

Purpose

1. The purpose of this policy is to establish a complaints management process for resolving complaints, as required under section 268 of the Local Government Act 2009 and Section 306 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 and will provide a framework for identifying, assessing, recording, managing, and resolving complaints in accordance with the customer service charter.
2. Council is committed to promptly, ethically, fairly, transparently, professionally, and-confidentially, manage and resolve all complaints.
3. This policy applies to all complaints regarding Council actions, services and employees including contractors and volunteers. This policy does not include the management of Customer Service Requests, Public Interest Disclosures, Complaints about the Chief Executive Officer, Competitive Neutrality Complaints, Councillor Conduct Complaints, or an Employee Grievance.

Scope

4. This policy applies to all complaints regarding Council actions, services and employees including contractors and volunteers. This policy does not include the management of Customer Service Requests, Public Interest Disclosures, Complaints about the Chief Executive Officer, Competitive Neutrality Complaints, Councillor Conduct Complaints, or an Employee Grievance.
5. This policy should be read in conjunction with the General Complaints Management Guidelines which explains the administrative arrangements for processing complaints.
6. Lodging a complaint for Council's consideration does not preclude the issue being investigated by another group or agency, such as the Queensland Ombudsman or Queensland Human Rights Commission.

Policy Statement

7. Council is committed to providing a level of customer service that acknowledges the rights of affected persons to provide feedback, both positive and negative, on its services and/or lodge a complaint about a decision or other action it takes. This feedback is important to ensure Council and its officers act within legislation/policies and provides continuous organisational improvement. Feedback can be received as a:
 - 7.1 Complaint.
 - 7.2 Compliment.
 - 7.3 Request for information.
 - 7.4 Request for service; or
 - 7.5 Suggestion.

Effective Management of complaints

8. To facilitate the effective management of complaints, Council will:

- 8.1 adopt a customer-focused approach that encourages open feedback and a commitment to resolving complaints.
- 8.2 endeavour to ensure that anyone who is dissatisfied with Council service or product can easily and simply make a complaint and/or feedback.
- 8.3 designate a location and provide multiple channels to lodge complaints which are visible and easily accessible to customers.
- 8.4 acknowledge complaints in writing.
- 8.5 investigate complaints courteously and fairly.
- 8.6 respond to complaints in a timely manner and within prescribed timeframes set out in its management procedure.
- 8.7 establish a system for complaint handling that will enable it to identify trends, eliminate causes of complaints and improve operations and customer service.
- 8.8 reward and recognise staff who receive compliments for their service delivery.
- 8.9 ensure all staff are aware of the General Complaints Management Policy and Procedure.
- 8.10 ensure complaint mechanisms are accessible for all customers and the availability of support for people with low literacy, English as a second language, disability or other access needs is communicated.
- 8.11 The General Complaints Management Guideline details how Council will record and report all Complaints.
- 8.12 If a complainant is not satisfied that a complaint has been satisfactorily resolved, they will be informed of any statutory right of review and, if requested, be provided with details of any further review mechanism that is available.

Applicable Legislation

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Information Privacy Act 2009

Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010

Crime and Corruption Act 2001

Definitions

Complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction by a customer regarding the unsatisfactory delivery of a product or service offered by Council or the unsatisfactory conduct of council employees, contractors and volunteers. A complaint may also be based on Human Rights which includes:

- a. recognition and equality before the law.
- b. right to life.
- c. protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.
- d. freedom from forced work.

- e. freedom of movement.
- f. freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief.
- g. freedom of expression.
- h. peaceful assembly and freedom of association.
- i. taking part in public life.
- j. property rights.
- k. privacy and reputation.
- l. protection of families and children.
- m. cultural rights - generally (enjoyment of culture, religion and language).
- n. cultural rights - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- o. right to liberty and security of person.
- p. humane treatment when deprived of liberty
- q. fair hearing.
- r. rights in criminal proceedings.
- s. right not to be tried or punished more than once.
- t. right not to be subject to retrospective criminal laws.
- u. right to education; and
- v. right to health services.

Compliment means positive feedback about a product or service and staff.

Request for information means an enquiry or request for information about Council services, policies and procedures.

Request for service means a request for action to be taken in relation to a service or product. If a request for service is not acted upon and a second request is received, this may be treated as a service complaint.

Suggestion means a suggested service or product improvement.

Related Documents

General Complaints Management Guideline

Administrative Actions Complaints Policy and Guideline

Customer Service Charter

Human Rights Compatibility Statement

This Policy has been assessed as compatible with the Human Rights protected under the Human Rights Act 2019.

General Complaints Management Policy

Corporate Services - Governance & Administration
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OUNCIL POLICY			
Date Adopted by Council	10 November 2021	Council Resolution	OM2021/11/10.9
Effective Date	10 November 2021	Next Review Date	10 November 2023
Responsible Officer(s)	Manager Governance and Administration	Revokes	Unreasonable Behaviour Policy