



**OMBUDSPERSON**  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

February 14, 2023

*Delivered via email*

Mayor Joan Atkinson  
District of Mackenzie  
1 Mackenzie Blvd  
Mackenzie BC V0J 2C0

Dear Mayor Atkinson:

With many new municipal mayors and council members elected and now sworn in across the province, I wanted to reach out and let you know how the Office of the Ombudsperson can work with, and help, local governments in British Columbia.

If you are continuing in your elected position, thank you for your service to British Columbians. And if you are newly elected, welcome to your very important role.

My office takes complaints from the public about all of the local governments in BC. We are an oversight body, one of the independent offices of the Legislature, and our mandate is to be BC's independent voice for fairness and accountability of the public sector. When we receive people's concerns about public services, we conduct impartial investigations and address the fairness problems that we find. For local governments, that means you may hear from us when we have received a complaint about your municipality and are investigating to determine whether the standard of fair and reasonable service set out in the *Ombudsperson Act* has been met. Where fairness issues are identified, we can consult with you to find a way to address the issues in order to ensure fairness moving forward.

We are also available to help. Our [Public Authority Consultation and Training team](#) can assist you with any questions about fairness you may have. A number of [useful resources](#) are also available on our website, including:

- A [Complaint Handling Guide](#), which contains a [Model Complaints Policy](#);
- Our Quick Tip resource [On Complaint Handling for Local Governments](#);
- [Bylaw Enforcement: Best Practices Guide for Local Governments](#);
- [Open Meetings: Best Practices Guide for Local Governments](#);
- Our 1-hour online [Fairness 101 course](#); and
- Educational [webinars](#).

Our office is also offering a [webinar](#) for public bodies on our recently released [Fairness by Design guide](#). In the webinar, we'll outline the fairness standards found in the guide and how they can be used to ensure your programs are delivered fairly. We will also answer your questions. Webinar details are below:

- **Thursday, March 16, 2023 from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 am**
- [Register here](#)

Please share this invitation with anyone in your organization who may be interested.

Once again, thank you for the important local government role you took on. We look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jay Chalke', written in a cursive style.

Jay Chalke  
Ombudsperson  
Province of British Columbia