, or organisational changes	July 2029

Contents

1.	Policy Context	3
2.	Policy Objectives	3
3.	Policy Statement	3
3.1	Unreasonable conduct and communications	3
3.2	Zero tolerance policy	4
3.3	Application of this policy to Elected Members	5
3.4	Managing unreasonable conduct and communications	5
3.5	Strategies that may be implemented.....	6
3.6	Referrals to other relevant authorities	6
3.7	Obligations under other Acts.....	7
3.8	Process for review	7
3.9	Complaints	7
4.	Questions	7
5.	Relevant Documents and Legislation.....	7
6.	Policy Owner	8

1. Policy Context

The Westland District Council (WDC) is committed to being an accessible council, and providing services to the community, the success of which is reliant on the ability to undertake our work in an effective and efficient way. As an employer, we must also protect the health, safety and security of our employees and the public when they are visiting our sites.

When conduct or communications by members of the public become unreasonable, the resulting interactions with employees can disadvantage others in the community by taking up a disproportionate amount of WDC time and resources. Unreasonable conduct and communications may also affect the mental or physical health of WDC employees and members of the public. When this happens, WDC will take proactive steps to manage any behaviour that negatively and unreasonably impacts WDC, its employees and other members of the public.

2. Policy Objectives

This policy aims to ensure a fair and comprehensive process is in place for managing unreasonable conduct and communications and their impacts. The policy seeks to achieve this by:

- Explaining what types of conduct and communications may be considered unreasonable behaviour.
- Providing guidance to employees on how to identify unreasonable conduct or communications.
- Clearly articulating the available strategies and protection measures available to employees when faced with unreasonable conduct and communications, and what is required to manage it in a WDC context.
- Setting out the review and complaints process available to members of the public.

A key outcome intended by this policy is to provide a framework for managing unreasonable conduct and communications, ensuring that employees feel supported and safe while at work.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 Unreasonable conduct and communications

Any conduct or communications that, due to their nature or frequency, raise substantial health, safety, resource or equity issues for WDC, our employees, or customers will be deemed to be unreasonable behaviour.

This policy will refer to both unreasonable customer behaviour, and unreasonable conduct and communications interchangeably.

Unreasonable behaviour that is disproportionate and impacts WDC by impacting our employees, services, time or resources includes:

- (a) **Unreasonable behaviour** is conduct that is unreasonable in all circumstances – regardless of how stressed, angry or frustrated a person is – because it compromises the health, safety and security of our employees, other service users or the person themselves, including, but not limited to:
 - Acts of aggression, verbal abuse, self-harm or the making of derogatory, discriminatory or racist remarks.
 - Harassment, intimidation, stalking or physical violence (whether threatened or

- actual violence).
 - Rude, confronting and threatening communications.
- (b) **Unreasonable arguments** include any arguments that are incomprehensible, false or inflammatory, including, but not limited to:
- Arguments not supported by sufficient evidence or are based on false information.
 - Making false statements or accusations.
 - Arguments that are defamatory or inflammatory.
- (c) **Unreasonable persistence** by continued, incessant and unrelenting behaviour or actions, including, but not limited to:
- Excessive phone calls, emails, visits, letters (including being copied into correspondence).
 - Contacting different people within WDC or externally to receive a different outcome or to elicit a more sympathetic response.
 - An unwillingness or inability to accept reasonable explanations, including final decisions that have been comprehensively considered and communicated.
- (d) **Unreasonable demands** (express or implied) made by a person, including, but not limited to:
- Insisting on talking to the Chief Executive or a senior manager, Mayor, or elected members when it is neither appropriate nor warranted, or where conversations with senior employees have already taken place.
 - Demanding services that are of a nature or scale that we cannot provide (even after this has been explained).
 - Insisting on outcomes that are not possible or appropriate in the circumstances, such as calling for someone to be dismissed or prosecuted or seeking an apology or compensation when there is no reasonable basis for expecting this.
- (e) **Unreasonable lack of cooperation** is the lack of willingness or ability of a person to cooperate with WDC, our processes, or our complaints system, including, but not limited to:
- Sending a constant stream of incomprehensible or disorganised information without clearly defining any issues or explaining how they relate to the core issue or complaint.
 - Displaying unhelpful behaviour, such as withholding information, acting dishonestly or misquoting others.
 - Refusing to follow or accept instructions, requirements, processes or advice without a clear and justifiable reason for doing so.

3.2 Zero tolerance policy

WDC has a zero-tolerance approach towards any violence, harm or threats to any of its employees. Any conduct of this kind is unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with our health and safety responsibilities, and where appropriate, may result in the involvement of the Police, courts or other agencies. In addition, the unreasonable behaviour may be addressed under this policy.

All employees are responsible for recording and reporting any incidents involving threats of, or actual, violence or harm. This should be recorded in a file note and forwarded to their manager and the Senior Leadership Team. If further steps are required, this will be discussed and approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

Numbers of incidents will be reported to the Risk and Assurance Committee.

3.3 Application of this policy to Elected Members

Elected members are required to interact with members of the public in accordance with the Elected Member Code of Conduct, but they may decide to implement steps under this policy to address issues related to their personal health and safety.

Any elected member who wishes to implement any steps in this policy should first notify the Mayor and Chief Executive, who will arrange for an employee(s) to assist the elected member.

Elected members may, at their absolute discretion, request support from the Council's Information Management Team to block specific email addresses or redirect specific email addresses to an alternative WDC address. It is for the elected member to decide whether or how they communicate their actions to the individuals concerned.

Elected members can refer any behaviour they believe breaches this policy and have chosen not to ignore, along with details of any steps taken in response—whether under this policy or not—to the Quality Assurance Manager for referral to the Privacy Officer. The Privacy Officer will record any breach and the actions taken for reporting purposes.

3.4 Managing unreasonable conduct and communications

WDC will be guided by the following principles when managing unreasonable conduct and communications.

- Impartiality.
- Transparency and honesty.
- Restrictions are proportionate to the unreasonable behaviour.
- Adequate opportunity has been given to the customer to address their behaviour.
- Our relationship to the customer will continue for the provision of infrastructure and certain services that must be provided, such as water supply, waste collection, etc.

If appropriate, the customer will have the time and opportunity to change their behaviour prior to the application of any strategies under this policy.

When we propose to implement any steps or strategy in this policy, our notification to the customer will include an explanation of the restriction being implemented, the reason for the restriction, the standard of behaviour expected before the restriction is reviewed and their right to complain to the Ombudsman.

Any arrangements made under this policy will be reviewed by the Chief Executive on an annual basis, or sooner at their discretion. The person concerned may be included in this process unless the Chief Executive determines this may provoke further unreasonable behaviour.

3.5 Strategies that may be implemented

Customers may be asked to moderate their tone, language or frequency of interactions with WDC. Initial warning letters will be issued by a Senior Leadership Team Member addressed to the customer, with a record held on file.

Customers may be asked to engage only with a nominated single point of contact who will assist both parties to work towards a resolution.

Customers may have modified or limited channels of communication with WDC, such as requiring “writing only” contact. Where correspondence is received in a manner that contravenes this restriction, such as through email, it will either be returned or filed without acknowledgement.

Customers may have their access to WDC employees restricted to an “appointment only” basis. This may include meeting with two or more WDC employees, and where it is deemed appropriate, a third party such as security or local police.

Customers may be restricted to communication with WDC by way of a third-party support person nominated by the customer and approved by the Chief Executive, and only after other control measures have been excluded.

Customers may be completely restricted from accessing WDC employees and buildings. This is a method of last resort and the Chief Executive, or their delegates, may decide that it is necessary to completely restrict contact or access to our services. Access to WDC services may be restricted, directly or indirectly, by using legal mechanisms such as trespass or reporting the person to the Police. Such restrictions are not taken lightly, and where possible, even where a trespass exists, communication of the person’s needs is to be received through a support person during their exclusion period.

At WDC’s sole discretion, the customer may be invited to attend mediation or some other form of alternative dispute resolution to assist with resolving the issue between any WDC employee or elected member and the customer. This may be facilitated if the parties concerned agree to that approach.

Nothing in this policy prevents WDC or its employees or elected members from utilising legal mechanisms to address unreasonable conduct or communications that pose real and genuine fear of harm.

3.6 Referrals to other relevant authorities

This policy does not limit WDC’s ability to refer a matter to the relevant authorities – matters of referral will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. This may include:

- Referring electronic communications, including emails, to the relevant authorities, including Netsafe.
- Referral of extreme breaches of this policy to relevant third-party agencies, including New Zealand Police.
- Referring the customer to an external review agency, such as the Environment Court or the Ombudsman.

3.7 Obligations under other Acts

This policy has no effect on an individual's rights or WDC's obligations under the [Privacy Act 2020](#) or [Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987](#). WDC will ensure it continues to meet its obligations under these Acts.

3.8 Process for review

Customers who have their access to our services changed or restricted may ask for that decision to be reviewed.

The review will be undertaken by a Senior Leadership Team Member who was not involved in the original decision to change or restrict access.

The review process involves the Senior Leadership Team Member:

- Considering the reasons provided in support of the requested review, the customer's personal circumstances, including cultural background, along with all relevant records regarding the customer's past conduct.
- Conducting any interviews with the persons involved, including the customer, if that is considered appropriate or warranted; and
- Advising the customer of the outcome of their appeal by letter. The employee will then refer any materials or records relating to the review to be kept in the appropriate file.
- If a customer is still dissatisfied after the review process, they may seek an external review from an agency such as the Ombudsman.

3.9 Complaints

Persons who are alleged to have breached this policy and have received an email or letter from WDC acknowledging the breach may bring a complaint to the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive will objectively review the circumstances, and if appropriate, after speaking with or otherwise communicating with the complainant, make their determination.

The Chief Executive must refer an investigation to the Risk and Assurance Committee where the Chief Executive's actions are the subject of the complaint.

Nothing contained within this policy prevents a complaint being made directly to the Office of the Ombudsman.

4. Questions

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Office of the Chief Executive or Human Resources in the first instance.

5. Relevant Documents and Legislation

For further information related to this policy, see:

- [Local Government Act 2002](#)
- [Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#)
- [Privacy Act 2020](#)

- [Public Records Act 2005](#)
- [Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015](#)
- [Harassment Act 1997](#)
- [Trespass Act 1980](#)
- [Office of the Ombudsman Guidelines for Managing Unreasonable Complainant Conduct](#)
- [Water Services Act 2021](#)

This policy is implemented in conjunction with the following documents:

- Westland District Council Health and Safety Policy and Procedures.
- Westland District Council Code of Conduct Policy and Procedures.
- Westland District Council Emergency Procedures

6. Policy Owner

This Policy is owned by the Chief Executive.