

 <b>Central Highlands</b> Regional Council	<b>CENTRAL HIGHLANDS REGIONAL COUNCIL POLICY</b>	
	General Complaints Management	<b>POLICY REF NO</b> CHRCP: 0003

## 1.0 Policy Purpose

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 Council is committed to manage and resolve all complaints in a prompt, ethical, fair, transparent, professional and confidential manner.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Administrative Action Complaint Procedure which explains the administrative arrangements for processing complaints.
- 1.5 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.

## 2.0 Policy Statement

- 2.1 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.

## 3.0 Effective management of complaints

- 3.1 To facilitate the effective management of complaints, council will:
  - 3.1.1 Adopt a customer-focused approach that encourages open feedback and a commitment to resolving complaints.
  - 3.1.2 Endeavour to ensure that anyone who is dissatisfied with Council service or product can easily and simply make a complaint and/or feedback.
  - 3.1.3 Designate a location to lodge complaints which is visible and easily accessible to customers.
  - 3.1.4 Acknowledge complaints.
  - 3.1.5 Investigate complaints courteously and fairly.

Electronic version current – uncontrolled copy valid only at time of printing

Adoption Date: 20/10/2021	Amended Date:	Document Name: General Complaints Management Policy
Replaces: Document Set ID: 1315311	Review Date:	Page 1 of 3

- 3.1.6 Respond to complaints in a timely manner and within prescribed timeframes as set out in its management procedure.
- 3.1.7 Establish a system for complaint handling that will enable it to identify trends, eliminate causes of complaints and improve operations and customer service.
- 3.1.8 Ensure all staff are aware of the General Complaints Management Policy and Procedure.
- 3.1.9 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.
- 3.2 The General Complaints Management Procedure details how council will record and report all complaints.
- 3.3 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.

#### 4.0 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:

- Recognition and equality before the law.
- Right to life.
- Protection from torture and cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment.
- Freedom from forced work.
- Freedom of movement.
- Freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief.
- Freedom of expression.
- Peaceful assembly and freedom of association.
- Taking part in public life.
- Property rights.
- Privacy and reputation.
- Protection of families and children.
- Cultural rights – generally (enjoyment of culture, religion and language).
- Cultural rights – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Right to liberty and security of person.
- Humane treatment when deprived of liberty.
- Fair hearing.
- Rights in criminal proceedings.
- Right to not be tried or punished more than once.
- Right to not be subject to retrospective criminal laws.
- Right to education.
- Right to health services.

Electronic version current – uncontrolled copy valid only at time of printing

Adoption Date: 20/10/2021	Amended Date:	Document Name: General Complaints Management Policy
Revolves: Document Set ID: 1315311	Review Date:	Page 2 of 3

<b>Strategic Link</b>	Customer Service Charter <a href="#">s 268</a> , Local Government Act 2009 <a href="#">s 306</a> , Local Government Regulation 2012 Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 Crime and Corruption Act 2001
<b>Category</b>	Organisational
<b>Lead Business Unit</b>	Governance
<b>Public Consultation</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Adoption Date</b>	20 October 2021
<b>New Review Date</b>	
<b>Document Number</b>	1315311
<b>Record Keeping</b>	ECM, Vine and Council Website
<b>Related Documents</b>	General Complaints Management Procedure (PROC036) Administrative Action Complaint Procedure (PROC035) Code of Conduct for Councillors Policy (CHRCP0040) Employee Code of Conduct (CHRCP0026) Investigations – Councillors Conduct Policy (CHRC0056)

Electronic version current – uncontrolled copy valid only at time of printing

Adoption Date: 20/10/2021	Amended Date:	Document Name: General Complaints Management Policy
Revokes: Document Set ID: 1315311	Review Date:	Page 3 of 3
Version: 13, Version Date: 18/04/2024	Version:	