

# OFFICIAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

All queries/complaints should be made in the first instance at departmental level. Staff are trained to answer your queries/complaints and every effort is made to resolve them promptly and efficiently. However if you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint you may use the Council's Official Complaints Procedure outlined below.

In this procedure, the term "Official Complaint" is used to include a customer's dissatisfaction

with the quality of service received, or with a decision made by the Council concerning the customer.

There is a Complaints Officer in each department. This Officer is at senior level. They have responsibility for handling and resolving Official Complaints, which relate to their department and have the authority to alter/nullify the original decision made in the case.

## **Complaints procedure: -**

All Official Complaints received (hereinafter called 'complaints') must be in writing/email and signed. Staff will provide assistance to the person making the complaint, with the assurance that the complaint will be treated sensitively and confidentially as far as possible. Application forms to facilitate the public when making a complaint are available in all our public offices, libraries and on the Internet.

When you make a complaint, you will receive an acknowledgement letter within 7 working days.

The Complaints Officer will review all files on the matter and issue his/her decision where possible within 28 days of receipt of the complaint. Where we are unable to process a decision within this time you will be promptly informed of the expected date of the final decision.

If you are not satisfied with the way your complaint was handled you can appeal the decision of the Complaints Officer to the Senior Executive Officer of the department handling your complaint who will have full responsibility for reviewing all appeals. The appeal process will be completed within 21 days of receipt of the appeal.

Please note that the Council's Official Complaints and appeal procedure does not affect your right to have your complaint reviewed by the Office of the Ombudsman at any stage who is contactable at: -

### **Office of the Ombudsman**

18 Lower Leeson Street,  
Dublin 2.

**Tel:** 6395600

**LoCall:** 1890 22 30 30

**Email:** [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie)

**Web Site:** [www.ombudsman.ie](http://www.ombudsman.ie)

# CUSTOMER CHARTER

We will aim to promote excellence in service provision subject to resources, which is responsive to

the needs and expectations of our customers.

## **Equality/Diversity**

- We welcome the diversity of our customers and will deal with all customers in a fair and equitable manner.

## **Contact by Telephone**

- We will answer telephone enquiries promptly and politely.
- We will acknowledge messages left on voicemail within 24 hours.

## **Contact by Letter or Email**

- For letters that require acknowledgement we aim to do so within 7 working days of receipt.
- We will issue a full reply as soon as possible thereafter.
- We will give contact names in our communications.

## **Visitors to our Offices**

- We will ensure that our public offices comply with occupational health and safety standards.
- We will enhance our public offices so that they are accessible for persons with disabilities.

## **Service in Irish**

- We will aim to accommodate our customers who wish to conduct their business through Irish.

## **Information**

- We will aim to provide information that is clear, timely and accurate at all our service locations.
- We will meet the requirements of people with specific needs where possible.

## **Choice**

- We will aim to provide choice, where feasible, in payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times.

## **Consultation and Evaluation**

- The Council is committed to consulting with its customers and to evaluating its services.

## **Complaints/Queries**

- We will deal with complaints/queries openly and fairly.

## **Our Performance**

- We will evaluate our performance against the commitments in this Charter.

# CUSTOMER'S ROLE

We welcome your comments and suggestions on this charter and on how we can improve our services in the future. If you would like to comment or make

a suggestion please write to the Head of Corporate Services, County Hall, Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin or email [corp@dlrcoco.ie](mailto:corp@dlrcoco.ie)

Just as the Customer is entitled to the highest level of customer service, Councillors and members of staff should receive the same levels of respect and courtesy from the Customer.

**The following conduct is NOT acceptable from customers: -**

- Behaviour that is disruptive and interferes with the use and enjoyment of Council facilities.
- Harassment of staff or members of the public by use of abusive, racist, obscene or threatening language.
- Use of violence or threat of violence towards staff and/or members of the public.
- Malicious damage to and/or theft of Council property.
- The use of alcohol and illicit drugs while using Council facilities.
- Smoking in Council premises.
- Leaving personal property unattended at any Council premises.

## Freedom of Information

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts 1997-2003 every person has the following new legal rights: -

- The right to access official records held by the Council.
- The right to have personal information corrected where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading.
- The right to be given reasons for decisions taken by the Council that affect oneself.

These rights mean that from the 21st of October 1998, the public can seek access to personal information held on them by the Council irrespective of when the information was created, and to other non-personal records created after the 21st of October 1998.

The Council has published two Manuals, as required by Sections 15 and 16 of the Acts, on its structures, functions and the services it provides to the public and the Rules/ Guidelines governing the provision of those services. You may also contact the Council's Freedom of Information Officer by telephone, fax or e-mail with any questions/queries at the following:-

**Tel:** 2054734/2054888

**Fax:** 2806969

**E-Mail:** [foi@dlrcoco.ie](mailto:foi@dlrcoco.ie)

[www.dlrcoco.ie](http://www.dlrcoco.ie)

## Data Protection

Data Protection is about your fundamental right to privacy. You can access and correct data about yourself. Those who keep data about you have to comply with data protection principles.

If you have any queries please contact the Organisation Development Unit at 2054734/2054888.

The Data Protection Commissioner investigates complaints under the Acts.

### Data Protection Commissioner

Block 4,  
Irish Life Centre,  
Talbot Street,  
Dublin 1.

**Tel:** 8748544

**Fax:** 8745405

[www.dataprotection.ie](http://www.dataprotection.ie)