

COMPLAINTS POLICY

POLICY NO: **C2500**

Adopted 18 April 2006

OBJECTIVE:

1. The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and concise process for managing complaints in respect of services provided by Council. It provides guidelines for both customers and Council staff for making and dealing with a complaint.
2. This policy aims to ensure that all complaints are treated consistently and fairly.
3. This policy aims to encourage excellence in customer service and identify areas that may require improvement.

POLICY STATEMENT:

1. Narrandera Shire Council recognises a customer's right to make complaints, comments or suggestions about the level and quality of services provided by the Council. Council values the opportunity this feedback provides in identifying areas that may need improvement.
2. Complaints may be received by telephone, in writing or in person.
3. All complaints will be received courteously, investigated and acted upon quickly, fairly and appropriately.
4. Council staff receiving and investigating the complaint are to be treated with the same level of respect as described in point 3.
5. The Council staff member receiving the complaint will endeavour to solve the matter at the time of lodgement. If this is not possible the matter will be referred to the appropriate person that possesses the relevant knowledge and expertise.
6. Complainant is to receive acknowledgment with the aim of providing a resolution within 14 days for straightforward matters and 28 days for complex matters. Complainant to be kept informed should investigations proceed outside the recommended response time frames.
7. Where a complaint is proven to be justified, corrective action may include:
 - An apology (**Note** under the civil liability act an apology does not constitute an admission of liability and is not relevant in the determination of fault or liability in connection with civil liability of any kind);

- Necessary action to fix the matter being complained of;
 - Amendment of Council's policy or procedure;
 - Other action deemed appropriate in the circumstances.
8. Confidentiality and privacy requirements will be followed if and as required when dealing with complaint issues;
 9. Complainants who may be dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint may request a review of the matter. This review may be handled by the relevant Director or General Manager. Matters which involve possible maladministration, potential corrupt conduct or substantial waste will be referred to the General Manager who will investigate for consideration in accordance with Code of Conduct requirements;
 10. The lodging of a complaint with Council does not in any way compromise the right of the customer to complain to the Ombudsman, Department of Local Government or the Independent Commission Against Corruption;
 11. Protected Disclosures will be managed in accordance with Council's Protected Disclosure Policy.