

# COUNCIL POLICY LG533

## COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

KEY FOCUS AREA LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is for Council to:

1. Demonstrate the Town of Claremont's (**Town**) commitment to receiving, acknowledging and resolving complaints in order to improve service provision.
2. Provide guidance and set out expectations in relation to the Town's complaints management approach.

### Definition

**Complaint** means an expression of dissatisfaction with the Town, a level of service, a lack of promised service or response, or the conduct of a person employed by or representing the Town, which is not anonymous, made to the Town through its Council Members, Chief Executive Officer or any of its employees in writing or verbally, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

### Policy

The Town's Employee Code of Conduct and Customer Experience Charter detail expectations in relation to employee behaviour and levels of service.

Council supports and promotes a culture where complaints are seen as opportunities to learn and improve service delivery. Council provides the following guidelines to assist with the Town's approach to managing complaints:

1. Complaints will remain confidential wherever possible and respectful of a person's privacy.
2. Complaints are as a general rule to be processed within the time frames specified in the Town's Customer Experience Charter.
3. The complainant will be kept aware of the progress of a complaint throughout the complaints process. Where a complaint has come via a Council Member, the Town will ensure that the Council Member is made aware of the progress or outcome of the complaint.
4. The Town will be:
  - a. Focused on the complainant with visible and accessible contact points provided for complaints.
  - b. Accountable and transparent.
  - c. Responsive and empathetic.
  - d. Objective, fair and neutral.
  - e. Outcome focused and ensure the complainant is involved in the process.
5. The Town will monitor and track any trends in complaints and on request of Council report to Council or Committees on any trends
6. The Town will provide training to employees in complaints management.
7. All correspondence relating to a complaint will be recorded within the Town's records management system.

The CEO may determine that the Town refuse to investigate a complaint or to continue corresponding with a complainant, if in the opinion of the CEO:

- a complaint is trivial, frivolous and/or vexatious;
- a complaint has been satisfactorily responded to;

- the complainant is acting unreasonably, abusive, aggressive, rude, angry, harassing and/or hostile.

The substance of a complaint will dictate the resources allocated by the Town to the complaint. Where appropriate a response to the complainant may be outside of the Customer Experience Charter timeframes.

In response to a complaint, the Town may determine to take one of the following courses of action:

- Take no further action and advise the complainant of the reason/s.
- Advise the complainant that the Town will not respond to issues already raised and responded to.
- Advise the complainant that all correspondence will be in writing not over the phone.
- Advise the complainant that all correspondence will be with a specific staff member of the Town.
- Resolve the complaint by use of appropriate strategies such as, but not limited to, mediation, informal discussion or negotiation.
- Discontinue the assessment in circumstances where it becomes evident that the matter should be referred to another body or person and advise the complainant accordingly.

If a complainant is not satisfied with the way that the Town has handled their initial complaint then they may apply for an internal review of the complaint. The reviewing officer will be senior to the initial officer and will reconsider the decision reached, taking all relevant matters into account.

Document Control Box			
<b>Legislation:</b>	<i>Nil</i>		
<b>Organisational:</b>	Code of Conduct Customer Experience Charter Online Complaint Form		
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