COMPLAINT HANDLING POLICY

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RELATED STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS, POLICIES OR PROCEDURES:	Customer Experience Charter Customer Experience Strategy Records Management Policy Instrument of Delegation Councillor Code of Conduct Staff Code of Conduct Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy Workplace Bullying Occupational Violence Policy Public Interest Disclosure Procedure Staff Complaints Policy Staff Complaints Procedure Complaint Handling Procedure Complaint Handling Framework Victorian Ombudsman – Councils and complaints – A good practice guide 2nd edition July 2021
RELATED LEGISLATION:	Local Government Act 2020 Gender Equality Act 2020 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Freedom of Information Act 1982 Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012 Public Records Act 1973 Equal Opportunity Act 2010 Infringements Act 2006 Planning and Environment Act 1987 Competition and Consumer Act 2010 Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011 Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Food Act 1984 Environment Protection Act 2017 AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for Complaint Management ISO 10002:2018 International Complaint handling Standard AS 8001:2021 Fraud and Corruption Control Standard

EVIDENCE OF APPROVAL:



Signed by Chief Executive Officer

FILE LOCATION: K:\EXECUTIVE\Strategies policies and procedures\Policies - adopted PDF and Word\POL Complaint Handling Policy v2.docx

Policy documents are amended from time to time; therefore you should not rely on a printed copy being the current version. Please consult the policies on the Loddon Shire website (Council Policies) or Intranet (Organisational Policies) to ensure that the version you are using is up to date. This document is available in alternative formats (e.g. larger font) if requested.

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Complaint Handling Policy (the Policy) is to provide Council's commitment and principles for effective complaint management across all areas of operations. The Complaint Handling Framework sets out how this commitment is operationalised.

2 SCOPE

This Policy applies to all complaints made by members of the public about Council officers (including the CEO), contractors, volunteers of Council and Councillors (both individually and as a decision-making body).

All complaints received by Council will be managed in accordance with the Complaint Handling Framework Where a complaint is received by Council that is subject to specific statutory or other legislative appeal process, the management of the complaint will be in accordance with relevant external process.

This may include but is not limited to:

- complaints relating to a planning application or decision
- complaints relating to parking or local law infringements
- complaints relating to building, health and food services
- public interest disclosures alleging fraud, corruption or other criminal behaviour
- freedom of information requests
- work related complaints from Council staff (i.e. complaints relating to their employment)
- complaints already reviewed by an external agency.

3 POLICY

Council is committed to delivering high quality services, Council recognises that there may be occasions when the community may not be fully satisfied with the service they have received.

Council will provide a fair, consistent and transparent complaint handling process for customers (complainants). This will be achieved by:

- providing an open and transparent customer complaint handling system
- ensuring complaints are handled fairly and objectively
- establishing timeframes for resolving complaints
- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of Council officers, and
- outlining how complaints will be recorded and responded to
- driving continuous improvement.

For further information on Council's complaint handling approach and how to make a complaint, refer to the Complaint Handling Framework.

4 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS OR ABBREVIATIONS USED

Term	Definition
Complaint	Communication, whether verbally or in writing, to the Council by a person of their dissatisfaction with – a) the quality of an action taken, decision made or service provided by a Council officer, Councillor, Volunteer or a contractor engaged by the Council; or b) the delay by a Council officer, Councillor, Volunteer or a contractor engaged by the Council in taking an action, making a decision or providing a service; or c) a policy or decision made by Council or a Council officer or a contractor.
Complainant/Customer	The person/people (resident, ratepayer, business owner or visitor) who has expressed dissatisfaction
Council	The body of elected Councillors
Contractor	Any third party engaged by the Council to carry out functions on the Council's behalf
Council officer	Any person employed by the Council to carry out the functions of the Council, and the Council's CEO

5 HUMAN RIGHTS STATEMENT

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights Act. Loddon Shire Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees. The Council will formally involve elected employee Health and Safety Representatives in any workplace change that may affect the health and safety of any of its employees.

6 REVIEW

The Manager Organisation Development will review this policy for any necessary amendments no later than 4 years after adoption of this current version.