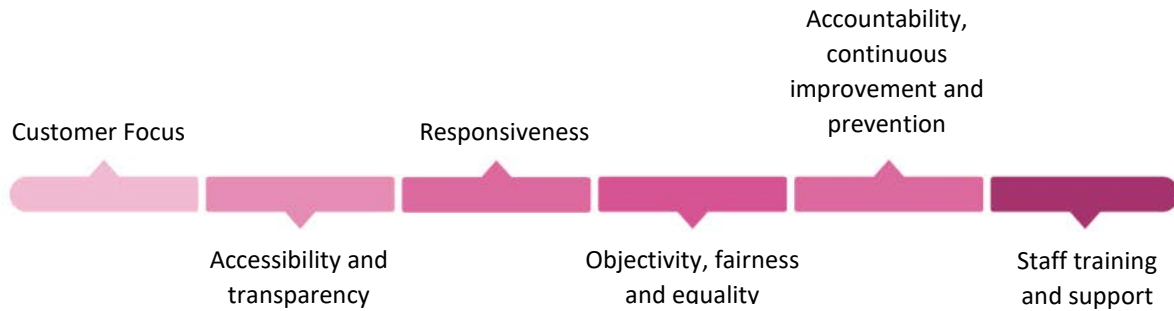


# Bulloo Shire Council

## Complaints Management Framework



### Principles



### Our approach

Monitoring and reviewing the customer complaints system

1. Receive complaint and record in eDRMS
2. Assess and resolve or escalate
3. Review and decide solution
4. Communicate outcome
5. Close complaint

Better outcomes for our customers

### What is a complaint?

An expression of dissatisfaction about the service or action of the council, or its staff, by a person who is directly affected by the service or action of the council, and includes complaints related to:

- a decision made, or a failure to make a decision, by a public service employee of the council
- an act, or failure to act, by the council
- the formulation of a proposal or intention by the council
- the making of a recommendation by the council
- the customer service provided by a public service employee of the council.

### What is not a complaint?

Our customers contact us for many reasons and most of the time our customers do not have a complaint. It is not a complaint when our customers:

- request more information
- request a change in services or request a new service
- make a suggestion for improving our services
- express a concern about a situation
- provide feedback on the department's performance
- are not directly affected by the decision or action of the department
- providing information e.g. reporting an incident.

## Accessibility

Complaints can be made by:

- Telephone
- Email
- In Person
- Social Media
- Letter

In making a complaint, complainants:

- can be supported by a friend, an advocate, an interpreter or a community elder
- will be provided information about where to lodge a complaint, how to make a complaint and how complaints will be managed, including referring complaints to external agencies, where needed
- can make a complaint anonymously
- can request other reasonable assistance such as translation services or text telephone services.

## Complaint type and response times

The time it takes to resolve a complaint depends on a number of factors, including when the complaint was made and the complexity of the complaint. As a guide:

- simple complaints may take up to 5 working days
- complaints requiring some inquiry may take up to 15 working days
- complaints that require investigation and referral may take up to 45 working days or longer in some cases.

## Complaint categories

Council uses set categories to record complaints at the organisational level. This helps us analyse complaints to identify trends and issues. Business areas may use more detailed categories to inform their business improvement processes. The organisational categories are:

- Corporate Services
- Governance Services
- Financial Services
- Town Services
- Road Services
- Rural Services

## Excluded complaints

Some complaints are outside the scope of this framework and will be managed through different processes:

- complaints about certain decisions made under legislation
- complaints about decisions made under a contract
- employee complaints about their employment (Public Service Act 2008 and Public Service Commission Directives)
- complaints involving corrupt conduct (Crime and Corruption Act 2001)
- public interest disclosures (Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010)

- administrative actions complaints
- competitive neutrality complaints

**Complainant responsibilities**

Customers making a complaint are responsible for:

- understanding that complex complaints can take time to review
- providing a clear idea of the problem and the desired solution
- providing all relevant information when the complaint is made
- informing the department of changes affecting the complaint including telling the department when they no longer need our help
- cooperating with us in a respectful and reasonable way
- understanding that abusive, aggressive or disrespectful conduct is not tolerated.

**How we handle complaint**

We try to resolve complaints as quickly as possible at the point where the complaint is received or after it is re-directed to the appropriate business area. Unresolved complaints are referred for review.

Our approach to handling complaints is based on the Australian and New Zealand standard on complaints management (AS/NZS 10002:2014).

<p><b>Early Resolution</b> <i>Frontline handling and resolution of customer complaints</i></p>	<p><b>Internal Review</b> <i>Unresolved customer complaints referred for review and resolution</i></p>	<p><b>External Review</b> <i>Unresolved customer complaints reviewed by an external agency</i></p>
<p>Resolving at point of receipt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We always try to resolve complaints quickly at the frontline or the point where the complaint is received</li> <li>• All complaints received are recorded in councils eDRMS</li> <li>• We provide acknowledgement of the receipt of a complaint</li> <li>• We manage complaints locally to fix local problems.</li> </ul>	<p>Referring for internal review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complainants may decide to submit their complaint for internal review if dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint</li> <li>• The complaint and the results of the review are recorded in councils eDRMS</li> <li>• At a corporate level, we use complaints data to inform improvements and to meet our complaints reporting obligation under the Public Service Act 2008.</li> </ul>	<p>Independent review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complainants may decide to submit their complaint for review to an external agency such as the Queensland Ombudsman</li> <li>• We provide information to complainants on alternative avenues for review.</li> </ul>