

INTRODUCTION

Dundee City Council is committed to providing the best possible service to the people of Dundee. That means we do our best to get things right first time, and we will take action quickly to try to solve any problems when things go wrong.

The Council values complaints about our services, and takes them seriously. Listening to complaints lets us put things right and also learn lessons to improve our service and try to make sure that the same thing doesn't happen again.

If you would like to make a complaint about the Council, this leaflet explains how to do it. It also explains our commitment to investigate and respond fairly to your complaint.



David Dorward, Chief Executive

WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with something the Council or its staff have done or failed to do, or with how a person has been treated, which requires the Council to respond.

Complaints will normally include things like:

- failure to provide a service to the standard you expected
- delay or failure to respond to a query or a request for service

- failure to follow the Council's agreed policies or procedures
- failure to take account of relevant matters in coming to a decision
- an employee's attitude or behaviour (e.g. rudeness, discourtesy or apathy)
- malice, bias or unfair discrimination

Some problems or enquiries are **not** considered to be complaints against the Council. For example, we would not count as complaints:

- initial requests for a service (for example, if you want to report a housing repair, a pothole or a faulty street light, or you want the Council to deal with a complaint against another party such as a neighbour or business)
- initial requests for information or an explanation of Council policy

The complaints systems is also not intended to deal with matters for which there is an alternative right of appeal or legal remedy, either within the Council or to an independent tribunal or the courts. For example, there are already procedures in place if you want to appeal against the issue of a parking ticket, appeal a planning decision or make an insurance claim against the Council, so these issues are not covered by the complaints procedure.

Finally, the complaints procedure does not deal with allegations about breaches of the Code of Conduct for Councillors. These should be referred to the Standards Commission for Scotland.

HOW DO I START WHEN I WISH TO COMPLAIN ABOUT A COUNCIL SERVICE?

The quickest way to solve most problems is to speak to the staff responsible for that service, who may be able to solve your problem "on the spot".

If your problem can't be resolved right away, we have a procedure to make sure that your complaint is dealt with effectively. You should make a complaint which will be logged on the Council's complaint system and passed to an appropriate officer for investigation. Very serious complaints will be drawn to the attention of senior officers straightaway.

You can make your complaint in any way that's convenient for you, for example:

- by telephone
- by letter
- by visiting in person to the department concerned or the Customer Services Team at Dundee House reception
- by completing the complaints form on the Council's website:
www.dundee.gov.uk

If you prefer, you can fill in the complaints form attached to this leaflet.

WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?

First of all, identify the department concerned. For example, you should contact the Housing department for a complaint about a Council house, the Environment department with a problem about refuse collection or the Social Work department if you want to complain about home care. If you aren't sure who you need to contact, telephone the **Customer Services Team on 434800**.

It will be very helpful if you can give as much detail as possible about your complaint - for example, dates, times, names and so on. It is a good idea to note down all the details and have these with you if you phone, or take the information with you if you are visiting a Council office.

HOW YOUR COMPLAINT WILL BE DEALT WITH

The Council will investigate and aim to give you a reply to most complaints within 5 working days. Where your complaint requires an urgent response - for example, because someone's health and safety is at risk or because an important deadline has to be met - a response will normally be made within 48 hours. Some complaints are more complicated and take longer to investigate eg Social Work complaints often require longer to investigate and they have different target timescales. So, at all stages in the complaints process, we will let you know if we can't respond fully within our target time and will let you know when you can expect a full response. At all stages in the process, you can seek independent help and advice e.g. from your Councillor, MP, MSP, Citizens Advice Bureau or advice centre.

Please complete this form, then moisten the edges, fold and seal the form and hand it in or post (FREEPOST) to the address shown overleaf

Please give details of your complaint

If you have already spoken to someone about this complaint, please tell us who and when

Please give us your contact details

Name	
Address	
Tel No:	

and if you would like us to contact someone else about your complaint (e.g. a relative, friend or advisor) give us their contact details

Name	
Address	
Tel No:	

for official use only

Date received	_____
Complaint system ref no	_____



WHAT IF I AM NOT SATISFIED WITH THE REPLY GIVEN?

At this stage you will be asked to fill in a complaints form if you have not already done so, or you can write to the Chief Officer of the department concerned. You should tell us who you have already spoken to and when. If possible, give us the reference number from your original complaint.

Your complaint will be investigated by the Chief Officer who will aim to give you a further reply within 5 working days.

WHAT IF I DON'T ACCEPT THE CHIEF OFFICER'S FINDINGS?

If you are still not happy, you can write to the Chief Executive who will study the case and aim to let you know within 10 working days what action will be taken.

CAN I GO STRAIGHT TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE?

Going through the relevant department first will make it easier and quicker to sort out your problem.

WHAT IF I AM STILL UNHAPPY AFTER HEARING FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE?

At this stage you can take your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, who may decide to carry out an independent external review of the situation. If you would like a complaint form, more information, or advice about submitting a complaint to the Ombudsman, contact:

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
4 Melville Street
EDINBURGH EH3 7NS

Tel: 0800 377 7330
Fax: 0800 377 7331
Text: 0790 049 4372
e-mail: ask@spsso.org.uk
website: www.spsso.org.uk

HELP OR ENQUIRIES

Our Customer Services Team will be happy to help if you have any queries about making a complaint. You can call them on 434800 or visit them at the reception in Tayside House.

OUR PROMISE TO YOU

- we will take all complaints seriously and carry out a thorough, fair and impartial investigation. This may involve contacting you for more information.
- we will deal with your complaint quickly and will keep you informed at all stages, particularly if we cannot meet the targets set out in this leaflet
- we will respect confidentiality when dealing with your complaint
- if we are at fault, we will apologise and try to find an appropriate remedy as soon as possible
- we will treat you with courtesy and fairness at all times

We hope, too, that you will be courteous and fair in your dealings with our staff when they are trying to resolve your complaint.

COMMENTS AND QUERIES

As well as complaints, we are always interested in your comments on Council services and any queries about Council policies or procedures. If you wish to make a comment or enquiry, or to request a Council service, please contact the relevant department. If you aren't sure who you need to contact, look up the A-Z of services on the Council website www.dundee.gov.uk or telephone the Customer Services Team on 434800. You can also send us your comments and queries through the Council website.

This information is made available in large print or in an alternative format that meets your needs.	
Chinese	欲知詳情, 請致電: 01382 435825
Russian	Более подробную информацию можно получить позвонив по телефону: 01382 435825
Urdu	مزید معلومات کے لئے براہ مہربانی 01382 435825 پر فون کریں۔
Polish	po dalszą informację zadzwoń pod numer 01382 435825
Alternative Formats	For further information please contact the issuer of this publication