

Working for the Taranaki Regional Council

Always refer to the TRC Toolbox for the most
recent version of this document

Working for the Taranaki Regional Council

April 2016

Document 3084106

Approved by the Chief Executive

Updated 11 July 2022 by Anita Ng (updated Safe Driving policy)

Updated 8 August by Anita Ng (updated Flexible working arrangement policy and Whistle blowing procedure policy)

Updated 15 August 2022 by Anita Ng (added Koha policy, added Recognising achievements policy, updated Work related travel and expenses policy, added Private Use of Council Suppliers policy)

Updated 17 August 2022 by Anita Ng (added Impairment policy, added GPS Fleet Management policy, updated Use of Vehicles policy, updated Personal files policy, updated Private use of Council equipment, updated Booking Council vehicles)

Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Purpose	1
1.2	Background	1
2	Mission and corporate values	2
2.1	Mission	2
2.2	Organisational values	2
3	Your Council	5
3.1	Staff structure	5
3.2	Overview of Council Activities	5
3.2.1	Resource Management	5
3.2.2	Biosecurity	7
3.2.3	Transport	7
3.2.4	Hazard management	7
3.2.5	Recreation, culture and heritage	8
3.2.6	Regional representation, advocacy and investment management	9
4	Working for the Council	10
4.1	Engagement and job description	10
4.2	Relocation policy	10
4.3	Induction	11
4.4	Probation	11
4.5	Personal files	11
4.6	Collective Agreements	11
4.7	Hours of work and pay arrangements	12
4.7.1	Work hours	12
4.7.2	On-call	12
4.7.3	Holidays and leave entitlement	13
4.7.4	Working on statutory holidays	14
4.7.5	Working extraordinary hours	15
4.7.6	Timesheets	15
4.7.7	Privacy for staff when discussing confidential payroll matters	15
4.7.8	Payslips	16

4.8	Flexible Working Arrangements	16
4.9	Remuneration Review Process	21
4.10	Personal Memberships of professional organisations	22
4.11	Personal Development Programme	22
4.12	Staff development and training	23
4.13	Conflicts of Interest (COI) for Consent Monitoring and Enforcement Officers	24
4.14	Koha	26
4.15	Recognising achievements	27
5	Health and safety in the workplace	28
5.1	Staff location and reporting in	28
5.2	Children on Site	28
5.3	Reporting work place accidents	29
5.4	Protective clothing and equipment	29
5.5	Compliance with Health and Safety Policies	30
5.6	Health monitoring and wellness	30
5.7	Impairment	31
5.7.1	Prohibited behaviour	32
5.7.2	Social events	32
5.7.3	Reasonable cause testing	32
5.7.4	Drug and alcohol testing	34
5.7.5	Breath alcohol testing	34
5.7.6	Post incident testing	34
5.7.7	Refusal to provide specimen	34
5.7.8	Dilute/Invalid result	35
5.7.9	Cheating on a drug and/or alcohol test	35
5.7.10	Post testing	35
5.7.11	Employee assistance	35
5.7.12	Prescribed medications	36
5.7.13	Post-incident or Reasonable cause flow chart	36
6	Professional and dress standards	37
6.1	Dress Code – Non-Uniform	37
6.2	Dress Code - Uniform	37
6.3	Provision of corporate and protective clothing	38
7	When things go wrong	38
7.1	Employee Support Services	38
7.2	Domestic Violence Leave	39
7.3	Anti-Bullying and Harassment	41
7.3.1	Anti-bullying	42
7.3.2	Harassment	45
7.3.3	Other Behaviour	46
7.3.4	Victimisation	46

7.4	Disciplinary and personal grievance procedures	46
7.4.1	Disciplinary procedures	46
7.4.2	Personal grievance procedures	48
7.5	Whistle blowing procedures	48
8	Communications and corporate style	51
8.1	Document creation	51
8.1.1	Templates	51
8.1.2	Letters, facsimiles and cover notes	51
8.1.3	Agenda memoranda	51
8.1.4	Quality control	52
8.2	Printing and distribution	52
8.3	E-mail and file notes	52
8.4	Filing and record keeping and management	52
8.4.1	Records	53
8.4.2	Library	53
8.5	Process Mapping	53
8.6	Meetings	53
8.7	Public relations and the media	54
8.8	Official information	54
8.9	Social Media Policy	54
8.9.1	Use of social media for Council activities	55
8.9.2	Guidelines for personal or unofficial online activities	56
9	Council offices, vehicles and equipment	57
9.1	Workplace appearance, access and security	57
9.1.1	Workplace appearance	57
9.1.2	Smoking and liquor consumption	57
9.1.3	Building access and security	57
9.2	Use of vehicles	58
9.2.1	Road laws	58
9.2.2	Use of Council vehicles to and from work	58
9.2.3	GPS Fleet Management	58
9.2.4	Fuel	59
9.2.5	Availability of Council vehicles	59
9.2.6	Care and maintenance of Council vehicles	59
9.2.7	Accidents	60
9.2.8	Traffic offences	60
9.2.9	Safe Driving Policy	60
9.2.10	Private use of Council vehicles	62

9.3	Use of Council equipment	62
9.3.1	Computer use	62
9.3.2	Booking Council meeting rooms and equipment	63
9.3.3	Booking Council vehicles	63
9.3.4	Private use of Council equipment	63
9.4	Sustainability in the workplace	64
9.4.1	Reducing energy use	64
9.4.2	Reducing waste	64
9.4.3	Recycling	65
9.4.4	Residual rubbish	65
9.4.5	Catering	65
9.4.6	In house sustainability group	65
10	Work related travel and expenses	66
10.1	Taxis	66
10.2	Rental Cars	66
10.3	Travel	66
10.3.1	Airline bookings and travel outside Taranaki – domestic travel	66
10.3.2	Overseas travel	66
10.3.3	Private travel linked with official travel	67
10.4	Provision of cellphones	67
10.4.1	Cellphone allocation and use	67
10.4.2	Communication facilities available	67
10.4.3	Cellphone models and cost	68
10.4.4	Cellphone/smartphone use in vehicles	68
10.4.5	Private use of Council cellphones	68
10.4.6	Care and maintenance of cellphones	68
10.4.7	Cellphones and overseas travel	68
10.4.8	Smartphone use	69
10.5	Reimbursement for work-related expenses	69
10.5.1	Work toll calls	69
10.5.2	Other out-of-pocket expenses	69
10.5.3	Use of private vehicle or equipment	70
10.5.4	Medical expenses	70
11	Purchasing or contracting goods and services	71
11.1	Delegated authority	71
11.2	Documentation and tendering procedures	71
11.3	Method for evaluating proposals	73
11.3.1	Weighted attribute system	74
11.3.2	Tender evaluation - lowest price conforming tender method	75
11.3.3	Opening of tenders	75

11.4	Sale of surplus assets to staff	76
11.5	Private use of Council suppliers	76

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Working for the Taranaki Regional Council manual is to summarise what the Taranaki Regional Council (the Council) expects of its staff and what staff in turn can expect of the Council. The document sets the Council's mission and goals, corporate vision and organisational values and expectations as to how staff employed by the Council will give effect to their duties and responsibilities.

1.2 Background

As the name suggests, the *Working for the Taranaki Regional Council* manual is a document that sets out the privileges and expectations that go with working for the Council. The document sets the foundation for the relationship between the Council, as employer, and individual staff members, as employees. It is also a guide on the Council's corporate vision, organisational values and employment expectations. While carrying out your duties you are expected to act, at all times, in accordance with this vision and these values and expectations.

The *Working for the Taranaki Regional Council* document contains a statement of the Taranaki Regional Council's employment policies, expectations, and the benefits staff enjoy as an employee. The provisions are presented for your information only. It is not a contract and nothing in this document takes precedence over an employee's specific letters of engagement, or the *Taranaki Regional Council Collective Agreement*, or individual employment agreements. Similarly, nothing in this agreement overrides employment law in New Zealand.

From time-to-time conditions or circumstances may mean that the provisions in this document need to be amended or deleted. This document will be reviewed from time to time and the most recent review date will be recorded on the front page of the document. At a minimum, this document will be reviewed every three years. The most recent document will be available on the TRC Toolbox.

The Chief Executive reserves the right to amend, add to, or delete provisions of this document.

2 Mission and corporate values

The Taranaki Regional Council's prime responsibility is to manage the use, development and protection of our natural and physical resources for the present and future benefit of Taranaki.

We live by our motto, "Working with people, caring for Taranaki". Besides developing, monitoring and enforcing regional rules around the use of core resources, an important part of our work involves getting alongside landowners, industry, community groups and individuals to take practical actions to protect and improve the environment.

We also support the Civil Defence for the region, and we lead the regional push to ensure Taranaki gets the highway network and other transport infrastructure it needs.

We own and administer three large public gardens, and we are the 100% shareholders of Port Taranaki Limited.

Our jurisdiction extends from Mohakatino in the north to Waitotara in the south, from Cape Egmont in the west to Pohokura Saddle in the east.

2.1 Mission

Mission

To work for a thriving and prosperous Taranaki by:

- Promoting the sustainable use, development and protection of Taranaki's natural and physical resources
- Safeguarding Taranaki's people and resources from natural and other hazards
- Promoting and providing for Taranaki's regionally significant services, amenities and infrastructure Representing Taranaki's interests and contributions to the regional, national and international community.

We will do this by leading with responsibility, working cooperatively, encouraging community participation, and taking into account the Treaty of Waitangi.

2.2 Organisational values

The Council will perform its functions with excellence and distinction and will continue to be acknowledged as a leader in quality, productivity and innovation across its full range of activities. We will do this through a commitment to the values below.

Values**Public service**

We are committed to:

- behaving with integrity and neutrality in the best traditions of the public sector in New Zealand
- administering our functions for the collective good of our community with consistency, fairness and sensitivity in our treatment of individual situations
- not accepting direct or indirect offers, payment, gifts or bribes in any form and avoiding conflicts of interest.

Service first

We are committed to:

- assisting people in a courteous, helpful, accurate and professional manner
- providing people with a better service than they may expect to receive, noting that many people do not have dealings with us out of choice
- recognising the social and cultural diversity that exists and take this into account in our dealings.

Improving the quality of our performance

We are committed to:

- ensuring our personal contributions make a real and positive difference to the Council, its mission and performance
- continually improving the quality of our services to customers and the quality of our working relationships with each other
- improving our time management and productivity by increasing our knowledge and experience of our duties, working in a planned and strategic way and focusing on completing assignments
- calling for assistance when required
- being thorough and professional in our work so that we make sound recommendations and decisions based on knowledge and understanding.

Working safely

We are committed to:

- taking all reasonably practicable steps to manage and control safety risks and prevent harm in the workplace
- encouraging staff to engage with and participate in health and safety matters
- providing resources and training to achieve and maintain a healthy and safe work environment

Effective communication and teamwork

We are committed to:

- informing each other about our tasks and seeking participation and advice
- communicating with simplicity, clarity, and certainty

- recognising that individual achievements are always underpinned by the assistance of others
- constructively assisting each other, being non-possessive and receptive to advice
- trusting, respecting and being loyal to each other and the organisation
- congratulating each other for jobs well done and helping each other through problems
- participative management systems which encourage constructive and timely expression of opinion, noting that having a say differs from having a vote.

Initiative and the right to make mistakes

We are committed to:

- challenging the way we do things with the aim of improving effectiveness
- being innovative in developing and using new ideas, methods and technologies
- minimising mistakes, but accepting that we will make mistakes as we learn and improve
- forgiving well-intentioned errors
- being flexible and responsive to change.

Accountability and results

We are committed to:

- being responsible and accountable for our own actions and the quality of our own work
- being collectively responsible for and loyal to the organisation's actions
- achieving results which benefit the community
- not mistaking activity for accomplishment.

Presentation, respect and care

We are committed to:

- presenting ourselves for work in a fit state and in appropriate standards of dress and appearance
- respecting and caring for Council property, plant, vehicles and our workplace as if it were our own
- recognising the need to protect the integrity and public image of the Council and our colleagues in our private lives
- remembering that many of the people who are obliged to contribute to the funding of the organisation have low incomes.

Job satisfaction

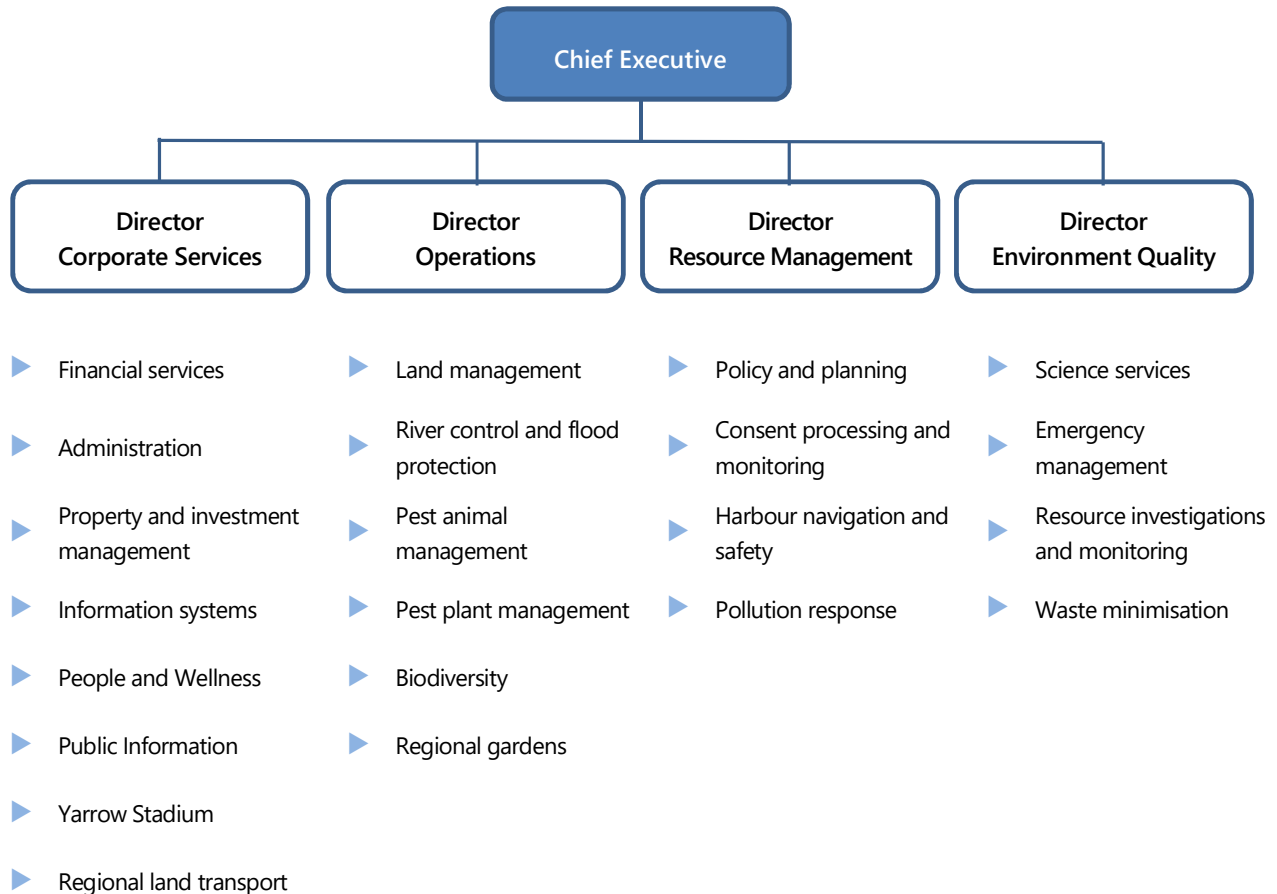
We are committed to:

- being appropriately trained and resourced to do our work well
- being satisfactorily rewarded for our work
- enjoying our work.

3 Your Council

3.1 Staff structure

Set out below is the staff structure of the Taranaki Regional Council.



3.2 Overview of Council Activities

Staff are employed by the Taranaki Regional Council to undertake a variety of tasks in relation to its responsibilities. The Council's operations collectively encompass the following significant activities:

3.2.1 Resource Management

Resource management comprises the following activities:

Resource management planning - preparing, adopting and maintaining comprehensive and publicly considered policies, plans and strategies that will deliver to the Taranaki community, efficient and effective management of the Council's functions and Taranaki's natural and physical resources.

Consent processing and administration - processing all applications for resource consents and administering resource consents in an efficient and effective manner.

Compliance monitoring programmes - undertaking effective and efficient monitoring of resource consents and, where necessary, undertaking successful enforcement action.

Pollution incidents and response - responding effectively to pollution incidents, reducing the occurrence and effects of pollution and other unauthorised incidents and, where necessary, undertaking successful enforcement action.

State of the environment monitoring - monitoring the state of the environment in Taranaki to enable periodic evaluation of trends in the state of the environment and the effects of the implementation of the Council's policies and plans.

Resource investigations and projects - providing relevant research information for resource management purposes.

Waste minimisation - encouraging and implementing waste management and cleaner production initiatives in Taranaki consistent with the Regional Waste Strategy for Taranaki and the waste management plans of the districts.

Sustainable land management plans and plant supply programme - promoting sustainable land and riparian management by providing land management advice and information on an individual property basis and through advocacy and facilitation.

Biodiversity - maintaining and enhancing the indigenous biodiversity of the Taranaki region, working alongside landowners and other groups and agencies in accordance with the Council's policies and biodiversity strategy priorities.

Enhancement grants - promoting the protection of the environment through the provision of targeted enhancement grants.

Principal legislation, policies and programmes

- Resource Management Act 1991
- Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941
- Local Government Act 2002
- Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki 2010
- Regional Coastal Plan for Taranaki 1997
- Regional Fresh Water Plan for Taranaki 2001
- Regional Soil Plan for Taranaki 2001
- Regional Air Quality Plan for Taranaki 2011
- Regional Waste Strategy for Taranaki 2011
- Resource Consent Procedures document
- Resource Consents Monitoring Procedures document
- Enforcement Provisions and Procedures, Resource Management Act 1991
- Delegations Manual for the Taranaki Regional Council
- Charging Policy under section 36 of the Resource Management Act 1991
- Taranaki Regional Marine Oil Spill Response Plan 2008
- Regional Action Plan for Taranaki: Dairying and Clean Streams Accord 2004
- State of the Environment Monitoring Procedures Document 1997.

3.2.2 Biosecurity

Biosecurity comprises the following activities:

Biosecurity planning - preparing, adopting and maintaining comprehensive and publicly considered policies, plans and strategies that will deliver to the Taranaki community, efficient and effective management of the Council's biosecurity functions.

Pest animal management - controlling pest animals to minimise their adverse effects on biodiversity, primary production and the regional economy and environment.

Pest plant management - controlling or eradicating pest plants to minimise their adverse effects on biodiversity, primary production and the regional economy and environment.

Principal legislation, policies and programmes

- Biosecurity Act 1993
- Local Government Act 2002
- Pest Management Strategy for Taranaki: Animals 2007
- Pest Management Strategy for Taranaki: Plants 2007.

3.2.3 Transport

Transport comprises the following activities:

Regional land transport planning - Contributing to an effective, efficient and safe land transport system in the public interest.

Public transport - promoting the provision of community public transport in Taranaki and to assist the transport needs of the transport disadvantaged.

Harbour management - promoting safe navigation for all users of the waters of Port Taranaki.

Principal legislation, policies and programmes

- Local Government Act 2002
- Land Transport Management Act 2003
- Maritime Transport Act 1994
- Regional Land Transport Plan for Taranaki
- Regional Public Transport Plan for Taranaki

3.2.4 Hazard management

Hazard management comprises the following activities:

Civil defence emergency management - promoting and enhancing, within the Taranaki community, an integrated comprehensive emergency management system including reducing risk, maintaining readiness, and providing response and recovery capacity and capabilities.

Flood management and general river control - providing accurate and timely flood warnings, providing flood control advice and undertaking minor works and associated actions to minimise and prevent damage by floods and river erosion.

River control schemes - managing and maintaining river control scheme works to accepted design standards to minimise and prevent damage by floods and river erosion.

Principal legislation, policies and programmes

- Local Government Act 2002
- Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
- National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan 2005
- Taranaki Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan 2012
- Taranaki Civil Defence Emergency Management Annual Business Plans
- Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941
- Resource Management Act 1991
- Land Drainage Act 1908
- Lower Waitara River Flood Control Protection Scheme asset management plan
- Lower Waiwhakaiho Flood Control Protection Scheme asset management plan
- Okato Scheme asset management plan.

3.2.5 Recreation, culture and heritage

Recreation, culture and heritage comprises the following activities:

Regional gardens - ensuring that Hollard Gardens, Tūpare and Pukeiti are maintained and enhanced as regionally significant recreational and heritage amenities.

Puke Ariki - maintaining an ongoing partnership relationship with the Puke Ariki regional museum and library including the ongoing use of display and presentation material within an annual project.

Yarrow Stadium - facilitating the continued maintenance and development of Yarrow Stadium.

Principal legislation, policies and programmes

- Local Government Act 2002
- Taranaki Regional Council Empowering Act 2001
- Hollard Garden Asset Management Plan 2014
- Tūpare Asset Management Plan 2014
- Pukeiti Asset Management Plan 2014.

3.2.6 Regional representation, advocacy and investment management

Regional representation, advocacy and investment management comprises the following activities:

Investment management - ensuring that the equity, property and treasury investments owned by the Council are efficiently managed.

Community engagement - promoting community awareness and understanding of the Council's functions and activities, and making quality and timely information publicly available.

Advocacy and response - advocating and responding, on behalf of the Taranaki community, to initiatives proposed by other agencies, when those initiatives affect the statutory responsibilities of the Council or relate to matters of regional significance, which are of interest or concern to the people of Taranaki.

Governance - facilitating public representation by the Council and its committees in accordance with statutory requirements.

Principal legislation, policies and programmes

- Port Companies Act 1988
- Port Taranaki Ltd's statement of corporate intent
- Local Government Act 2002
- Resource Management Act 1991
- Investment Policy
- Standing Orders.

4 Working for the Council

4.1 Engagement and job description

Upon engagement as an employee of the Taranaki Regional Council, the employee and Chief Executive will have agreed on an individual letter of appointment and job description for the position.

The employee will be a party to the Taranaki Regional Council Collective Employment Agreement or an Individual Employment Agreement.

A job description may be reviewed or amended at any time by agreement between the staff member and the Chief Executive.

4.2 Relocation policy

Upon engagement as an employee of the Taranaki Regional Council, the staff member may be eligible for contribution toward relocation expenses in accordance with the following policy.

Contribution towards relocation expenses is available to staff moving to the Taranaki region specifically for the purposes of employment at Taranaki Regional Council. The staff member must be relocating to Taranaki from outside the Taranaki region (as determined by the physical geography covered by the Taranaki Regional Council).

The amount of contribution toward relocation expenses will be determined as follows:

- Permanent staff relocating from within New Zealand will be eligible for relocation expenses of up to \$4,000 plus GST or actual costs, whichever is the lesser amount. Staff must submit two (2) quotes from moving companies, in which case the Council will provide a purchase order for the selected moving company to invoice directly (up to \$4,000 plus GST), or receipts for actual costs incurred submitted via the expense claim process.
- Permanent staff relocating from overseas will be eligible for a lump-sum payment of \$4,000 (net of tax but including any required KiwiSaver contribution) that will be paid upon commencement of their employment.
- Staff employed on a fixed term of nine (9) months or more will be eligible for relocation expenses of up to \$1,000 plus GST or actual costs, whichever is the lesser amount. Employees must submit two quotes from moving companies, in which case the Council will provide a purchase order for the selected moving company to invoice directly (up to \$1,000 plus GST), or receipts for actual costs incurred submitted via the expense claim process.

Staff are required to sign their application for relocation assistance form and agree that should their employment with the Council terminate within two (2) years, or prior to the end of their fixed term agreement, they would be liable to repay a percentage of the relocation contributions based on the actual tenure with the Council.

Costs associated with the relocation of pets and household cleaning are excluded from this policy. In exceptional circumstances relocation expenses greater than the amounts prescribed above may be approved at the sole discretion of the Chief Executive.

4.3 Induction

Following engagement, a new staff member will complete an induction course, the purpose of which is to be introduced to the Council's staff and to gain a broad understanding of the Council's functions and activities.

As part of that induction, there are a number of activities that new permanent staff must undertake. There will also be various compulsory health and safety training, relevant to each staff member's role, which will be organised as part of the normal induction process.

Fixed term and casual staff will receive an induction appropriate for their role and length of employment.

4.4 Probation

Staff appointed to the permanent staff of the Council shall, on appointment, serve a six (6) month probation period. Please note, the Council does not have a 90-day Trial Period as provided for in Section 67A of the Employment Relations Act.

The performance of any staff serving a probation period is reviewed following three (3) and six (6) months service and the Chief Executive advises the staff member, in writing, as to whether the probation is proceeding satisfactorily or unsatisfactorily. Following the completion of the probationary period, the Chief Executive advises the staff member, again in writing, as to whether the probation has been satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

At the completion of a satisfactory probation period, the officer concerned shall be appointed to the permanent staff of the Council and the probationary period of service shall count towards continuous service.

At the completion of an unsatisfactory probationary period, the Chief Executive reserves the right to either extend the probationary period or terminate the employment of the officer concerned, in accordance with the applicable employment agreement. In the event of termination, the officer concerned shall not be entitled to any severance compensation.

Fixed term staff of the Council shall, on appointment, serve a six (6) week probation period, as above, if appropriate.

4.5 Personal files

Electronic personal files contain documentation relating to a staff member's work history with the Council (e.g., letter of appointment, training records, correspondence relating to salary reviews or any other correspondence between the Council and the staff member). Staff may request for copies of this documentation in their personal files by emailing the People and Wellness Administrator.

4.6 Collective Agreements

The Taranaki Regional Council has a relationship with two (2) unions, the Taranaki Regional Council Staff Association (TRCSA) and the Public Service Association (PSA) albeit that currently, the Council only has a collective employment agreement with the Taranaki Regional Council Staff Association.

The majority of Taranaki Regional Council staff are parties to the *Taranaki Regional Council Collective Agreement*, between the Council and the Taranaki Regional Council Staff Association.

Negotiations for collective agreements are undertaken on behalf of the Council by the Chief Executive.

Collective agreements specify the terms and conditions of employment agreed to by staff with the Council. Matters addressed in the collective agreements include hours of work, holiday and remuneration arrangements and procedures for managing personal disputes and the like.

Staff should ensure that they each retain a personal copy of the agreement that they are party to which, together with the letter of appointment and job description, is kept in a safe place. A copy of the *Taranaki Regional Council Collective Agreement* can be found on the TRC Toolbox

4.7 Hours of work and pay arrangements

4.7.1 Work hours

Full-time staff are employed on a forty (40) hours a week basis. Staff covered by the Collective Agreement will work a minimum of 37.5 hours per week, but may be required to work up to 40 hours per week without additional compensation. Standard work hours are normally from Monday to Friday, between 8.00 am and 5.30 pm. Staff may, with the agreement of their Manager, work flexible time depending upon job demands or staff availability during the working day (including the requirement of providing services to the public).

Any staff who, at the specific request or prior approval of their Manager, has worked in excess of 40 hours in a week may accrue 'time in lieu' at an hour-for-hour rate up to a maximum of 24 hours. Accrued time in lieu is to be taken at a time that is agreed to between the officer and supervisor.

Note

The varied nature of the Council's activities means that some staff may regularly work outside standard office hours or work more than the minimum 37.5 hours. Where this is an expected duty, it has been recognised as such within the remuneration for that position.

As a general principle, you are expected to work whatever hours are needed to complete your tasks. In rare circumstances, where you are required to work substantial extraordinary hours, compensation in the form of payment, time off in lieu, or some other form may be made at the Council's discretion. However, if hours are consistently high due to work commitments, then this should be addressed by your supervisor.

4.7.2 On-call

For those staff members rostered to be on-call, and perform duties outside of the ordinary hours of work, the following conditions apply:

- must be ready and able to respond to a call made to the staff member by cellphone within two (2) hours of the call; and
- must remain within the Taranaki Region and observe all legal requirements, including the legal limit of alcohol in relation to driving; and
- will be provided with a Council car for private use for the duration of the on-call period.

Staff who are employed on a Council approved, rostered, on-call basis will be paid an on-call allowance of \$1,000 per annum (gross) in addition to their existing salary, regardless of the number of times that staff member is rostered on call, as per the Collective Agreement.

It is essential that all on-call rosters cover an entire statutory holiday period and that there is no 'change-over' between staff during a statutory holiday period.

4.7.3 Holidays and leave entitlement

Annual Leave

In accordance with the Collective Employment Agreement, staff with less than seven (7) years continuous service are entitled to 21 annual leave days a year. Staff with seven (7) or more year's continuous service are entitled to 26 annual leave days a year. In the case of part-time staff, pro rata weeks will be applied.

Leave will be taken at times that are mutually agreed to between the Council and the staff member.

Leave must be applied for electronically using the Datacom Payroll website, accessed through Citrix or via the Datacom app "MyPay". These also both hold information on available leave. All leave, excluding sick leave, must be applied for in advance of the leave being taken. It is essential that sick leave is applied for as early as possible, upon your return, as it won't appear in your timesheet straightaway.

The Council operates a partial close down period each year, usually for three (3) days between Christmas and New Year. The Council will provide 14 days' notice of the dates on which the close down period will take place via Workplace. Staff are required to take annual leave during the close down period. Where a staff member has not yet become entitled to annual leave or does not have enough annual leave entitlement to cover the close down period, this will be dealt with in accordance with the *Holidays Act 2003*. Staff will not be required to take annual leave during the close down period on any days that they are specifically instructed by the Council to be on call or work during the close down period. The level of holiday entitlement has been increased to allow for these required days of annual leave.

The staff member should take annual leave within 12 months after it becomes due. Untaken annual leave may be accrued with the written approval of the Manager.

Sick Leave

A staff member, after completion of three (3) months continuous service, is entitled to ten working days sick leave for each completed year of continuous service. All unused sick leave shall be cumulative. In most circumstances sick leave in excess of three (3) consecutive days will require a medical certificate to be provided at the staff member's expense. This medical certificate needs to be given directly to Payroll.

Leave without pay

Short durations of leave without pay may be possible at the discretion of the Chief Executive. Applications for leave without pay must be discussed in the first instance with your Manager, and then made in writing to the relevant Director. If the Director agrees, they will recommend to the Chief Executive for approval before leave without pay is granted. For further clarification, please discuss with People and Wellness or Payroll.

Public Holidays

The Council observes public holidays in accordance with the *Holidays Act 2003*. Staff are entitled to those holidays defined in that Act. Where a public holiday falls on a Saturday/Sunday, the following Monday/Tuesday shall be observed as the holiday.

Note

Any period of leave that results in a negative balance (both annual leave and sick leave) must be approved by the Chief Executive in writing.

In addition to annual leave, public holidays, and sick leave, other entitlements may apply (e.g., long-service leave, parental leave, jury service and bereavement leave).

Refer to your employment agreement for further details on holiday and leave entitlements.

4.7.4 Working on statutory holidays

Staff on call, on a statutory holiday but who are not called out are entitled under the *Holidays Act 2003* to:

- pay at normal hourly rate for statutory day
- a full alternative day (the Alternative Holiday, shown as AH on your Leave Balance, is automatically calculated in Payroll processing).
- Officers on call on a statutory holiday and who are called out are entitled under the *Holidays Act 2003* to:
 - pay at time-and-a-half for hours worked; plus the balance of the unworked hours (up to 7.5 hours) for that day, paid at the normal hourly rate
 - a full alternative day (the Alternative Holiday, shown as AH on your Leave Balance, is automatically calculated in Payroll processing).

If the hours worked on a statutory holiday (at a time-and-a-half rate) do not make up a full day's work (7.5 hours), the balance of unworked hours are met by the employer so that the total equates to a normal work day (7.5 hours) and the worked hours only are paid at time-and-a-half (see example).

Example

If you work two hours on a statutory holiday, Council will pay two hours at time-and-a-half (a total of 3 hours) plus an alternative day to be added to your alternate hours balance. You will also be paid for the remaining 5.5 hours (7.5 hour day less 2 hours worked) at your normal hourly rate.

Note: Alternative Hours must be taken as a full day by law.

However, unless on call, a staff member is not to work on a statutory holiday without the prior written approval of their Manager.

The three (3) days between Christmas and New Years are not statutory holidays. If required to work on these days and be on call, staff will take their annual leave at a suitably agreed later time. There is no extra pay for the time worked.

4.7.5 Working extraordinary hours

In accordance with your employment agreement, if a staff member is required to work substantial extraordinary hours as determined by the Council, the Council, may at its discretion make payment to that staff member in the form of payment or some other form of compensation (e.g. time-in-lieu).

Extraordinary hours required to be worked will only be worked with the approval of the staff member's Manager and will be identified as an Extraordinary Event as soon as practicable. Extraordinary events require a staff member to work substantially additional hours (outside the norm) and are typically associated with a special and or uncommon event, e.g., national oil spill responses, biosecurity incursion responses, emergency management responses.

The Chief Executive will consider the following matters when determining matters of compensation for extraordinary hours worked:

- Additional hours worked
- The staff member's performance
- The nature and scale of the disruption to the staff member's professional and personal circumstances.

The Chief Executive will advise the staff member as soon as practicable of their determination on the matter of compensation for extraordinary hours worked. This determination may include deferring the decision to a more appropriate time.

4.7.6 Timesheets

Staff are paid fortnightly. Timesheets must be submitted to your Manager no later than 4.30pm every second Friday afternoon. The only exceptions to this (other than in the event a staff member is on sick or bereavement leave that day) is for staff who are on-call and/or working through the weekend. In this instance, these staff members must complete their timesheets up until the Friday, with any time worked over the weekend added and submitted for approval by 9.00am on Monday morning. Your pay will be available from your bank account on the following Thursday.

Timesheets are prepared electronically using Origen Web. At the end of each day, you should record your time against appropriate job numbers on your time sheet. At the end of each fortnightly pay period you should:

- check your job numbers/hours to ensure accuracy (the Council operates a cost recovery system and it is important that you have correctly identified the job you have been working on and the hours worked); and
- submit your timesheet for your Manager's review and approval.

Your timesheet must accurately reflect the hours worked each day and the jobs worked on. Flexible time accrued and used should be accurately reflected on your timesheet. Deliberately incorrect or misleading timesheets will be treated as misconduct or potentially serious misconduct.

4.7.7 Privacy for staff when discussing confidential payroll matters

Staff seeking to discuss payroll matters with the Payroll Specialist **in private** are to schedule an appointment. This is to provide the Payroll Specialist with sufficient time to set up a private room for the discussion.

4.7.8 Payslips

Payslips will be emailed to all staff on the Thursday following the fortnightly pay. They can then be printed off as required. Payslips will be emailed to personal email addresses when supplied, or to work email addresses as a default. There will be no hardcopies of payslips provided. In addition, staff with the "MyPay" App on their phones will be notified via the App when their pay has been processed and transferred into their bank account.

4.8 Flexible Working Arrangements

Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) believes that our staff are committed to their role, their team and to ultimately serving the Taranaki community in the best way possible. In line with the organisation's values, we want to provide a working environment that is flexible, sustainable, supportive and responsive to change. We aim to provide a balance between work and personal life and recognise the importance of wellbeing.

The Flexible Working Arrangement policy is based on the premise that there is benefit to both the employer and employee from having flexible working arrangements in place.

If a staff member is able to fulfil their work requirements from home and have a safe and effective work station, then working from home may be an option. TRC will provide the opportunity for the staff member and their people leader to have an open discussion about requests to work from home and the options that may work for both parties. In any case, the needs of the role and of the organisation will be a key determining factor in any decision as well as the impact on other staff members.

The intention is to reach a mutually beneficial agreement on any request for flexible working. However, if agreement cannot be reached there must be recognition that flexible working is not an entitlement and at the discretion of TRC.

Flexible Working Principles

- Works for the role: Across the TRC we have many different types of work and roles. The staff member's people leader will consider each request for working from home on a case by case basis, taking into account the benefits and impacts for the individual, role requirements, the wider team and the organisation. Genuine business reasons may mean that some types of flexibility cannot be provided for some roles. However, TRC will endeavour to maintain fair and equitable flexible working arrangements across the organisation.
- Works for the team: Flexibility requires some give and take between staff, people leaders and their teams. Staff need to be open and adaptable so that it works for everyone within the team, for the team as a collective and the organisation. In this regard consideration needs to be given to ensure that any arrangement does not disrupt team cohesion, effective working relationships or the ability to work as a collective when required.
- Consideration will also be given to the extra workload created for office-based team members when others work away from the office. This refers to tasks that cannot be effectively completed from home or which require a physical presence in the office.

- Works for stakeholders: Flexible working needs to work for our stakeholders, customers and community. This means that the impact of flexible arrangements on our ability to respond to customer queries in a timely and effective way also needs to be considered.
- Requires give and take: There may be periods of time when it is not suitable to work from home and field or office based commitments need to take priority. In this regard it is expected that staff will make themselves available in the office to attend training, in-person meetings and on-site appointments with the Occupational Health Nurse. Equally, there may be other periods of time where it is more suitable to work from home over a few days to encourage undisturbed, deep work and facilitate concentration.
- Prior Approval: Flexible working and working from home will in all cases require the prior approval of the staff member's Manager, unless agreed otherwise.
- Addressing issues: If there are issues with the flexible working arrangements, the relevant people leader will discuss these with the staff member to try to reach a resolution. An example of this might be where work targets are not being met or non-attendance when the staff member is required to be in the office for a specific reason (e.g. training). If the matter cannot be resolved, the staff member's people leader will discuss other options which may include reverting to a standard working pattern.
- Mandatory Working from Home: Staff will in most instances work flexibly because it is their preference to do this. However, there may be times where TRC might require team members to work from home, such as in the case of a pandemic lockdown, where the office is being refurbished, or in the case of a permanent hybrid working model. In this situation, TRC will provide reasonable support to enable mandatory working from home, such as loan equipment and technology where this is required.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- The Council is responsible for ensuring that the workplace is safe, and we will provide any reasonable assistance to attempt to achieve this. As such, the staff's environment at home may need to be assessed to ensure the Council is fulfilling these responsibilities. At a minimum, the Council may require all staff to submit a photo of their home workstation to the Wellness and Risk Adviser.
- It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure that they have access to the office equipment necessary to fulfil their working duties, to support a healthy ergonomic arrangement and appropriate working conditions whilst working from home. This would include addressing any issues that might be identified through a formal ergonomic assessment that TRC might have completed.
- Staff are responsible for immediately reporting any concerns they may have with their home work space set up or if they experience any discomfort while working away from the office.
- It is the staff's responsibility to ensure their home computer and internet access are reliable, sufficient and secure, and to maintain a safe workspace that is, for example, free from obstacles and tripping hazards, that is well lit, not draughty, and that does not otherwise potentially create an unsafe working environment or risk of harm.

- If a staff member is sick or injured and is well enough to work at home unhindered, they may request to have a work from home day rather than taking sick leave. If the staff member is too sick to work, is in pain or should be resting and recovering, then sick leave must be taken.
- Working from home should not be treated as an alternative to childcare. If staff are at home with a sick or injured child or dependent and they are unable to work unhindered, then they should be on sick leave.
- When working from home the normal flexi time working arrangements continue to apply, including the ability to attend a personal appointment during the day, provided this does not unreasonably disrupt working commitments.
- Regular work breaks should be taken when working from home and hours of work should be reasonable and in accordance with Councils acceptable standards.
- The staff member is responsible for ensuring that when working from home there are safeguards in place to maintain confidentiality in accordance with the Councils expectations and standards.

Logistics

- Being well connected and maintaining regular contact with others while working from home will ensure a successful flexible working environment. When working from home, the staff member must ensure they "BOB" out as 'WFH'. If the employee is working from home and will be away from their workstation for more than half an hour this should be noted on "BOB" (e.g. local appointment).
- Phone calls will be directed through to staff via Councils 3CX system. The staff member is responsible for ensuring they have downloaded and set up the app on their mobile device.
- If a staff member is a designated driver of a Council vehicle, they must make an effort to ensure the car is available for others to use and provide as much notice as possible. This could be by posting on the 'Car Pool' workplace chat.
- The Council is not responsible for meeting additional expenses that might arise from staff working from home. The normal remuneration policy as outlined in *Working for TRC* continues to apply.
- In the situation where individuals are regularly working from home, the Council may consider implementing "shared" workspaces rather than allocated desks in the office.

The expectation is that travel to and from the office is not completed during working hours. This includes situations when an individual is working part of the day from home or another location away from the office.

Requesting further flexible working arrangements

Under the Employment Relations Act 2000, you have the right to request changes to your work arrangements, place, hours, or days and the Council must consider your request. This includes the ability to request short term flexible working arrangements if you have been affected by domestic violence.

Please go to <https://www.employment.govt.nz/workplace-policies/productive-workplaces/flexible-work/> for more information or speak to the People and Wellness Manager. In the first instance, you can talk to your People Leader about any potential changes.

In the event of a dispute over a request for a flexible working arrangement, the Council will work with you in good faith to attempt to resolve matters.

Guidance form for People Leaders to communicate work expectations

Guide only, more or less may be required based on team requirements.

Frodo #3041365

Flexible Working Arrangement Policy – People Leaders (PL) Expectations Guide	
'Normal' work expectations	<p><i>PL to communicate team expectations for standard working week/environment: Field work vs office work, working from home arrangements pre and post field visits, responding to customer queries, staff training and team meetings etc.</i></p> <p><i>Consideration should also be given to establishing agreed all-in office days on which all members of the team and/or directorate would be expected to be in the office to facilitate collaboration with their colleagues.</i></p> <p><i>The arrangements proposed to be put in place for each team should be discussed with the Leadership Team for each Directorate.</i></p>
Health and Safety	<p><i>Have a discussion with the staff member about their working arrangements at home. Consideration should be given to:</i></p> <p><i>Ensuring there is an appropriate ergonomic environment</i> <i>Checking it is possible to appropriately separate their work and home activities so as to avoid, for example, interruptions</i> <i>The workspace is kept clear and free from obstacles or tripping hazards</i> <i>The employee can take regular breaks</i></p>
'WFH' expectations	
Clarification	<p><i>PL to take team through TRC WFH policy to ensure understanding of policy and TRC expectations, before developing and communicating team specific expectations.</i></p>
Notification	<p><i>PL to set out expectations for individuals and team. For example, to be notified in advance of day planned to be worked from home, including any planned variation from 7.30am to 5.00pm working hours – in person, call, text, email, WP message.</i></p>
Approval	<p><i>PL to provide approval or alternative (defer/decline) based on flexible working principles i.e. what is best for role, team and the community.</i></p>

Visibility	<i>Staff member working from home required to 'bob out' WFH with best contact phone number.</i>
Availability	<i>Unless agreed/required staff should be as contactable when working from home as they would be in the office (via remote means). This includes being available via 3CX.</i>
Exceptions	<i>PL to communicate that there may be tasks that require more days work in the office (or WFH) in a single week and these situations are to be arranged/agreed as required.</i>
Review	<i>Standard working and WFH expectations will be reviewed and may be amended if required</i>

4.9 Remuneration Review Process

The Council strives to provide market based staff salaries. This section sets out how salaries are reviewed at the Council.

General Market Adjustment

Every staff member on the Collective Agreement gets a salary increase each year, effective 1 July (the start of the new financial year). This increase has been negotiated by the Staff Association on behalf of all staff every three years, and is called the General Market Adjustment (GMA). This adjustment is made in accordance with the percentage change in the immediate preceding March quarter from the same quarter of the previous year of the *Local Government Sector, Index of Salary and Ordinary Time Wage Rates* as published by Statistics New Zealand. It is automatically applied to all members of the Collective Agreement, though the updated remuneration letter must be signed and accepted by the staff member before the increase can be actioned.

The effect of this GMA is that all staff on the Collective get a pay increase every year (provided they want it).

Individual Market Adjustment

After the General Market Adjustment has been applied, the salaries of all Council staff are individually reviewed, following the process set out below. The process may result in an Individual Market Adjustment (IMA), which is in addition to the general market adjustment.

To receive an IMA:

- 1) the staff member must have consistently demonstrated an increase in performance (this may reflect a newer staff member becoming proficient in their role); and/or
- 2) there has been a significant change in the market remuneration for the position.

The market review process involves:

- a) The Council participates in salary surveys twice a year – both with Strategic Pay in their Local Government and their Regional Councils' and Unitary Authorities' surveys, and also with MHR Global (formerly Cubix);

- b) Strategic Pay data is considered the most accurate data for regional councils, with MHR able to provide additional context where available;
- c) Directors check to see if the position described in the survey data continues to accurately reflect Council roles. If these are not aligned, then People and Wellness consider undertaking a position assessment by an independent expert;
- d) People and Wellness provides Directors with details of the remuneration for staff in each section, and includes current salary, kiwi saver contributions, impact of GMA, history of IMA, market data and the IMA section budget. Current salary for each Officer is compared with the benchmark market data for the position.
- e) Directors meet with Managers and carefully undertake the salary review considering the two criteria noted above;
- f) The Chief Executive considers and approves the Director recommendations;
- g) The Chief Executive,, Directors and People and Wellness meet and review the recommendations, challenging these as appropriate, to allow others input given the cross council nature of our work and to achieve consistency across the organisation;
- h) Directors deliver letters to staff setting out any changes;
- i) Staff are given the opportunity to discuss their letter with their Directors and/or Managers; and

So the effect of the IMA is that some staff get a merited additional pay increase over and above the GMA increase that all staff get every year.

The Collective Agreement provides that salaries will not be decreased in a situation where the sector salary information shows that salaries have declined.

All remuneration increases are effective from **1 July** of the specific financial year. The above process will be completed as close to 1 July as possible, and will be backdated to this date if required.

4.10 Personal Memberships of professional organisations

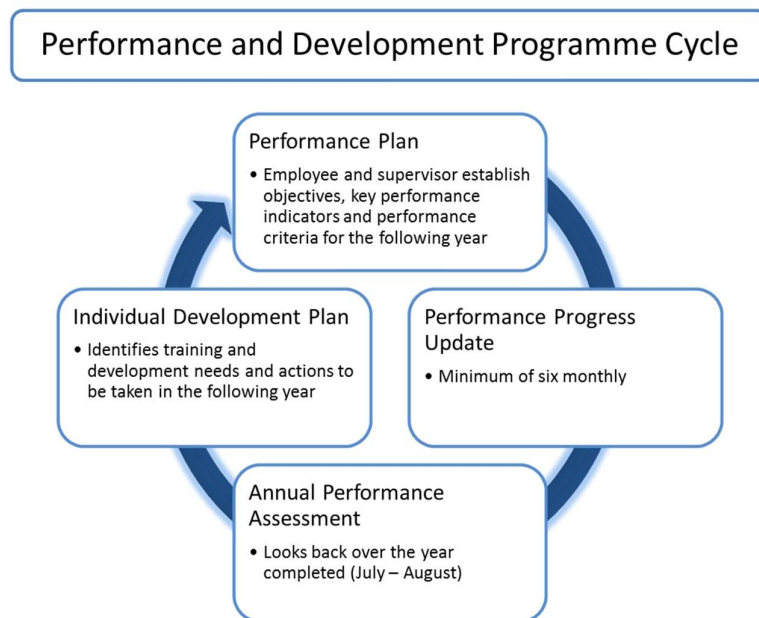
All personal memberships of professional organisations are the personal financial responsibility of the staff member concerned, unless there is a financial benefit to the Council. The Council will only pay for a corporate membership of a professional organisation. All requests will be considered on a case by case basis and must be made through the Financial Services Manager for consistency purposes.

4.11 Personal Development Programme

The Personal Development Programme (PDP) is a process to assist staff professional development and to establish a staff member's responsibilities and priorities for the coming year and to review the staff member's performance over the preceding year.

The PDP is highly participative with assessment and review meetings taking place between a staff member and their Manager. For individual staff members, the PDP will help you understand exactly what your job requires and what your Manager expects of you. You will receive clear feedback on your performance and any concerns the Council has, be able to establish a training and development plan tailored for your own aspirations and needs, and have a clear understanding of the Council's commitment to providing that training. For the Council, the PDP process will ensure that individuals are contributing effectively and efficiently to the successful operation of the Council.

The diagram below outlines the PDP process. For further information on the PDP refer to our *Promapp* process. Further details about training can be found in Section 9.1 of this document.



4.12 Staff development and training

Staff development and training is very important for personal and professional development, and is covered by the staff member and their Manager in the Personal Development Programme process (see Section 4.9).

Training and development refers to any course, seminar, conference, workshop/forum, visit or meeting where costs are charged to training codes. This includes in-house training, extramural study and any other training.

The People and Wellness Administrator coordinates all Corporate Training. All departmental/job specific training is coordinated and organised by the Departmental Secretary and the staff concerned. All training needs to be included in your approved Personal Development Programme. Training other than that included in an approved Personal Development Programme must be approved by the Departmental Director on an individual basis and the Travel and Training Notification/Application form completed, which is located on the TRC Toolbox. It is your responsibility to ensure you have your Director's authorisation if a specific training or development course has not already been signed off as part of your PDP.

Training recorded in Personal Development Programmes (PDP) and completed travel and is recorded in Vault. The purpose of recording this information is so that:

- a comprehensive record of all training can be kept on personal training files for you to access at any time;
- your PDP assessor and/or Director can ascertain at a glance the training you have undertaken during any period.

When you are attending training and development, the Departmental Secretary or People and Wellness Administrator undertakes organising and booking your attendance (including travel, accommodation and other matters). Staff are not to make their own arrangements without the prior agreement of your Manager.

Please refer to 10.5.2 Other out of pocket expenses for guidance around expectations for meals and how to process an expense claim form.

Travel associated with staff development and training

From time-to-time staff attendance (including travel time) at a **training course, conference or seminar** may exceed the normal eight hour workday.

As a general rule, the Council will not compensate staff time above-and-beyond the eight hour work day spent attending such training. In rare circumstances, however, there may be occasion when compensation in the form of flexi-time or time-in-lieu may be appropriate (e.g., extraordinary hours spent travelling, benefits of attendance principally accrue to the Council rather than the individual etc.). In such circumstances, compensation in the form of flexi-time or time-in-lieu is subject to the written approval of the Director – Corporate Services.

Travel associated with meetings and workshops

From time-to-time staff attendance (including travel time) at a **meeting or workshop** may exceed the normal eight hour work day. Where the benefits of attendance at meetings or workshops accrue principally to the Council, staff may be compensated for travel time in the form of flexi-time or time-in-lieu subject to the approval of the staff members Manager.

From time to time, Managers or Directors may request a brief report to be prepared critiquing the training or conference.

4.13 Conflicts of Interest (COI) for Consent Monitoring and Enforcement Officers

This policy concerns the disclosure and management of actual and potential conflicts of interest (COI) for all consent monitoring and enforcement staff. Its fundamental purpose is to be able to demonstrate to the public, openness, transparency and appropriate management of COIs. As such, it also protects members of staff and consequently the Council, when a COI arises.

It is important to note that a COI does not, in itself, reflect that anyone has done anything wrong. Nor does the existence of a COI necessarily require that any more than disclosure, and documentation of that disclosure, occurs. The appropriate response to a COI requires case by case consideration.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- create a framework for staff decision-making that avoids actual or perceived conflict of interest
- minimise the risks where a conflict of interest exists
- ensure staff are free from any personal, commercial, financial, political or other pressures (including threats) that might affect their actual or perceived ability to make independent decisions.

This policy provides guidance for staff as to where a COI may arise (and therefore how to avoid a COI) and a mechanism for ensuring that any actual or potential COI is disclosed and managed appropriately.

A conflict of interest can arise where two different interests overlap. This policy is designed to manage conflicts of interest surrounding decision-making by staff. These decisions can be in undertaking functions relating to the:

- processing of resource consent applications
- monitoring and assessment of compliance; and
- dealing with non-compliance.

For the purposes of this policy, a conflict of interest is defined as a situation where a staff member's duties or responsibilities could be, or could reasonably be perceived to be, affected by some other interest or duty that the staff member may have.

Conflict of interest exists in any situation in which any decision, action or activity through the individual's employment, business, investments, or personal situation could:

- directly or indirectly detriment the reputation or interests, of the Council, its staff, or any of its elected members; or
- directly or indirectly benefit:
 - the individual; or
 - other staff of the Council or its elected members; or
 - any member of the individual's immediate family or any other person with whom the individual has a material or business interest; or
 - any business or community organisation in which the individual (or any member of the individual's immediate family, or any other person with whom the individual has a material or business interest) has a material or business interest.

The term "conflict of interest" includes material or non-material conflicts, actual or potential conflicts, and real or perceived conflicts.

In the discharge of their official duties, officers shall not undertake the following without the written approval of their Manager:

- Process any consent application they have an interest in
- Process an application where they have provided the applicant with specialist technical advice or recommendations concerning the design of their proposal.
 - Note: the intention of this item is to avoid situations where the processing officer is inherently conflicted because they are evaluating a proposal which they themselves have recommended or assisted in designing. This is distinct from providing information, or suggesting alternatives, or discussing the merits of alternatives with an applicant - none of which should give rise to a COI. In any of these situations however, it is important that the officer does not cross the line into recommending solutions/alternatives or assisting in the design of proposals.
- Process any application they have prepared themselves
- Sign any certificates or approve anything they have an interest in

- Expedite or provide special treatment, to the detriment of other applications, to any application they have an interest in
- Monitor any projects they have an interest in
- Position themselves to gain personal benefit directly or indirectly through any work activity where they can influence decisions or affect the outcome of any decision-making
- Gain personal benefit, or enable others to benefit from information that is not generally available to the public and is acquired in their official capacity
- Accept payment related to projects they have an interest in
- Participate in negotiating or giving final approval to contracts or agreements between the Council and other organisations that they have an interest in.
- Extend gratuities or special favours to employees of any business, agency or entity which stands to gain financially or otherwise, from gaining contracts or work from the Council. This includes other officers of the Council and its elected members
- Investigate any non-compliance involving any activity or project they have an interest in; and
- Be involved in any reporting or decision-making in respect of non-compliance involving any activity or project they have an interest in.

Where a conflict of interest is identified by any person involved in consents, monitoring and enforcement it must be declared to their Manager as soon as practicably.

The Manager, in liaison with the relevant staff member, will determine the appropriate action, if any, in response to the COI. The Director of the section should also be notified. Simply identifying or declaring a conflict of interest is not usually enough. Further steps might be required to remove any possibility or perception of an official role being used for private benefit. The action to be taken will depend upon the circumstances of the situation, in particular whether the conflict of interest is considered to be real or perceived.

Where there is discretion as to the action required, the following may, depending upon the situation, be considered:

- Taking no action
- Enquiring as to whether all affected parties will consent to the staff member's involvement
- Seeking a formal exemption to allow participation (if such a legal power applies)
- Imposing additional oversight or review over the staff member
- Withdrawing from discussing or voting on a particular item of business at a meeting
- Exclusion from a committee or working group dealing with the issue
- Re-assigning certain tasks or duties to another person
- Agreement or direction not to do something
- Withholding certain confidential information, or placing restrictions on access to information
- Transferring the official (temporarily or permanently) to another position or project
- Relinquishing the private interest; or
- Resignation from one or other position or entity.

4.14 Koha

The Council has a policy on, and controls over giving Koha.

Refer to document #1297267 for the full Koha policy.

4.15 Recognising achievements

Gifts and/or events to recognise significant milestones or achievements by staff are permitted.

Expenditure in this area should not be extravagant or inappropriate. Moderation should be exercised at all times and should be pre-approved by a Manager, Departmental Director or the Chief Executive.

An identical approach is to be applied to team and Council wide events

5 Health and safety in the workplace

Staff will comply with relevant health and safety legislation and Codes of Practices. Staff will also comply with Council-specific health and safety policies and procedures set out in the Council's *Workplace Health & Safety Guidelines*, *Operating Manual for Field Staff*, and any other relevant procedural documentation, including, but not limited to, the procedures below.

5.1 Staff location and reporting in

Staff are required to comply with the following safeguards:

- No staff will put themselves at risk
- The Council does not expect and will not require staff to put themselves at risk
- Managers are directly responsible to the Council for the proper and safe execution of tasks
- Staff must properly record their absence from the office on Bob and location boards (if location boards used by section) along with estimated return times. Ensure your Manager or fellow team members have sufficient detail of your location to initiate search and rescue if necessary
- Staff issued with personal locator beacons must carry them on their person at all times during field work
- Staff will advise reception (or through the After Hours Service when the office is closed) should the estimated return times change
- When working in the field outside ordinary office hours (including at night), staff will remain in contact and advise reception (or through the After Hours service when the office is closed) when they have returned home (as per the procedure outlined in 10.4.2 Communication Facilities Available)
- Staff onsite at the Cloten Road between the hours of 5pm and 7am weekdays and on weekends and public holidays are to advise the After Hours Call Centre by telephoning 06 765 7127. Staff must advise of their arrival and anticipated departure time. Staff must then advise the After Hours Call Centre when they leave the premises
- Staff should follow any departmental specific health and safety processes.

Standards of safeguards must be increased in direct proportion to increased risk. These instructions are particularly applicable to those undertaking potentially hazardous work (eg, tidal work) or working alone in isolated areas.

5.2 Children on Site

The Council supports being a family friendly workplace, however due to the potential health and safety risks, the following rules must be followed at all times:

- You must have your Manager's approval to have children on site.
- All visitors (and anyone over the age of 12) must sign in at the front desk
- Children under the age of 12 must be fully supervised and signed in by their caregiver
- The caregiver supervising the children must be sensitive and respect the needs of other workers and ensure that the behaviour of their children is not disruptive to others
- Children are only allowed beside their caregiver's desk, reception, canteen and toilets. Children shouldn't be running up or down the corridors/stairs or sliding down bannisters.
- When leaving the site, all persons must sign out. For children under 12 years of age the caregiver must sign out on their behalf.

Restricted Areas include; laboratory, workshops, bird cage, kitchen, sick bay

There will never be exceptions to the following rules:

- Children under the age of 15 must not be out in the field with their caregiver
- Children under the age of 15 must not be kept in the Council vehicles while their caregiver is doing work

If your child is over the age of 15 and you require them with you in the field, you will need permission from your Manager and the People and Wellness team.

Childcare

Managers should be flexible in granting leave or alternative flexible working arrangements to staff who need to make emergency child care arrangements when unforeseen problems arise.

Children under the age of 15 and anyone else should not be onsite if they are sick. Care for sick children should be arranged under the staff member's entitlement to sick leave or flexible working arrangements.

5.3 Reporting work place accidents

The Council places a high priority on ensuring that work hazards to safety and health are eliminated, minimised through the provision and use of appropriate safety equipment and procedures. ALL work-related accidents, especially those which have harmed, or might have harmed ('near misses') any staff member or person at the workplace or involved in Council activities, must be promptly recorded in the Council's Accident Register (Vault) either online or through the People and Wellness team.

Health and Safety Committee

The Council implements a Health and Safety Employee Participation System. The purpose of this system is to provide opportunities for staff to participate effectively in the on-going process for improving health and safety in the workplace.

As part of this system, the Council operates a Health and Safety Committee, which has the task of overseeing, implementing and reviewing/monitoring occupational health and safety requirements. Membership of the Committee consists of the Departmental Director/s, union representatives and representatives from each department within the Council or any other interested staff member.

5.4 Protective clothing and equipment

Staff will be provided with all necessary protective clothing and equipment (PPE) to meet specific needs associated with their duties. Protective clothing and equipment includes gloves, gumboots and safety shoes, waders, safety helmets, earmuffs, safety spectacles and goggles, breathing protection, overalls, dust coats, parkas, over-trousers, shower/rain proof jackets. However, other specialist items may be required from time to time (e.g. dealing with an oil spill or other emergency).

All protective clothing and equipment is provided through the Council's Facilities Coordinator. The following procedure applies in relation to the issuing of protective clothing and equipment:

- for each Council staff member, PPE issued will be recorded in the Council's health and safety database detailing what, when and the cost of protective clothing and equipment issued
- prior to any PPE being issued, a 'Request for personal protective clothing' form shall be completed, which is located on the TRC Toolbox, duly authorised by their Manager, and provided to the Facilities Coordinator for action
- any disputes over requests shall be referred to the appropriate Departmental Director
- requests for replacement clothing or equipment shall be accompanied by the article being replaced (if available)
- all protective clothing or equipment remains the property of the Council. Upon cessation of employment, all protective clothing shall be returned to the Facilities Coordinator, with the exception of footwear worn for more than 15 weeks, which may then become the property of the staff member.

5.5 Compliance with Health and Safety Policies

Staff are given guidelines and training on Council's health and safety procedures as part of their induction. Training and health and safety updates should be identified as part of each staff member's Development Plan with their PDP.

Staff are required to comply with the Council's health and safety policies and practices at all times.

5.6 Health monitoring and wellness

New staff will have a pre-employment medical before commencement of duties for benchmarking purposes.

The Council will meet the cost of annual eyesight assessments for all staff through the Council's health monitoring programme.

New staff should have an equivalent eyesight assessment on commencement of duties for benchmarking purposes.

Should the annual eyesight assessment result in a referral to an optometrist for further testing, the Council will pay for the cost of the initial optometrist assessment. The Council will also pay up to \$100 towards the cost of corrective lenses if the examining optician certifies that work undertaken at the Council has contributed to a need for such lenses whilst in the employ of the Council. The optometrist must invoice the Council directly. A purchase order must be raised by the staff member and approved by the People and Wellness Manager.

The Council will also offer audiometric (hearing) and spirometry (lung function) tests for officers issued with hearing or respiratory protection for their role. Should the annual testing result in a referral to a specialist medical professional due to work undertaken at the Council, the Council will consider meeting these costs on a case by case basis.

The Council will also offer all staff influenza vaccinations annually at no charge.

The Council also sets up an in-house Skin Check Clinic annually. The clinics involve a specialist performing a thorough head-to-toe skin check. This includes identification and imaging of any

moles and other lesions showing features of skin cancer for subsequent expert dermatologist diagnosis. The Council funds 50% of the costs involved.

The Council provides an onsite gym for use by all staff.

5.7 Impairment

To ensure that the Council is identifying and managing the risks arising from being impaired while at work.

Impairment can be caused by a number of factors including but not limited to alcohol, illicit or prescription drugs, fatigue, stress, anxiety, poor levels of health and wellbeing, the work environment and distraction.

The Council has a legal obligation under the *Health and Safety at Work Act 2015* to ensure the health and safety of all employees, contracted workers, visitors and others at all its workplaces. All staff have a legal obligation to ensure their own personal safety and to ensure that no action or inaction on their part affects the health and safety of others.

The Council is committed to maintaining a healthy and safe work environment that is not compromised by drug and alcohol use, health conditions, stress and being fatigued.

Impairment can impact on a staff's ability to do their job safely and create a significant risk of injury and death to the impaired worker, co-workers, and members of the public. Impairment can have many causes, but the most common substance-related causes of impairment in the workplace are the use of the following:

- Alcohol
- Recreational cannabis
- Illegal drugs
- Prescription drugs
- Over-the-counter medications

This policy extends to all persons on Council property and persons conducting work on behalf of the Council, including our staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors.

It covers:

- The use and misuse of illegal drugs, prescription medication, alcohol, or any other substance where such use or misuse creates a potential or actual risk to health and safety.
- Provision of alcohol at council functions and on council premises
- Consumption of alcohol while representing council at external functions
- Reasonable cause and post incident drug testing

Staff should be aware that they have responsibilities for managing impairment, including the following:

- Making sure that their ability to work safely is not impaired by alcohol, drugs, or other causes
- Not working if their impairment may endanger themselves or anyone else
- Notifying their Manager if their ability to work safely is impaired for any reason
- Notifying their Manager if they see someone who appears to be impaired

5.7.1 Prohibited behaviour

The Council strictly prohibits the following:

- Working or conducting Council business whilst impaired, or at the risk of being impaired by alcohol or other drugs
- Consuming, using, supplying or possessing drugs at a Council workplace except prescription or over the counter medication that have no negative impact on a staff member's ability to safely carry out their duties
- Using, supplying, or possessing drug paraphernalia on Council premises
- Consuming alcohol at a Council workplace or during working hours, including paid breaks, except at an approved employee or social club function.
- Driving a Council vehicle whilst impaired, or the risk of being impaired by alcohol or other drugs at any time

5.7.2 Social events

As per section 9.1.2 of the *Working for the Taranaki Regional Council, consumption of liquor on Council premise is not permitted without the prior approval of the Chief Executive.*

In all cases, either on or off-site, the event organiser is responsible for ensuring that good host principles are followed. This includes:

- Serving a range of alternative drinks including low alcohol and non-alcoholic beverage; and
- Providing food to last throughout the function
- Ensuring that anyone who is believed to be at risk impairment of alcohol or drugs does not return to work or drive a vehicle
- Making appropriate arrangements to ensure that anyone who may be at risk of impairment has suitable transport arrangements to get home safely

Staff must behave lawfully, appropriately and responsibly. This includes making sure that they remain in a condition to be able to get home safely and ensuring that if they are required to work the following day, that they are not in breach of this policy.

5.7.3 Reasonable cause testing

Testing may be carried out if the Council has reasonable cause to suspect that a staff member is working under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Reasonable cause for testing can be established if a staff member's behaviour, actions or conduct suggest they are under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. Indications of the types of behaviours, actions or conduct that may lead to a test under reasonable cause include, but are not limited to the table below:

Physical Signs	Behaviour Change
Sweating	Excessive talking
Weight loss	Poor coordination and concentration
Chills or shivering	Lack of energy and motivation

Physical deterioration and change in appearance such as dilated or pinned pupils, blurred vision, droopy eye-lids, bloodshot eyes, slow and slurred speech, slow gait	Changes in alertness, e.g. falling asleep, attention span difficulty, problems with short-term memory
Feigning sickness or emergencies to get out of work early	Unpredictable behaviour, arguments and sudden outbursts
Strong smell of alcohol or cannabis on the person	Withdrawal from workmates
Continual minor incidents or mistakes	Fighting or arguments in the workplace
Increased health problems or complaints about health	Regular absenteeism with or without a identifiable pattern
Poor hygiene	Frequent taking time away from the work place during working hours
Personal	Performance
Increase aggression	Frequent absence or lateness
High anxiety	Changes in attitude
Appears stressed	Poor time-keeping
Denial of issues	Careless and frequent accidents
Depression	Repeated concerns about, or an unexplained poor performance or achievement
Paranoia	Going to car, lunchroom or rest-room more than necessary or normal
Family/domestic issues	
Money problems e.g. frequently asking to borrow money from colleagues	

More phone calls/visitors during working hours	
--	--

Before reasonable cause testing may occur, the Manager must liaise with their Director and either the People and Wellness Manager or the Wellness and Risk Adviser on whether there is a reasonable cause to test. A member of the Staff Association is required to be involved (if available) to ensure the process is fair and reasonable.

5.7.4 Drug and alcohol testing

Drug testing will be carried out by an approved accredited provider in accordance with the relevant testing procedures and under the current Australian/New Zealand Standards AS/NZ 4308:2008 *"Procedures for specimen collection and the detection and quantitation of drugs of abuse in urine"* and 4760:2019 CH-039 *Detection of Drugs in Oral Fluids* and any future updates. Testing may take place at an accredited designated mobile site or at an accredited provider's premises. The type of testing will be determined by the recommendations below:

- Reasonable Cause – oral fluid testing
- Reasonable Cause Delayed (next working day) – urine testing
- Post incident/post-accident (same day) – oral fluid testing
- Post incident/post-accident (next working day) – urine testing

For drugs/metabolites (a substance made or used when the body breaks down drugs/chemicals) not listed in the AS/NZS 4308:2008 and 4760:2019, the laboratory will determine what the appropriate cut-off concentration is and advise TRC.

5.7.5 Breath alcohol testing

Breath Alcohol testing will be carried out by an approved accredited provider using an breath-alcohol testing device which complies with the Australian Standard AS3547-1997 *"Breath Alcohol Testing devices for personal use"*. Testing may take place at an accredited designated mobile site or at an accredited provider's premises.

New Zealand current legal limits apply.

5.7.6 Post incident testing

Post Incident testing may be required if there is an incident, accident, near miss, plant, vehicle or property damage involving potential to compromise health and safety standards when a staff member's actions, or lack of action, may have been a direct or indirect contributing factor.

5.7.7 Refusal to provide specimen

If a staff member is required to take a drug and/or alcohol test and refuses to do so, they should first explain the refusal. The Council will consider any explanation given. If the Council considers the explanation is unreasonable in the circumstances, the refusal will be treated as a positive result and may lead to disciplinary action.

5.7.8 Dilute/Invalid result

If a staff member provides a specimen that is "dilute" the staff member shall be given the opportunity to explain the dilute result. The staff member may be provided with one further opportunity to provide a specimen within 24 hours that is not "dilute". This may mean the staff member needing to reduce their fluid intake during this period. This specimen may be an "observed" specimen. If the second specimen is also "dilute" the Council may take disciplinary action.

Dilute – to make the specimen weaker.

5.7.9 Cheating on a drug and/or alcohol test

If a staff member "cheats" on a drug and/or alcohol test or attempts to compromise the integrity of a specimen when taking a test, or where the person conducting the testing has reasonable grounds to suspect that the staff member has tampered with a specimen, the staff member will first be given the opportunity to immediately explain the reason.

The staff member may be provided with one further opportunity to provide a specimen. This specimen may be an "observed" specimen.

Examples of "cheating" include providing a specimen that is not their own, providing an altered specimen, using a masking agent, or providing a specimen that is "cool" (not within acceptable temperature testing range).

If a staff member is found to have cheated on a drug and/or alcohol test this may be deemed to be Serious Misconduct and the Council may take disciplinary action.

5.7.10 Post testing

Stand Down

If a staff member returns a non-negative test or a positive breath alcohol test, the Council may stand them down on ordinary pay until the result is confirmed. If that result is positive, the Council shall be entitled to treat the stand down period as annual leave. If a staff member believes they have returned a false positive, they are able to request another test – this is to be a urine test.

Rehabilitation

If a staff member returns a positive test, the Council may permit them to continue their employment, subject to the requirement that they undertake a Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Programme. This may or may not be funded by the Council. Failure to take part or complete the programme may result in disciplinary action.

If a staff member enters rehabilitation and fails subsequent drug and/or alcohol tests, this could result in further disciplinary action.

5.7.11 Employee assistance

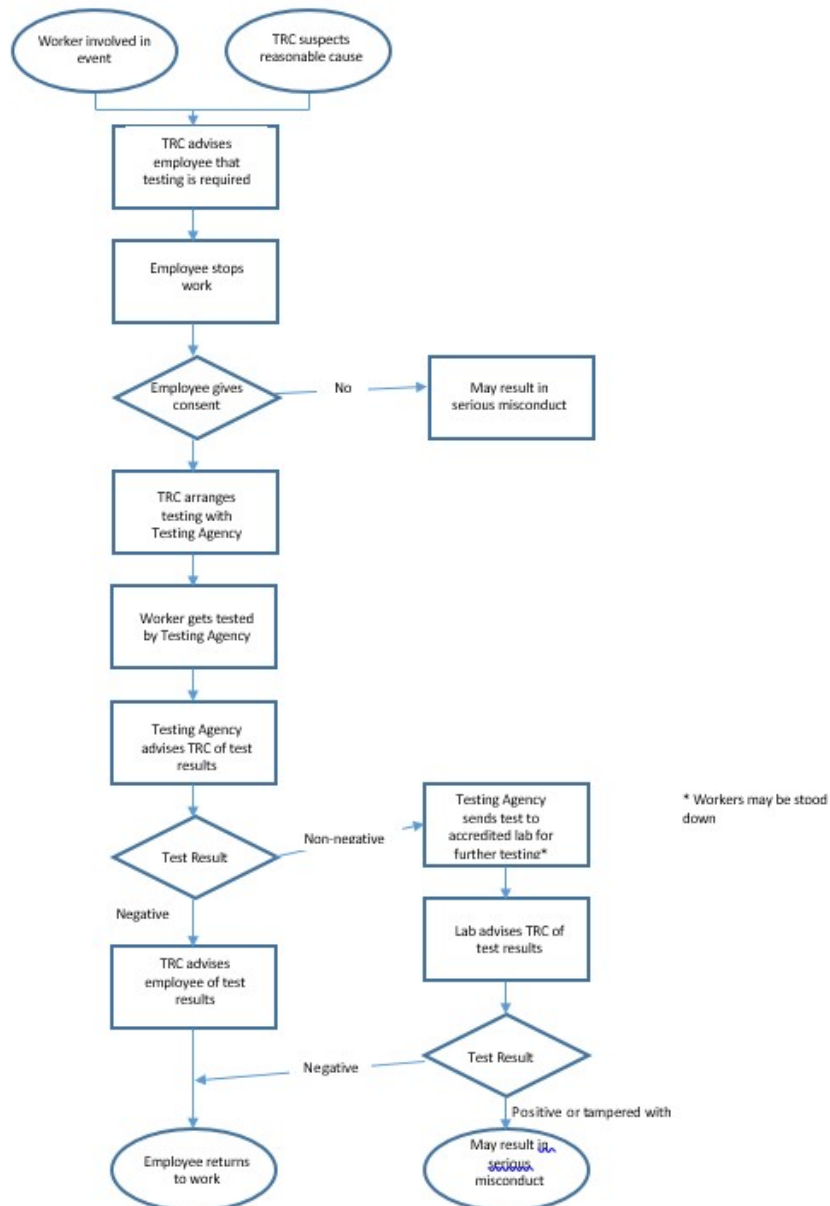
If a staff member thinks a drug or alcohol problem could be affecting their work, the Council encourages them to ask for help from the People and Wellness team, without fear of reprisal. Discussions will be kept confidential.

5.7.12 Prescribed medications

When a staff member is prescribed medication, they should seek advice on possible side effects that may impair their job performance, or safety (for example; dizziness, fatigue, drowsiness, mood swings, altered perception, or impaired coordination) by consulting their GP.

The staff member should immediately inform their Manager so they can take any necessary steps to provide a safe workplace, or alternative duties if required.

5.7.13 Post-incident or Reasonable cause flow chart



The contents of this flowchart are illustrative only. The policy will prevail if any there are any conflicts

6 Professional and dress standards

People who have dealings with the Council expect the highest standards of service. The Council expects all staff to present themselves to the highest professional standards appropriate for the tasks they will be undertaking. As a minimum this means, staff must, at all times, meet the organisational values set out in section 2.2 of this Document

6.1 Dress Code – Non-Uniform

The Council expects all staff to maintain professional dress standards appropriate for the tasks they will be undertaking. Business casual attire can be worn by all staff (including field staff) when they do not have predominantly customer facing roles or customer appointments. At all other times appropriate corporate attire will be required.

Unacceptable clothing options include:

- Ripped jeans
- Jandals
- Hoodies
- Singlets and t-shirts
- Lycra leggings

Examples of situations where corporate attire will be required include client meetings, council meetings, interviews and public forums/presentations. For clarification, field staff who are representing Council in these types of situations can wear either the uniform or appropriate corporate attire.

Managers will be able to provide guidance for any of their team members who are unsure about the suitability of particular clothing options.

6.2 Dress Code - Uniform

There is a compulsory uniform for all field based staff. This applies to all field staff in:

- Inspectorate
- Environment Services
- Regional Gardens
- Land Management
- Science Services – Science & Technology and Environmental Assurance

The uniform must be worn in full at all times when in the field. As noted in policy 6.1 (above), business casual or corporate attire may be worn at all other times.

Staff who are on-call and out after hours must make every reasonable attempt to wear their uniform when called out.

All clothing fully funded by the Council will remain the property of the Council and must be returned if requested or when the employment relationship has been terminated.

Staff will be provided an initial budget to purchase items from the corporate range when they first start with the Council. Purchases in excess of the budget will be at the staff member's expense.

Each subsequent year, on the anniversary of the staff first purchase there will be an additional budget available for each staff to replace worn out or damaged clothing.

All ordering, purchasing, exchanges and returns will be managed through an individual online account with Booker-Spalding.

The Council further provides a range of corporate clothing at a 50% discount to staff. Purchase of the corporate range is not compulsory. Staff can, as an alternative to the corporate range (and subject to meeting appropriate dress standards), dress to that standard from alternative sources.

The Council also provides all necessary protective clothing and equipment commensurate with the specific needs associated with an officers duties.

6.3 Provision of corporate and protective clothing

Upon engagement as an employee of the Taranaki Regional Council, the Council will provide the staff member a corporate jacket free of charge.

The Council further provides a range of corporate clothing at a 50% discount to staff. Purchase of the corporate range is not compulsory. Staff can, as an alternative to the corporate range (and subject to meeting appropriate dress standards), dress to that standard from alternative sources.

The Council also provides all necessary protective clothing and equipment commensurate with the specific needs associated with a staff member's duties.

7 When things go wrong

7.1 Employee Support Services

It is inevitable that, from time to time, staff will experience problems, sometimes work-related, but often personal, which will impact on work performance and work relationships. Discussions and communication through the lines of management are in the majority of instances the best and quickest way to overcome these problems or their effects in the workplace.

Staff are requested to advise of matters which could be having an adverse effect on their work to allow support to be provided as may be necessary and appropriate.

The Council also has a relationship with Vitae (an employee assistance programme), who provide nationwide access to a team of specialists, independent counsellors, psychologists and mediators. Through this programme, staff can address issues such as:

- personal or workplace stress
- relationship problems
- conflict solutions
- anxiety and depression
- anger or violence
- grief or loss
- harassment
- personal trauma

- addictions
- budgeting.

Staff can confidentially access Vitae at any time on 0508 664981, or complete a self-referral form by accessing www.vitae.co.nz, and receive up to four sessions which the Council will pay for.

7.2 Domestic Violence Leave

The purpose of this policy is to inform staff of their entitlement to Domestic Violence Leave.

The Council is committed to supporting employees who are experiencing domestic violence to continue to participate in the workplace and maintain their employment. In addition, the Council seeks to create a supportive work environment where staff are comfortable in requesting assistance for domestic violence related concerns.

Definitions

Domestic violence is defined as:

- Physical, sexual and psychological abuse, in the latter case abuse such as intimidation, harassment, damage to property, threats of abuse, financial or economic abuse (for example, denying or limiting access to financial resources, or preventing or restricting employment opportunities or access to education).
- Psychological abuse of a child by causing or allowing the child to see or hear the physical, sexual or psychological abuse of someone with whom the child has a domestic relationship with, or putting the child at real risk of seeing or hearing that abuse occurring.
- A single act that could constitute abuse or a number of acts taken together, even if apparently trivial by themselves, might be considered to form a pattern of abuse.

Leave Entitlement

Staff are entitled to access up to ten (10) days per annum of Domestic Violence Leave for the purposes of, and not limited to:

- Seeking medical and legal assistance;
- Attending court appearances;
- Counselling or attending EAP services;
- Relocation;
- To make other safety arrangements; or
- Any other absence relating to experiencing domestic violence.

Requests for domestic family violence leave must be made to the People and Wellness Manager. Depending on the circumstances, and in consultation with you, your Manager may be informed of your requirement for leave. Staff won't be treated adversely because they are, or are suspected to be, a person affected by domestic violence.

Domestic Violence Leave is not recorded through payroll. Instead, an off-line, confidential record is kept by the People and Wellness Manager. This means this leave type will not show up on payslips to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

Domestic Violence Leave is non-cumulative. In addition to Domestic Violence Leave employees can request other untaken leave (annual, sick leave, long service leave) that is available to the staff member.

The Council is permitted to request staff to provide proof they are affected by domestic violence.

Unpaid leave will be available to staff who are supporting a victim of domestic violence to go with them to court, to hospital or to mind children (at the discretion of their Manager).

Flexible Working Arrangements

Any staff experiencing domestic violence may make a short term (not more than two (2) months) request for a change in their working arrangements. The request may include a change of duties, hours, days and place of work, or any other variation the staff member thinks would help them deal with the effects of domestic violence. Please talk to the People and Wellness Manager in the first instance if this is a suitable option.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is critical. If necessary to disclose information to others, we would obtain informed consent in advance and limit disclosure. While primarily managed by the People and Wellness Manager, your Manager may be involved to ensure you are supported appropriately, but privacy and confidentiality is maintained at all times.

Support Services

There are a number of support services available to anyone who is experiencing domestic violence including:

ARE YOU OK?

0800 456 450

www.areyouok.org.nz

AVIVA

0800 28482 669

www.avivafamilies.org.nz

EAP SERVICES

0800 327 669

www.eapservices.co.nz

FINDSUPPORT (ACC FUNDED)

0800 735 566

www.findsupport.co.nz

FREE COUNSELLING LINE

1737

www.1737.org.nz

NZ POLICE

Dial 111 (Emergency situations)
06 759 5500 (New Plymouth Police Station)
06 765 8860 (Stratford Police Station)

SAFE TO TALK HE PAI KIT E KORERO

0800 044 334
www.safetotalk.nz

SHINE HELPLINE

0508 744 633
www.2shine.org.nz/contact

VICTIM SUPPORT

0800 842 846
www.victimsupport.org.nz

WOMEN'S REFUGE

0800 733 843
www.womensrefuge.org.nz

Also, a secure non traceable site (green and white computer screen) is provided at the bottom number of NZ organisations websites, some of which are listed below. This is a safe place, not recorded in your browser history, where a person can ask for help.

- ASB Bank
- Countdown
- EAP Services
- IRD
- Tower
- The Warehouse
- TradeMe



7.3 Anti-Bullying and Harassment

Taranaki Regional Council is committed to providing a positive and diverse workplace culture that is free from all forms of bullying and harassment. The Council regards bullying and harassment of any kind as unacceptable.

Staff are expected to conduct themselves with integrity and in a reasonable manner that does not create a risk to another person's safety or well-being. The Council has adopted the definitions provided by WorkSafe New Zealand with regard to workplace bullying.

7.3.1 Anti-bullying

WorkSafe New Zealand defines workplace bullying as repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that can lead to physical or psychological harm.

Unresolved bullying can not only cause harm to those who are victims of such behaviour, it can also have significantly negative impact on the workplace. It can lead to conflict, contribute to absenteeism, staff turnover, result in a loss of productivity, and create a dysfunctional working environment.

Because of the harm it can cause, workplace bullying is considered to be a serious health and safety issue.

Repeated behaviour is persistent (occurs more than once) and can involve a range of actions over time.

Unreasonable behaviour means actions that a reasonable person in the same circumstance would see as unreasonable. It includes victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening a person.

Bullying may also include harassment, discrimination or violence.

A single incident of unreasonable behaviour will not be considered bullying but could escalate if ignored.

Examples of workplace bullying can include:

- Belittling remarks
- Ignoring or isolating behaviour
- Ridiculing or insulting behaviour
- Intimidation and/or threats of violence
- Physical attacks
- Public criticism or humiliation
- Verbal abuse and/or yelling at others in an unreasonable manner
- Spreading malicious gossip or rumours
- Unreasonable workloads or timeframes for work completion
- Constant and unreasonable criticism of work
- Threats about job security
- Unreasonable monitoring of work

Workplace bullying is not:

- One-off or occasional instances of forgetfulness, rudeness or tactlessness
- Setting high performance standards
- Constructive feedback and legitimate advice or peer review
- A Manager requiring reasonable verbal or written work instructions to be carried out
- Warning or disciplining an Officer in line with the Councils' disciplinary procedure as per the Working for TRC document.
- A single incident of unreasonable behaviour
- Reasonable management actions delivered in a reasonable way
- Difference in opinion or personality clashed that do not escalate into bullying, harassment or violence.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff should:

- Tell their Manager if they experience or see any bullying behaviours – if the Manager is the person possibly behaving in a bullying manner then the officer should contact the Council's People and Wellness Manager.
- Try low-key solutions, e.g. talking to the person initially (only if it is safe to do so)
- Follow the Council's informal or formal processes when making a complaint
- Understanding that bullying is a serious matter that needs to be substantiated
- Maintain confidentiality if they are personally involved in a bullying complaint
- Cooperate fully with any investigation.

Managers' Responsibilities

Managers are required to:

- Ensure staff have clarity on what their roles entail
- Intervene early to identify and deal with any unreasonable behaviour before it escalates
- Record and investigate complaints fairly and in line with the business or undertaking's policies and processes
- Report to and seek advice from the People and Wellness team
- Maintain confidentiality when dealing with complaints
- Look for informal solutions before escalating an issue to higher levels (e.g. mediation or investigation) where appropriate

Council's Responsibilities

When dealing with an allegation of bullying, the Council will:

- Treat all matters seriously and investigate promptly and impartially
- Ensure neither the person who complained nor the alleged bully are victimised
- Provide appropriate support to all parties involved
- Find appropriate remedies and consequences for confirmed bullying as well as false reports. This may include referring the matter to the Council's disciplinary procedures where necessary
- Communicate the process and its outcomes to parties involved as appropriate
- Maintain confidentiality and ensure all parties are advised of such requirements
- Ensure principles of natural justice are upheld
- Document incidents where appropriate
- Have specialist internal and external advisors and/or investigators available to help where necessary

Complaints Process

Staff who may be experiencing, or who witness behaviour that they consider unreasonable should report these concerns to their Manager. If their manager is possibly involved in the behaviour of concern, the matter should be raised with People and Wellness Manager.

It is important that such concerns are reported in a timely manner, so that these can be addressed.

Low Key Approach

Where appropriate, the Council will look for a low key solution when dealing with a report of possible bullying.

A low key approach may include a Manager and/or People and Wellness Manager speaking with the person who is the subject of the complaint to reconfirm the Council's requirements regarding appropriate behaviours.

Staff may be encouraged to seek advice from a trustworthy source to obtain an objective viewpoint on whether the behaviour in question is unreasonable.

As part of a low key approach, the Council may encourage the staff member to try a self-help as an option. This may involve the staff member directly speaking to the person whose behaviour they are concerned about. Self-help will only be an option encouraged where it is safe for the staff member to take this approach.

Note: In more serious cases of bullying where safety is a factor, low key approach will not be an appropriate option.

Informal Resolution

The Council may offer informal resolution as a potential option to resolve an issue of bullying. This may include mediations.

Mediation involves a suitably trained and impartial person meeting with both parties to an issue of concern to try and resolve matters and look for an agreed way forward. This will be conducted in a safe and constructive environment for all involved.

Mediation may be used even where there has been no formal complaint of bullying received. In the case of a formal complaint, after an investigation has been completed, mediation may be offered as a resolution option, if appropriate.

Formal Complaint Process

Staff who consider that they have been subject to bullying behaviour may decide to provide a formal complaint to Council.

Staff who wish to raise a formal complaint should provide a level of detail to the Council so that the issue can be appropriately dealt with. This would include the following:

- Specific alleged incidents that give rise to the complaint
- Relevant dates and times
- Names of any potential witnesses
- Any other relevant factors, including any issues related to the safety of the complainant or other persons

The Council will take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the staff member raising the complaint and will provide any reasonable support.

The person who is the subject of the complaint (the respondent) will be notified in a timely manner and will be provided with any reasonable support.

The Council will appoint an independent and suitably qualified person to investigate the complaint and will ensure that the investigation is conducted in a fair manner and in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

The complainant and respondent will be advised of the process to be adopted to investigate the complaint.

The Council will encourage all parties to the complaint to maintain privacy and confidentiality at all times.

Depending on the circumstances, a substantiated incident of bullying may be treated as potential serious misconduct by the Council and may become the subject of the Council's disciplinary procedure.

Employee Support Services

Any party to a formal investigation may access the Council's Employee Support Services. This includes the Employee Assistance Programme – Vitae.

7.3.2 Harassment

The Council does not tolerate any form of harassment in the workplace and will take such claims seriously.

Harassment is where a person is subject to inappropriate and unwanted behaviour that is offensive or humiliating and because it is serious or repeated it has a negative effect on the person's employment, job performance or job satisfaction.

Employees are protected from racial and sexual harassment under both the Employment Relations Act 2000 and the Human Rights Act 1993, which defines these types of harassment. Harassment may take these specific forms or it may be general in nature.

Harassment can create an unsafe working environment and can create a significant risk to a person's safety and well-being.

Harassment is an offence under the Harassment Act 1997 and serious cases may result in criminal proceedings.

Examples of harassment may include:

- Offensive or hostile comments or 'jokes' being made by one person to another (whether sexual, racial or otherwise)
- Unwanted and persistent attention or physical contact
- Offensive or inappropriate comments about a person's physical appearance or their gender or ethnicity
- Displaying offensive or inappropriate imagery to another person
- Accosting, following or stopping another person
- Interfering with another person's property

Harassment will usually be repeated behaviour, but a one-off serious incident may still amount to harassment.

Staff who consider that they are being harassed should report the matter to their Manager or the People and Wellness Manager as soon as possible so that the matter can be dealt with appropriately.

Formal complaints of harassment will be taken seriously by the Council and investigated fully. The process used will be consistent with the formal complaints process outlined above for bullying allegations.

Staff who are involved in a situation of possible harassment may access the Council's Employee Support Services. This includes the Employee Assistance Programme.

Depending of the circumstance, a substantiated incident of harassment may be treated as potential serious misconducts by the Council and may become the subject of the Council's disciplinary procedure.

7.3.3 Other Behaviour

Other unreasonable or inappropriate behaviour that does not amount to bullying or harassment, and that has a potentially detrimental impact on another person in the workplace will be treated seriously, and investigated as appropriate. Depending on the circumstances involved, such matters may be referred to the Council's disciplinary procedure.

7.3.4 Victimisation

Victimisation occurs where a person is treated, or threatened to be treated less favourably due to having made a complaint. The Council will treat any allegations of victimisation seriously and will take immediate action to deal with such allegations.

7.4 Disciplinary and personal grievance procedures

7.4.1 Disciplinary procedures

In dealing with alleged occurrences of misconduct or serious misconduct, the Council as employer has an obligation to act fairly and responsibly.

Where any disciplinary or performance management issues arise, the following will generally apply:

- The staff member will be advised of their right to obtain representation and/or have a support person of their choice present at any meetings
- The staff member will be advised of any possible disciplinary outcome
- The staff member will be informed of the specific matter of concern or allegation and must be given all supporting information and a reasonable opportunity to consider that information and to provide an explanation in person to the decision maker
- An investigation will be undertaken as appropriate in the circumstances.

If the situation dictates, some of the above steps may be abbreviated or merged into other parts of the procedure.

In the case of a first or second offence, following a disciplinary meeting, where appropriate, the staff member will be advised of any corrective action required, and provided with a reasonable period of time to improve performance, conduct or behaviour. Where a work performance issue

arises, consideration may be given to coaching, training or other support and resources to assist the officer to attain the required standard before any formal disciplinary action is implemented.

In the case of a third offence termination on notice may be an outcome.

Any disciplinary action will be recorded in writing, provided to the staff member and placed on their personal file.

In cases of alleged serious misconduct, the officer may be suspended on pay while an investigation into the allegation is undertaken and pending completion of the disciplinary process.

Serious misconduct or three repeated occasions of misconduct may result in dismissal from employment with the Council.

7.4.1.1 Serious misconduct

The following will be regarded as serious misconduct and may be grounds for instant dismissal. Please note these examples are not an exhaustive list and cannot be construed to cover every possible situation. Behaviour not included on this list may also be regarded as serious misconduct depending on the circumstances:

- Failure to follow a reasonable instruction, or walking off the job, or insubordination
- Unauthorised possession or removal of Council or an individual's property without that person's permission
- Use, consumption, possession of, or being under the influence of non-prescription drugs/substances, or alcohol either on Council premises or while operating a Council vehicle/equipment
- Violation of, or failure to follow, all Council Health and Safety guidelines, standards and procedures
- Harassment
- Violence, use of abusive, offensive, threatening, or intimidating language or behaviour to another staff member, customer, or visitor, in work time and/or when attending work related functions out of normal work hours
- Negligent or unprofessional behaviour to the detriment of the Council's reputation
- Falsification of, or refusal to complete, accountability documentation, e.g., timesheets/work records, medical reports, or other Council documents.

7.4.1.2 Misconduct

Misconduct may be grounds for disciplinary action, ranges from a reprimand or warning to dismissal, depending on the circumstances. Please note these examples are not an exhaustive list and cannot be construed to cover every possible situation. Behaviour not included on this list may also be regarded as misconduct depending on the circumstances. Misconduct includes:

- Unauthorised or improper use of computer systems, vehicles, or other Council property
- Leaving the job or workplace during working hours without permission
- Smoking in a smoke free or prohibited area
- Poor time keeping, lateness, unapproved absences or repeated absenteeism
- Consistent failure to meet the standards of performance required
- Deliberate wasting of time or materials

- Wilful or deliberate acts that may affect hygiene, quality, or safety
- Discourteous behaviour to other employees, clients, customers, or visitors
- Reporting to work in a condition that, in the opinion of the employer, means that duties are unable to be carried out competently or safely
- Breach of confidentiality in respect of Council information
- Undisclosed conflicts of interest.

7.4.2 Personal grievance procedures

Following the findings of a disciplinary procedure, and in the event a staff member considers that they have been unjustifiably dismissed, disadvantaged by the Council's unjustifiable actions, discriminated against, sexually harassed, or duressed in connection with their membership or non-membership of an employees' organisation, they may invoke personal grievance procedures under the provisions of the employment agreement that the officer is party to and in accordance with the requirements of the *Employment Relations Act 2000*.

7.5 Whistle blowing procedures

The purpose of this procedure is to facilitate the disclosure and investigation of serious wrongdoing in the workplace (also known as whistleblowing), and provide protection for staff who report concerns.

Should a staff member ever receive information about serious wrongdoing in the Council, the provisions of the *Protected Disclosures (Protection of Whistleblowers) Act 2022* apply.

A protected disclosure is when the discloser believes on reasonable grounds that there is, or has been, serious wrongdoing in or by their organisation, they disclose in accordance with the Act and they do not disclose in bad faith.

A discloser is a person who has an employment type relationship with the organisation they are disclosing about. This includes current and former employees, homeworkers, secondees, contractors, volunteers and board members.

Serious wrongdoing is an act, omission, or course of conduct. Serious wrongdoing includes:

- any unlawful, corrupt or irregular use of public funds and resources
- any act, omission or conduct that is a serious risk to public safety, or the health or safety of any individual, or to the environment
- any act, omission or conduct that may cause a risk to maintaining the law including the prevention, investigation and detection of offences and the right to a fair trial
- any act, omission or conduct that constitutes an offence
- any act, omission or conduct by a public official that is oppressive, improperly discriminating, negligent or constitutes mismanagement.

In the event of an officer suspecting serious wrongdoing in the Council, a protected disclosure can be made at any time to the Council or to an appropriate authority. If a disclosure is made to the Council the following steps will be taken:

- Meet with the Director – Corporate Services and disclose your concerns about serious wrongdoing in the Council. Subject to the results of that meeting, put any concerns in writing. If the concerns

meet the criteria of serious wrongdoing, the matter becomes a protected disclosure in terms of the Act.

- The Director – Corporate Services discusses the disclosers' concerns with the Chief Executive, and will deal with the matter by doing one or more of the following:
- - investigates the disclosure
 - addressing any serious wrongdoing by acting or recommending action
 - referring the disclosure to an appropriate authority (the Director-Corporate Services will consult with the discloser and the intended recipient of the referral before referring
- The Director – Corporate Services will notify the discloser of the result of the discussion and investigation within 20 days of the concerns being raised. But will endeavour to keep the discloser updated about progress where possible.
- If the concerns relate to the Director – Corporate Services, refer the matter directly to the Chief Executive.
- If the concerns relate to the Chief Executive, refer the matter to the Chairperson.
-
- If the discloser is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, the Director – Corporate Services will explain the options available to the officer.

Any disclosure must be treated confidentially unless exceptions under section 17(2)(b) of the *Protected Disclosures (Protection of Whistleblowers) Act 2022* apply.

A disclosure can be made to an appropriate authority at any time rather than having to go through the Council first. An appropriate authority is a trusted external party who can be approached if a discloser is not confident about making the disclosure within their own organisation. An authority includes:

- The head of any public sector organisation
- Any officer of Parliament (an Ombudsman, the Controller and Auditor-General or the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment)
- The persons or bodies listed in Schedule 2 of the Act
- The membership body of a particular profession, trade, or calling with the power to discipline its members

An appropriate authority does not include a Minister or Member of Parliament.

Please note that an Ombudsman may provide information and guidance on the Act (as well as being an appropriate authority).

A discloser may also disclose to another person, as long as they do so on a confidential basis and for the purposes of seeking advice about how to make a protected disclosure in accordance with the Act.

A discloser is entitled to protection for a disclosure made in accordance with the above process or to an appropriate authority. The officer is entitled to protection even if:

- they are mistaken and there is no serious wrongdoing, or
- they do not refer to the name of the Act when making the disclosure, or

- they technically fail to comply with some of the Act's requirements (as long as they have substantially complied with the Act, or
- they also make the disclosure to another person (as long as they do so on a confidential basis, to seek advice about whether or how to make a protected disclosure).

Another discloser making a disclosure who discloses further information in support of a disclosure is also entitled to protection if they do not disclose in bad faith and they follow the above process or to disclosure to appropriate authority in accordance with the Act.

We understand that going through process is unsettling and we encourage our staff to call Vitae, an employee assistance programme on 0508 664 981 to help provide confidential support at any time.

8 Communications and corporate style

The Council has a reputation for excellence. To maintain this reputation, the Council expects quality and consistency of style to be maintained across the whole range of Council communications (ranging from statutory planning documents to letters and field inspection notices). This section outlines the Council's expectations relating to communications and corporate style. Staff are expected to comply with this and further detail set out in the *Communications and Corporate Style Document*.

8.1 Document creation

8.1.1 Templates

There are standard Council document templates in Word for letters, faxes, cover notes, memoranda, agenda items, file notes and technical reports. The templates set out the standard formats and style for these documents. Always use the templates for these documents and do not change the format. Always start a new document from these templates rather copying an existing document. Copying an existing document carries forward mistakes and errors in the existing document to the new document.

8.1.2 Letters, facsimiles and cover notes

All letters and facsimiles must follow the standard format as set out in the templates or the *Communications and Corporate Style Document*.

All outgoing letters should be checked and signed by a Director or person with delegated signing authority. Outgoing facsimiles containing Council matters of significance should also be checked and signed by a Director or person with delegated signing authority (refer *Delegations Manual for the Taranaki Regional Council*).

Cover notes are a quick forwarding advice for sending reports or other information to outside parties. Accordingly, they do not require delegated signing authority. However, they must not be used as an alternative to authorised letters.

All letters, facsimiles and cover notes are to be recorded in the Council's document management system.

8.1.3 Agenda memoranda

All reports for Council meetings/agendas must follow the standard format and other instructions set out in the templates or the *Communications and Corporate Style Document*.

All agenda items should be either written by, or contain a cover memorandum from, a Departmental Director and countersigned by the Chief Executive. Agenda items become public documents. The content and style must be of a high technical and professional standard.

When preparing agenda items refer to the significant decision-making provisions contained in the *Delegations Manual for the Taranaki Regional Council*.

8.1.4 Quality control

It is essential that all documents produced by the Council conform to the highest standards of presentation. To assist in this process the Council has produced a *Communications and Corporate Style* document. All documents produced by the Council must comply with the *Communications and Corporate Style* document. Again, to assist in this process a range of templates have been produced. All documents must be created by starting with a Council template. Styles within the template should not be changed.

It is the responsibility of both the document author and the signing/approving staff member to ensure compliance with the *Communications and Corporate Style* document. However, overall responsibility for correspondence quality control belongs to the signing staff member.

There are a range of staff, including Departmental Secretaries, the Administration team and the Receptionist, who are happy to assist you in ensuring your documents comply with the corporate standards.

8.2 Printing and distribution

Before any reports, newsletters or information sheets are published, the Departmental Director must approve the publication, the number to be printed and the standard of presentation. Distribution of reports to the various interested parties is the responsibility of individual Departmental Directors.

8.3 E-mail and file notes

E-mail (including inward e-mails) regarding official Council matters of significance must be saved to the appropriate file in the document management system.

Telephone conversations regarding official Council matters of significance should also be recorded as a file note and saved to the appropriate file in the document management system.

8.4 Filing and record keeping and management

Inward mail is processed by the Corporate Services Department and distributed to the appropriate officer by the Chief Executive or Departmental Director. It is the individual staff member's responsibility to ensure that originals are filed promptly and correctly. A copy of all inwards correspondence is scanned and saved to the appropriate file in the document management system.

All records that are hand delivered are to be given to Corporate Services for scanning and recording in the document management system.

All records of Council business activities (including correspondence with the public and other documents relating to the Council's work) must be produced and maintained as per the requirements of the *Public Records Act 2005*. In addition to this, documentation should be created and maintained to a standard that meets the requirements of the Evidence Test and therefore be admissible in a Court of Law, in accordance with the *Crown Law Prosecution Guidelines* (Frodo 1692869). The Council's *Enforcement Provisions and Procedures* guide (Frodo 677861) provides detail on how records should be maintained to meet this standard.

8.4.1 Records

The Information & Records Management Adviser is responsible for filing services. A hardcopy of all inwards mail is filed, by date, and stored in the records room.

All files are to be signed out before removal from the central or consents records rooms, and returned promptly after use.

8.4.2 Library

Information on the use of the library system and interloans, including access to statutes, is available from the Documents Management Officer.

8.5 Process Mapping

The Council uses a process mapping tool, Promapp, to record business processes. Promapp is an online process management software that helps the Council build, improve and share processes in a central repository. All staff are actively encouraged to use Promapp to record, view and share business processes and procedures.

8.6 Meetings

The manner in which staff represent themselves and the Council at meetings with individuals or groups, in the field or meeting chambers, formally or informally, is critical to the Council's performance and reputation.

Attendance at formal Council meetings should be as required or when authorised by your Manager. At formal Council meetings, an officer should speak clearly when requested and address all comments through the Chairperson with full respect to the Chair and Councillors. Most Council meetings are open to the public and the news media.

For any meeting with clients, informal or formal, staff should always:

- know the purpose of and, where relevant, the agenda for the meeting
- know who will be attending
- be informed and prepared
- know the limit of their authority to negotiate or make decisions
- take appropriate notes of the meeting for record purposes
- act with professionalism and courtesy.

Informal contact with Councillors

The effective performance of the Council requires a high level of cooperation and mutual respect between Councillors and staff. The Chief Executive is responsible for all employment related matters concerning staff. However, from time-to-time Councillors may approach you directly for assistance. If you have any doubt or queries concerning the Councillor's approach or request see your Departmental Director.

For meetings held on Council premises, the responsible staff member should advise reception to expect visitors and where the meeting is being held. Visitors must sign in at reception. In the case

of large groups of visitors, the responsible staff member should provide a list of attendees to Reception.

8.7 Public relations and the media

Public relations activities are vital to the Council. Staff involved in a presentation, seminar or speaking assignment should prepare as for a meeting and aim to represent the Council with distinction.

Any requests to be involved in a specific public relations exercise should be approved by a Departmental Director or the Chief Executive. The Council's Communications and Engagement Manager is available to coordinate or provide assistance with materials and display aids. Staff should note that all of their work and activities with the public contribute to the Council's image and public relations.

Any Council initiated contact with the news media associated with work activities has to be authorised by the Chief Executive who may delegate to specific officers. Any approach made to officers by the media should be referred to a Departmental Director.

8.8 Official information

Accurate and professional reports, correspondence and other records properly filed are of fundamental importance to the Council. Most of the information held by the Council is available to the public under the dictates of the *Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987* (LGOIMA). Information subject to the LGOIMA includes: documents, reports, memoranda, letters, emails and draft documents; non-written information, such as video or tape recordings (official information has also been interpreted to include information which is known to an agency but has not yet been written down); manuals which set out internal rules, principles or guidelines; and agendas and minutes of meetings (including those not open to the public). All information should therefore be developed by staff as information that is to be freely available to the public. Information may also be used well into the future in matters of dispute, inquiry or litigation.

Note

Care should be taken with all communications (including notes, emails, letters etc.,) as all content could be used in a Court as evidence. All communications should use language that is both accurate and appropriate. In particular, there should be no slanderous language, no "slagging" comments about people or organisations, no flippancy, and no musings or commentary. As a rule of thumb, no language should be used that would cause discomfort or embarrassment to the Council or any other person or organisation should that communication become public. Take care.

8.9 Social Media Policy

Social media refers to internet-based tools used for publishing, sharing and discussing information and opinions. Examples are:

- Personal blogs, e.g., WordPress
- Twitter
- Facebook
- LinkedIn

- YouTube
- MySpace
- Personal websites
- Digg
- Bebo
- Wikipedia.

The Council has a number of public websites (TRC, Regional Gardens, buses), Twitter (TRC, CDEM, Regional Gardens), Facebook (Regional Gardens) and WordPress (TRC) accounts.

8.9.1 Use of social media for Council activities

Any participation in social media associated with Council activities must be authorized by the Chief Executive who may delegate to specific officers in line with existing delegated authority for communicating with the media.

Authority may be delegated to appropriate staff to communicate online on specific accounts. When responding or posting information via social media, authorised staff must ensure that they:

- have the authority to engage on the topic
- speak with the voice of the Council (eg TaranakiRG for regional gardens) rather than as an individual
- be professional and honest, as all communications are a direct reflection on the Council
- keep records, as online Council communications are subject to the same legal requirements as traditional media communications
- ensure that posts are accurate and do not reveal sensitive or confidential information about the Council, staff or other people. If content cannot be accurately conveyed in a short message, provide a link to a site where the information can be fully expressed, eg the Council website
- seek advice from senior staff or the Communications section if you are in doubt about responding or posting information. **When in doubt, do not post**
- respect the rights of others by acknowledging content from another source and making sure you have their approval
- be mindful that the internet is permanent. Once information is published online, it is essentially a permanent record, even if later you "remove/delete" it

The use of Council equipment (computers, internet access, email and cellphones) to monitor social media is permitted provided that:

- the content relates to the nature of your work at the Council
- it is reasonable use that does not impact on your work duties and productivity
- it does not negatively impact on the Council's computer system (eg downloading video/audio).

8.9.2 Guidelines for personal or unofficial online activities

Sound judgement and common sense should be exercised when making personal online comments, particularly on activities that could relate to Council business. Some guiding principles for personal online communication are:

- Your activities should meet relevant Council policies such as these within the *Working for the Taranaki Regional Council*
- You are responsible for your actions and any communication that may affect the Council's reputation. Remember all postings are public. Would you be happy to see your name and posting published in the newspaper?
- Monitor the social media landscape for compliments or criticisms of the Council. Pass on any relevant comments to senior staff or the Communications section
- Avoid the temptation to respond to negative or critical posts about the Council or its activities. Pass them on to an authorised spokesperson to respond to
- Take care to separate your business and work lives. While staff are entitled to express personal opinions, remember that your colleagues, supervisors and members of the public may see online information that you originally intended only for friends and family
- Never disclose any sensitive or confidential Council information. Taking public positions online that are contrary to Council interests could lead to disciplinary action.

9 Council offices, vehicles and equipment

9.1 Workplace appearance, access and security

9.1.1 Workplace appearance

The general public and other Council clients regularly visit Council's offices. Accordingly, the Council expects an officer to maintain his/her workstation in a clean and tidy condition.

Staff cafeteria and social club facilities

The Council provides a staff cafeteria, kitchen facilities, gymnasium and barbecue area for staff use and enjoyment. The Council expects these facilities to be used in an orderly manner. Contract cleaners undertake normal cleaning duties. However, any abnormal mess must be cleaned up by the officer responsible.

9.1.2 Smoking and liquor consumption

Inside areas of the Council workplace including all sites, offices, depots and vehicles are smoke-free areas and no smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes, is permitted in these areas.

Consumption of liquor on Council premises is not permitted without the prior approval of the Chief Executive.

9.1.3 Building access and security

The Council expects staff to maintain building security. If a staff member is working in Council offices outside normal office hours, doors should be locked upon entering and leaving. Keys to offices have been issued to the Chief Executive, Department Directors and the Facilities Coordinator. Requests for access must be made through these people.

Staff onsite at the Cloten Road between the hours of 5pm and 7am weekdays and on weekends and public holidays are to advise the After Hours Call Centre by telephoning 06 765 7127. Staff must advise of their arrival and anticipated departure time. Staff must then advise the After Hours Call Centre when they leave the premises.

Personal effects

The Council has no insurance cover for staff personal belongings such as books. The use of personal belongings is not encouraged and no Council responsibility can be assumed.

The Council employs a security firm for nightly patrols. Any issues related to security should be reported to the Facilities Coordinator.

9.2 Use of vehicles

9.2.1 Road laws

Staff will, at all times, obey all applicable road laws and carry their driver's licence on them while driving Council vehicles.

9.2.2 Use of Council vehicles to and from work

The Council has a modern and well maintained vehicle fleet. All vehicles are considered Council resources and reallocation of vehicles can and may happen when job roles change. Council vehicles are to be available for work use at all times for all staff. Staff may be assigned a vehicle to take to and from work dependent on the nature of their role. Where staff has been provided with a vehicle to travel to and from work, they are expected to securely garage the vehicle. Staff provided with the vehicle a free allowance of 50 km/day applies, thereafter a charge of 10 cents/km applies.

The designated driver of the vehicle is charged on a fortnightly basis for the appropriate number of kilometres depending on where they live (see example for determining fortnightly staff charges). Charge rates may be reviewed from time to time. Note: The charge will only alter if the designated driver changes their address requiring a new staff charge calculation to be determined or ceases to be the designated driver.

There is no adjustment for sick leave, annual leave, statutory holidays, acting as duty officer, garaging cars at the Council offices, attending conferences or training, or leaving from home/office to go direct to a job and then on to the office/home.

Example: determining fortnightly staff charges

For a person living in New Plymouth travelling to and from Stratford:

80km/day x 10 days per fortnight = 800km

Less daily allowance (x10) = 500km

= 300km

300km per fortnight x 10 cents per km = a fortnightly charge of \$30.

If the designated driver carries other Council staff to or from work they may organise and recover the appropriate fair proportion of the charges from their passengers on a pro rata basis. The amount recovered should not exceed, in total, the amount charged to the authorised driver.

9.2.3 GPS Fleet Management

All Council vehicles that are branded are equipped with ERoad GPS tracking units. These units provide accurate and timely data via GPS including driver behaviour and vehicle location. Due to the remote areas of some work this is critical to our risk mitigation. As part of our ERoad platform we also utilise the 'Driver Log' function. This requires drivers to log into the ERoad unit installed in the vehicles at the start of a trip. This ensures any adverse driving behaviours are recorded against the correct staff member.

9.2.4 Fuel

All Council vehicles have been assigned a fuel card to purchase fuel at all major service stations. Please refer to the 'Vehicle Safety Guidelines' book for a list of preferred service stations where the Council receives a higher discount.

All fuel cards have a pin that is available from the Facilities Coordinator to enable pay at pump. All card purchases must have accurate odometer reading entered at time of purchase. Fuel cards are only to be used for fuel/oil purchases and only for Council vehicles. Fuel Cards are not to be used for private purchases.

Rules in respect of the use of fuel card are contained in the card wallets. The fuel card is to remain in the assigned vehicle at all times (preferably in the card holder on the keys or centre console). Personal Fly-buys or other loyalty cards are not to be used.

9.2.5 Availability of Council vehicles

Council vehicles are to be available at all times for Council work purposes. Assignment of a vehicle to staff carries no implied priority to, or sole rights to, the use of that vehicle. Every attempt must be made to accommodate the vehicle requirements of staff across all Council Departments.

During periods of absence from the workplace (e.g., sick leave, annual leave, conferences etc.), the designated driver will advise their Manager and the Facilities Coordinator of the vehicle's availability in a prompt and timely manner. The Manager can then ensure that that vehicle is available to other staff.

The vehicle is to be parked in the Birdcage and keys attached to the Pool Car Booking board in Reception. The Facilities Coordinator will then activate the vehicle as available on the ERoad Book It App for the duration of the designated drivers absence.

Use of private vehicle

Use of private vehicles for work-related activities can only occur with the specific and prior approval of the Director – Corporate Services. Such use will be reimbursed on the basis of Public Service rates on completion of an expense claim.

9.2.6 Care and maintenance of Council vehicles

The Council expects the staff member assigned to a vehicle to ensure that the vehicle is kept in a clean and tidy state and is in a serviceable and safe condition. The staff member assigned to the is also responsible for completing a monthly check using the ERoad Inspect application and working with the Facilities Coordinator to remedy any faults as soon as possible. The Council prides itself on its modern sign written fleet, the appearance and presentation of these vehicles can impact the Council's reputation.

The Council expects the staff member assigned to a vehicle to ensure that that vehicle is regularly cleaned, and maintained in a safe and tidy condition as determined by the Facilities Coordinator. There are car cleaning facilities at the washbay located inside the Birdcage at the Taranaki Regional Council offices at Stratford.

When vehicles are due WOFs, services etc it is up to the designated staff member of the vehicle to arrange with the appropriate approved service provider at a time which suits their work schedule. Council approved repairers will then invoice the Council. If there are special circumstances which require immediate repairs, the Facilities Coordinator must be informed as soon as practicable. Staff must also advise if a pool car needs to be allocated whilst repairs are being undertaken.

First Aid kits and fully-operational fire extinguishers are supplied and must be carried in all vehicles at all times.

9.2.7 Accidents

In the event of an accident involving a Council vehicle, the driver should:

- stop – secure their personal safety, then the safety of other people involved
- ascertain whether anyone is seriously injured (remove them from vehicles only if necessary)
- in the event of injury, apply first aid and call an ambulance and the Police immediately
- if another vehicle is involved, obtain the names and addresses of any witnesses and obtain the following particulars from the driver:
 - name
 - address
 - details of vehicle
 - the owner's name
 - insurers of the other vehicle
 - also provide the other driver with the same particulars.

Be careful to simply note the facts and avoid any admission of fault. Should the other party require the name of the Council's insurers then the advice to be given is: NZI Insurance. Please refer to the 'Vehicle Safety Guidelines' book for more information.

All accidents must be reported as soon as practicable to the Facilities Coordinator to ensure decisions regarding insurance claims and other actions are made as soon as possible.

If the vehicle is drivable please take it to Stratford Panel Beaters as soon as possible for an insurance assessment to take place

Staff involved in an accident involving a Council vehicle may be required to undertake a driving assessment and/or a drug and alcohol screening test as per section 5.7 Impairment policy.

9.2.8 Traffic offences

The Council expects that staff will follow all applicable road rules. Penalties (fines) for speeding, parking or other infringements are the responsibility of the staff member in charge of the vehicle at the time of the offence, and must be paid promptly.

9.2.9 Safe Driving Policy

The unauthorised or improper use of a council vehicle is considered a misconduct behaviour, as defined by this document. Furthermore, Council policy states that staff must operate vehicles in a lawful manner. The aim of this policy is to help achieve that.

A consistent management approach to speeding is defined below and is to be communicated to staff prior to its roll out. This will ensure there are no surprises.

The policy stages proportionate responses to speeding breaches of 11 km and over the limit. Formal action will be taken on the forth breach. The number of speeding events can be reviewed annually to determine whether the 11 km threshold is appropriate to change driving behaviour.

First time speeding event

1. Wellness and Risk Adviser emails the weekly speeding report directly to the staff member concerned (cc'd to the Manager) and asks:
 - Were you driving? and,
 - Can you provide any justifiable reason that explains this speed exceedance?
2. The staff member is then required to respond to the email with their explanation. The assumption is that no speeding is considered justifiable unless transporting an individual to hospital for emergency treatment or, if there is some mechanical failure in the vehicle. However, if a justifiable case is made it will be considered on a case by case basis by their Manager.
3. The record is copied onto the staff members personnel file and registered as a first breach. This information will be collected and maintained by the Wellness and Risk Adviser.
4. This record is time limited and will be removed from the personnel file and database if good driving behaviour continues for six months from the date of the first event.

Second time speeding event (steps 1-2 as above)

1. The record is copied onto the staff members personnel file and registered as a second breach. This information will be collected and maintained by the Wellness and Risk Adviser.
2. This record is time limited and will be removed for the personnel file and database if good driving behaviour continues for six months from the date of the first event.
3. The staff member will be advised that should speeding occur again their vehicle will be taken away from them for use to and from work for 5 consecutive working days (leave days not included); a record is made on their personnel file.

Third time speeding event (steps 1-2 as above)

1. The record is copied onto the staff member's personnel file and registered as a third breach. This information will be collected and maintained by the Wellness and Risk Adviser.
2. The council vehicle that is assigned to the staff member will be taken away for use to and from work for 5 consecutive working days (leave days not included); a record is made on their personnel file.
3. The staff member is also put on a classroom based driving course. If they refuse the driving course, they do not get the vehicle back until they agree to one.
4. If the staff member does not have an assigned vehicle they will be put on a classroom based driving course.

Note: If the staff member is on call and no cover can be found, the vehicle will be removed during an alternative week at their Manager's discretion.

Fourth time speeding event (steps 1-2 as above)

The behaviour will now be considered misconduct as defined in this document and disciplinary action will be taken by their Manager in discussion with their Director and the People and Wellness Manager.

9.2.10 Private use of Council vehicles

Vehicles are not to be used for private purposes under any circumstances unless:

- the use is authorised in an officers' letter of appointment or equivalent written authorisation signed by the Chief Executive; or
- the prior approval of Director – Corporate Services has been obtained.

It is noted that unauthorised private use of a Council vehicle will be considered misconduct.

Note private use is to be at the expense of the staff member, that means fuel/consumables required for the task is to be paid for personally. When using vehicles/trailers for private use an inspection is to be completed on the ERoad Inspect it application – both pre and post trip. Any damages that are discovered are to be repaired at the users cost. Failure to complete the required checks will result in any damage discovered upon return being the responsibility of the staff member who used it for private use.

9.3 Use of Council equipment

9.3.1 Computer use

The Council expects staff using Council's computers to consider the following:

- **Viruses:** Minimise the risk of the Council's computer network being affected by software viruses brought in through e-mail, memory sticks, CD's or the internet. The network runs a viruses detector. However, in the event of any problems, contact computer staff for advice.
- **Non-standard software:** The loading or copying of unlicensed software or the copying of already installed licensed software to another computer is prohibited.
- **Data backups:** Ensure all documents are saved to EDOCs DM so that they can be automatically backed up every night.
- **Data storage:** Store any personal information to your personal file on EDOCs DM, and store Council data in the relevant file in EDOCs DM.
- **Hardware:** Turn off both the computer and monitor at the end of each day to save power. In addition, the monitor should be turned off when you are away from your computer for extended periods of time throughout the working day to save power. Remove any disks from the compact disk drive. Occasionally clean the screen, mouse and keyboard.
- **Security:** Do not tell other people your password or write it down.
- **Internet:** This facility is provided for work purposes. Any other use should be within reason. Personal use of the Internet is permitted provided that:
 - The amount of use is reasonable and does not interfere with the officers' duties
 - There is no viewing of adult sites, or any site that may cause offence to those working around you. If internet records show staff has been viewing such sites, the matter will be dealt with through the disciplinary process

- **E-mail:** Official e-mails must be filed and recorded to the relevant file in Edocs DM. Sending or receiving e-mail attachments may have a detrimental effect on the performance of the network.
- **Personal use:** Personal use of the Council's computer facilities is allowed, provided it is within reason (also see rules for internet use). However, any related costs may be charged and the BITS team have the right to delete any non-Council related information at any time.

It is completely unacceptable to use the Council's computer facilities to receive, view or distribute any adult or offensive material. If an officer receives any material of this nature, it is the officers' responsibility to immediately delete it, and request the sender to refrain from sending this type of material in the future. Common sense must prevail on determining whether something is deemed "adult material" or offensive. If there is any doubt, delete it. If computer records show an officer distributes such material, it will be dealt with through a disciplinary process.

Any problems or required assistance should be immediately directed to the BITS team.

9.3.2 Booking Council meeting rooms and equipment

Please refer to the ITS Portal for the most up to date information on how to book meeting rooms and equipment.

If you require any assistance with the booking, please contact the Council's Business

Respect and care

Respect and care should be shown for the Council's property, plant, vehicles and workplaces. Similarly, respect should be shown and care taken when dealing with other people's property, particularly during field operations.

9.3.3 Booking Council vehicles

Bookings for vehicles, trailers, quads etc are all be actioned through the ERoad Book It application. It is the responsibility of the staff member who is booking it to ensure the information is accurate and up to date (ie if the vehicle is no longer required they are to action a booking cancellation as soon as possible).

Council maritime equipment can only be booked through the Facilities Coordinator.

All users of Council motor vehicles must hold the appropriate licence/s and/or have completed relevant training.

All vehicles must be returned in a clean and tidy condition. As a rule, any vehicle that require fuel should have no less than half a tank of fuel when returned.

9.3.4 Private use of Council equipment

All applications to use and/or hire Council vehicles and other equipment for private use must be made to the Director – Corporate Services prior to the equipment being used. Any hireage fees are payable on return of the equipment. Applications can be made via the form on the TRC Toolbox.

The Facilities Coordinator is responsible for the overseeing of equipment hire, safety and payment.

Any damage to Council equipment whilst under private use must be reported to the Facilities Coordinator and may be the responsibility of the staff member involved.

Bookings that are for private use are to have the private use 'reason' selected in the booking. Private use bookings must be accompanied by an approved private use form, which can be found in on the TRC Toolbox.

All vehicles must be returned in a clean and tidy condition. As a rule, any vehicle that require fuel should have no less than half a tank of fuel when returned.

Any request for equipment should conflict with the owning department. Staff should check first before submitting a form. Council operational outputs take precedence and approval can be removed if Council outputs require the resource at the last minute. A condition assessment is to be performed by the staff member requesting to borrow the equipment and the issuer to determine any faults prior to use. Staff are required to ensure the equipment is used correctly and in accordance with manufacturer's specifications and the Council is not liable for any injuries caused during the use of the equipment whilst on loan for personal use.

If staff are requesting to borrow equipment which are deemed high risk, e.g. chainsaws, quads etc for private use, they need to be trained in using it.

9.4 Sustainability in the workplace

Staff are expected to take all reasonable steps to think and act sustainably in the workplace. There are a number of small actions that we can all take to help achieve environmental and economic benefits, both for our workplace community and the wider regional community that we serve. These simple steps also demonstrate that this organisation walks its talk on environmental responsibility.

9.4.1 Reducing energy use

There are many ways in which we could reduce our energy use. Here are a few suggestions:

- Lights – Turn the lights out if you're the last one out of a room – including toilets.
- Vehicles – Carpool to/from work, and work activities, wherever possible to reduce fuel use.
- Heating – Remember to turn off heat pumps at the end of the day. Try not to use personal heaters as these use a lot of electricity.

9.4.2 Reducing waste

Most of the waste generated by council is in the form of paper. There are a number of ways in which we can reduce the unnecessary wastage of paper, for example:

- Consider if it is necessary to print out a document. If you want to share a document with colleagues, you can easily do this electronically.
- Print in black and white rather than colour.
- If a member of the public wants a Council document, remember that it's probably available electronically on the external website, or able to be sent by email.
- When printing documents, double-side whenever possible (the printers generally automatically default to this), or print multiple pages to an A4 page for draft documents.

9.4.3 Recycling

- Paper – Use the green paper recycling box at your work station Recycled notepads and cube paper are available in Corporate Services – please use them. Note: you do not need to remove staples from paper for recycling.
- Cardboard – The Council has a separate skip bin for recycling cardboard. This is located between Inspectorate and the birdcage, where all cardboard should be taken for recycling. Please ensure that boxes are broken down before they are placed in this bin.
- Plastic, Cans and Tins – Rinse and place recyclable plastic, cans and tins in the mixed recycling bins located in your department or in the cafeteria recycling bin.
- Glass – Rinse and place glass bottles into the separate glass recycling bin in the cafeteria.
- Organic waste – Place organic waste (food scraps-including bones, tea bags, coffee grinds, tissues and serviettes) in the composting bins provided in your department or otherwise in the cafeteria compost bin.

9.4.4 Residual rubbish

- Only inorganic and non-recyclable items should be placed into rubbish bins. Recycling wherever possible reduces the amount the Council contributes to landfill through residual rubbish and therefore the costs to ratepayers.
- A skip bin is used for residual rubbish. This is located under the trees by the birdcage. The key for the bin is held by the Facilities Coordinator. Rubbish is not to be left beside the skip bin.
- Council's rubbish facilities (office rubbish bins or the red skip bin) are not to be used for personal rubbish.

9.4.5 Catering

- Catering off-site is an opportunity to demonstrate our environmental responsibility. Ask caterers to provide reusable or recyclable crockery and cutlery. Bins and signage can be provided to collect bottles and recyclables and these can be brought back to the TRC site. Make arrangements for how leftover food will be managed.
- Where catering is brought in for Council meetings and staff events, whoever organises this should liaise with the catering company about any packaging, utensils and crockery used with the intention of minimising waste.

9.4.6 In house sustainability group

- A group of interested staff meet quarterly to progress sustainability initiatives within the workplace. This group comprises one representative from most departments. If you are interested in joining the group, or finding out more about the initiatives, please refer to the Workplace group Sustainability at work.

10 Work related travel and expenses

10.1 Taxis

The use of taxis is to be moderate, conservative and cost effective, relative to other forms of transport available to the Council.

The use of public transport and rideshare is encouraged where appropriate.

A taxi card can be obtained prior to travel from the Departmental Secretary or People and Wellness Administrator.

10.2 Rental Cars

When staff require the hireage of a rental car, the prior approval of the Manager or Departmental Director is required.

Our expectation is that the most economical type and size of rental car be used, consistent with the requirements (distance, terrain, weather and number of people) of the trip.

Any fines (parking or traffic offences) incurred while using a rental vehicle are to be paid by the staff member.

10.3 Travel

All air travel should be booked well ahead of the actual travel dates, where practical, so the expenditure is the most cost-effective possible.

Accommodation should be cost-effective, taking into account the geographic location of the accommodation relative to where staff are working, the standard of accommodation, and safety and security issues.

10.3.1 Airline bookings and travel outside Taranaki – domestic travel

Where staff are required to travel outside Taranaki on Council business, the prior approval of the Manager or Departmental Director is required. The Departmental Secretary or People and Wellness Administrator should make all airline bookings.

Council paid membership of the Air New Zealand Koru Club is restricted to the Chief Executive and Departmental Directors due to the frequency of travel undertaken by these staff members. Any other applications for Koru membership will be considered on a case by case basis and can only be justified by significant levels of required air travel.

10.3.2 Overseas travel

Proposals to travel overseas on work-related activities must be prepared in detail and approved by the Chief Executive.

When a staff member travels overseas for work, it might be necessary to provide them with a cash advance. In these instances, the cash advance should be set at an appropriate level having regard to the circumstance, be properly documented and accounted for and reconciled to actual expenses on return.

Tipping expenses in countries where it is local practice and where it is appropriate is allowed. A daily allowance for this should be agreed in advance by the Manager or Departmental Director. This should be properly documented and any unused funds accounted for on return.

Economy class is used for flight journeys of up to six hours. For flights greater than six hours premium economy will be considered upon application to and approval of the Chief Executive.

10.3.3 Private travel linked with official travel

Staff may request to undertake private travel before, during, or at the end of travel paid by the Council. The travel is to be approved by the Manager or Departmental Director. All costs will be covered by the staff member and no additional costs will be incurred by the Council as a result of the private travel.

The private travel must only be incidental to the business purpose of the travel.

10.4 Provision of cellphones

10.4.1 Cellphone allocation and use

The Council provides and pays for cellphones in the following situations:

- where staff work in remote locations (i.e., not in the Stratford main office); and/or
- where staff are required to work outside normal work hours (eg, Duty Officers); and/or
- where staff are required to be in continued contact with customers and outside agencies regardless of the time of day and their location.

Staff who believe that they meet the above criteria can apply for a cellphone through their Departmental Director who will then liaise with the Business Information & Technology Services team (e.g., in circumstances when other communication technology does not meet with the requirements of a staff member's job functions).

Cellphones are not to be issued for health and safety purposes due to the lack of coverage in some parts of Taranaki.

It is noted that all cellphones remain the property of the Council and in an emergency situation may be reallocated.

10.4.2 Communication facilities available

Cellphones are not issued primarily for health and safety purposes as the coverage is often unreliable, calls/texts are not instant and phones/texts are unmonitored. Notwithstanding, smartphone technology may be utilised for health and safety as outlined in clause 10.4.8. Communication facilities available to all staff, that include the approved methods of communication for health and safety purposes, are:

- radio telephones (RTs) in all vehicles that are monitored around the clock; exclusive to the Council and free to air
- handheld RTs
- personal emergency radio beacon (EPIRB)

- personal locator beacons (PLBs)
- the toll free number (0800 736 222) that can be used nationwide
- the 'Bobit' system that allows staff to record their whereabouts at all times.

10.4.3 Cellphone models and cost

The Council has cellphone contracts with Spark. Cellphones are replaced at the discretion of the Council. The relationship with Spark is managed by the Business, Information, Technology and Services (BITS) team. In general terms, all Council cellphones are a standard model or a model deemed fit for purpose for a particular position. Any staff member who has a Council-allocated cellphone and requires a model other than the standard model should make their request to their Director who will liaise with the BITS team.

The costs of Council cellphones are charged against the budgets of the appropriate Department. Cellphone rental is over and above the costs incurred by the Council for other communication systems. Directors, in approving the allocation of Council cellphones to staff, need to be aware of these additional costs.

10.4.4 Cellphone/smartphone use in vehicles

In accordance with New Zealand law, hand-held cellphones must not be used whilst driving. The use of hands-free cellphones is also discouraged while driving. Staff should adopt the following policies with hands-free cellphones:

- keep the use to an absolute minimum when driving (eg, divert to voicemail and check messages regularly when it is safe to pull over)
- do not make calls, dial numbers, text or email while driving
- pull over to the side of the road when it is safe, before making or answering a call, sending a text or email.

10.4.5 Private use of Council cellphones

All personal calls, data and texts on Council cellphones that exceed their plans limits by \$5 or more must be paid by the staff member that has been assigned the cellphone.

Any data usage that exceeds that of a smartphone contract by \$5 or more should be paid for by the staff member that has been assigned the smartphone. The smartphone contract will have sufficient data available for work-related purposes.

Personal use of smartphones must be in line with the Council's internet usage and social media policies.

10.4.6 Care and maintenance of cellphones

The Council expects all cellphones assigned to a staff member to be maintained to a high standard.

All lost and problem cellphones should be reported to the Business Information & Technology Services team.

10.4.7 Cellphones and overseas travel

Staff travelling overseas on Council-based travel and requiring a cellphone or smartphone for work-related use should refer their request to their Director who will liaise with the BITS team.

10.4.8 Smartphone use

Some staff will be issued with a smartphone for their role. In addition to the policies relating to cellphone use outlined in clauses 10.4.1 through 10.4.7 above, the following specifically relates to the use of smartphones at the Council.

Smartphones will have the ability to be located via GPS. This functionality is available to the Information Services team and Operational Managers. The location of a smartphone will only be undertaken by:

- the information technology section to disable and erase a lost phone, or
- Operational Managers to locate the last known position of a missing or overdue staff member (via information technology team).

This functionality may not be used for any other purpose without the prior consent of the Chief Executive, the Director – Corporate Services and/or the staff member to who the phone is assigned.

10.5 Reimbursement for work-related expenses

10.5.1 Work toll calls

The Council will pay all work-related toll calls upon appropriate claim being made and authorised.

10.5.2 Other out-of-pocket expenses

The Council will reimburse staff for out-of-pocket expenses reasonably incurred in the execution of their duties. This includes travel-related expenses such as accommodation, transport and meals. It also includes costs associated with getting necessary licences to use specialised equipment or materials such as firearms and poisons.

The Council will reimburse staff for their reasonable meal expenses, which might include a glass of alcoholic or two glasses of non-alcoholic beverages. Over and above that, expenses considered to be excessive will be borne by the staff concerned. The Council will not reimburse any mini-bar expenses.

The Council expects officers not to tip while they are travelling for work in New Zealand.

Separate meal expenses may not be claimed if a meal is provided as part of another package paid for by the Council.

Expense claim forms for work-related expenses are available on the TRC Toolbox. Valid tax invoices (GST receipts) must be included with claims. EFTPOS receipts only will not be accepted. In the event that a staff member opts to stay in private accommodation, fair and reasonable costs may be considered. Such arrangements should be made in advance and with the approval of the staff member's Manager or Departmental Director.

Expense claims are approved by the staff member's Manager or Departmental Director depending upon their level of delegated authority (refer to financial delegations in the Delegations Manual for the Taranaki Regional Council).

Personal expense reimbursement claims must be submitted promptly after the expenditure is incurred. Approved reimbursement claims will be paid in the next scheduled creditor payment run

10.5.3 Use of private vehicle or equipment

The Council discourages the use of private vehicles for work related activities.

The Council will reimburse staff where out-of-pocket expenses are incurred as a result of the staff member using their vehicle or other private equipment.

Reimbursement (at IRD approved mileage rates for private vehicle use) is subject to a staff member obtaining their Manager or Departmental Director approval prior agreement to the use of the private vehicle or equipment at agreed rates.

10.5.4 Medical expenses

Where a staff member requires medical check-ups or certifications associated with their work duties, the associated costs should be invoiced to the Council provided the Health and Safety Adviser is notified prior to expenditure being incurred and a purchase order is obtained.

11 Purchasing or contracting goods and services

11.1 Delegated authority

The process of incurring expenditure through the purchasing of goods, services and capital items is strictly controlled through delegated authorities. Only those officers with appropriate delegated authority may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council.

Refer to the *Delegations Manual for the Taranaki Regional Council* for the specific delegated authorities.

11.2 Documentation and tendering procedures

This section is currently under review.

An officer exercising expenditure delegations will ensure that the Council receives optimum value for money and that the goods and services purchased were received as ordered. The officer will ensure that his or her decision(s) is impartial and objective, and not influenced by any offers of personal discounts or other privileges. Receipt of such inducements in the absence of prior declaration to the Council is a statutory offence and represents a substantial breach of conduct.

The Council lets a variety of contracts during the normal course of its business. The procedures within this document provide an outline of the standards expected, however they are in no way all inclusive. Some contracts administered by Council require officers to follow tendering procedures set by external agencies, with detailed procedures set out within section standard operating procedures or contract manuals. In the absence of any external requirements this document must be followed.

The following table sets out appropriate procedures and documentation to take place in relation to tendering, gaining quotations and contracting goods and services.

Value of goods & services (GST exclusive)	Procedural and documentation requirements
Goods and services up to \$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design specifications required for product or service required • Obtain at least two quotes (preferably three quotes) where reasonable & possible* • Documentation to include the agreed price, the agreed goods/services to be supplied, & the agreed timeframe for delivery • Confirm approved supplier with either an exchange of letters or by issuing a purchase order • Officer with appropriate delegated authority to sign-off purchase order • While normally lowest price quote will be accepted, other factors such as known track record can be taken into account.

Value of goods & services (GST exclusive)	Procedural and documentation requirements
Goods and services between \$10,000 and \$50,000	<p>A higher standard of purchase definition and documentation is required in this area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail & define what is to be purchased and how the supplier will be selected - usually in the form of a project brief (to be signed off by an officer with appropriate delegated authority) • Obtain a contract number from the Committee Administrator • Based on the project brief, obtain quotes, tenders or expressions of interest • Evaluate the tenders and select preferred suppliers in accordance with the project brief • Prepare a memorandum to the appropriate Director detailing how and why the preferred supplier was selected • Document the purchase via a short-form contract, or in appropriate circumstances a letter, which clearly specifies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the goods or services to be supplied – the timeframe – the costs – any other pertinent factors. • Officer with appropriate delegated authority to sign off contract • File the standard short-form contract & other documentation relating to the contract (e.g., project brief, request for quotes/expressions of interest & other correspondence) on the Contract File, which is maintained by the Committee Administrator.
Goods and services over \$50,000	<p>This requires the highest level of project/purchase definition, evaluation and documentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare project brief/documentation – with the appropriate use of professional advice e.g., architects (to be signed-off by the Chief Executive) • Prepare a Contract Administration Checklist¹ this document is attached to the main contract file to ensure the process is correctly followed • Prepare requests for proposals or tender documents for sign off by appropriate Director and Chief Executive see below • Publicly advertise the approved project brief &/or call for requests for proposals/tenders

¹ Contract Administration Checklists vary between contracts, examples can be found at Document 879494

Value of goods & services (GST exclusive)	Procedural and documentation requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenders are to be opened by the Chief Executive or a delegated Director (detailed process is outlined below) • Evaluate, where appropriate, all proposals/tenders received as outlined below • The successful provider will be subject to a long-form contract (legal advice may be necessary at this stage) • Chief Executive to sign off contract • File the long-form contract & other documentation relating to the contract (e.g., project brief, the request for tenders/proposals, all tenders/proposals received, evaluation of tenders/proposals, the final signed contract & other correspondence) on the Contract File, which is maintained by the Committee Administrator.

*In some circumstances obtaining two or three quotes is impracticable or unnecessary e.g., one supplier, small dollar value etc. From time to time there may be exceptions to this process. Any exceptions below \$50,000 must be endorsed by the relevant Director and any exceptions above \$50,000 by the Chief Executive. These exceptions must be in writing.

Contract and Tender documents will vary across council but should include standard clauses such as those in the example Document 879057. Tender forms will be specific to each contract but should be consistent with the evaluation method being used. The details of the contract are to be documented in the contract specifications, these form part of the contract documents. Tender documents will include:

- Tender instructions
- Conditions of tender
- Explanation of evaluation method
- Tender forms
- The contract documents
- The specifications

Originals of any ongoing correspondence related to the contract including a copy of any certificate of completion are to be filed with the Committee Administrator along with a final report to the Chief Executive on the contract outcomes.

11.3 Method for evaluating proposals

For the purchase of goods and services over \$50,000, the Council uses one of two methods to evaluate the proposal, weighted attribute system or a lowest price conforming system. The method used will be detailed in the tender documents.

Regardless of the evaluation method used a tender evaluation panel will be formed to both open and evaluate tenders based on the method outlined in the tender documents. The Tenders

evaluation panel will include three officers one of whom must be independent of the section letting the contract.

The panel are to prepare a memorandum to the Chief Executive and the appropriate Director detailing the evaluation process and making recommendations as to the successful tenderer, all members of the panel are to sign this memorandum.

11.3.1 Weighted attribute system

Stage 1: Identify the attributes for evaluating the proposal. Examples of attributes of the proposer or applicant such as:

- relevant experience, track record and management skills
- available resources
- methodology
- cost of the proposal.

Stage 2: Grade each of the attributes on a points basis, from 0 (fail) to 5 (excellent). In grading particular attributes consider the following:

- experience, track record and management skills can be graded on the documentation provided in the proposal and on previous experience with the Council. If the Council has no previous first-hand knowledge of the proposer it would be helpful for that proposer to nominate 2 or 3 local authority clients to which reference can be made to assess relevant attributes
- available resources can be graded on both the quality and quantity of personnel that will be committed to the project, the competence of any sub-contractor, and the merit of any specialised software
- methodology will be graded on its ability to deliver agreed outcomes within agreed timeframes
- cost of the proposal should identify the component parts of the total cost and give pricings for each of the component parts of the study. Pricing should be inclusive of all fees, disbursements and incidental costs but exclusive of GST.

Any proposal that scores a zero on any attribute may be excluded from further consideration.

Stage 3: Multiply the grade of each attribute by the weighting of that same attribute to give an index for each attribute. The indices for each proposal will then be summed to give an overall index.

Attribute	Weighting
Relevant experience, track record and management skills	25
Available resources	20
Methodology	25
Price	30

The successful proposal will be the proposal scoring the highest overall index based on the process outlined above (or a similar method, to the same standard, as may suit the circumstances). An example of attributes and weightings is given below. However, appropriate attributes and weightings will need to be assigned for each proposal evaluation.

Example of an evaluation exercise

Three proposers (Proposer A, B and C) are evaluated based to the same attributes and ranked accordingly. After weighing, and despite ranking poorest in terms of price, Proposer C is picked given they have the best total index.

Applicant/ Proposer	Attribute								Total Index
	Experience		Resources		Method		Price		
	Grading (0 - 5)	Weight (x 25)	Grading (0 - 5)	Weight (x 20)	Grading (0 - 5)	Weight (x 25)	Grading (0 - 5)	Weight (x 30)	
A	3	75	2	40	3	75	4	120	310
B	3	75	3	60	3	75	4	120	330
C	4	100	4	80	3	75	3	90	345

11.3.2 Tender evaluation - lowest price conforming tender method

This tender evaluation process shall be conducted in two stages as follows:

- The first stage shall consist of ranking tenders in ascending order based on prices.
- The second stage shall consist of determining tender acceptability when assessed against each of the non-price attributes and no others. Each attribute shall be scored on a pass/fail basis. Any attribute which scores a fail will exclude that tender from further consideration. Determination of acceptability shall commence with the lowest priced tender and shall cease when the first conforming tender is determined.
- Notwithstanding (1) and (2) above, Council may ask for price in a separate envelope and to then assess the non-price attributes of all tenderers before opening the price envelopes.

11.3.3 Opening of tenders

To ensure fairness and transparency all tenders must be opened following the procedures outlined below.

- A member of the tender evaluation panel will be appointed to arrange for the Chief Executive or his delegated Director and the Information & Records Management Adviser to be present when opening tenders
- Tenders are to be removed from the tender box and opened, the Document Management officer will ensure that all items from the tender are appropriately stamped, copied and recorded in the document management system
- Tenders are to be recorded by the Information & Records Management Adviser on a tender log form (Document 88888) in the order that they are opened
- Each tender will be copied and provided to all members of the evaluation panel.
- The complete original tenders including the envelope are to be secured into a suitable file

- Upon acceptance of any tender all unsuccessful tenders are to be filed by the Document Management officer, the successful tender will now form part of the contract and will be filed by the committee administrator

11.4 Sale of surplus assets to staff

As part of normal business, the Council will from time to time dispose of assets. Typically, this is when the assets have reached their replacement criteria, are surplus to requirements or have become obsolete.

The assets will be valued and sold through a tender process that is overseen by the Administration and Facilities team and the Director-Corporate Services. Assets will only be sold to staff for the personal use of the staff member or their immediate family. Assets may not be purchased for commercial gain.

11.5 Private use of Council suppliers

Staff use of Council supplier charging arrangements and accessing Council supplier discounts is prohibited.