



CHERBOURG ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL

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COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY

OVERVIEW

To manage customer feedback and ensure complaints are dealt with in the most effective and efficient manner, Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council (CASC) has developed processes for dealing with complaints in key areas, which form CASC's Complaints Management System. CASC will deal with complaints at the local level and, in some cases, provide an avenue of independent review.

CASC's Complaints Management Policy does not preclude a customer approaching any of CASC's political representatives directly with a complaint or with any other kind of feedback.

CASC's customers may, at any time, refer their matter of concern to an external agency, e.g. Queensland Ombudsman or the Crime and Corruption Commission.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all CASC employees including permanent, temporary, casual or part-time employees, contractors or volunteers. It covers all employees, regardless of their employment status, role or position.

Other CASC policies and procedures must also be taken into consideration when carrying out duties and when applying this policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

CASC acknowledges the right of customers to provide feedback, both positive and negative, about its services.

CASC is committed to addressing complaints fairly, promptly and professionally and ensuring complainants are treated equally. This policy ensures:

- accessible, comprehensive and clear complaints procedures are in place
- complaints are managed in a clear and transparent way
- natural justice and procedural fairness are followed at all times
- specific complaints are resolved in accordance with legislative requirements
- employees are empowered to resolve complaints at the local level
- data collection and analysis occurs to allow for continuous improvement in customer service.

Complaints will be managed in accordance with the appropriate procedure for the type of complaint made.

SCOPE

CASC's Complaints Management Policy applies to its various complaints processes but does not apply to complaints already covered by other statutory review mechanisms or under corrupt conduct that should be directed to the Crime and Corruption Commission.

DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with CASC's activities in governing the community of Cherbourg.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

A complaint may be made in the following ways:

- visit the Council Office at 22 Barambah Avenue, Cherbourg QLD 4605
- write to Council at 22 Barambah Avenue, Cherbourg QLD 4605

Complaints must be made in writing, signed and dated. Complaints may be made anonymously, however sufficient detail will be required so that CASC may deal with the complaint.

COMPLAINTS BY THIRD PARTIES

CASC will accept complaints by a person (an agent) on another person's behalf if the person wishing to complain has authorised the action on their behalf. CASC will respond directly to the person wishing to complain and not to the agent, unless a letter of authority directing a response to the agent is provided to CASC.

If a complaint is lodged on another person's behalf by a professional advisor, e.g. a solicitor or accountant, CASC will respond directly to that advisor.

PRINCIPLES OF INVESTIGATION

1. CASC will investigate complaints in a fair, objective and timely manner. The following natural justice principles will apply in all cases:
 - an absence of bias
 - decisions based on evidence
 - proper examination of all issues.
2. A complaint made to CASC and dealt with under CASC's Complaints Management Policy does not generally stop the operation of the decision or action under investigation.
3. In some instances, complaints may not be investigated or the investigation may be discontinued if:
 - a complaint is made frivolously, without grounds, lacking in substance, or with the intent to harass
 - the complainant seeks to revisit the same issue after an initial investigation when no new evidence or material is provided
 - the complainant displays aggressive or abusive behaviour, or threatens or uses physical violence against themselves, a Council employee, another person or property.

TIMEFRAME

CASC is committed to resolving complaints as quickly and efficiently as possible and in a timely manner. The length of time taken to deal with a complaint will depend on the circumstances of each complaint, such as the complexity of issues in the complaint, the time required to obtain necessary information, the time taken to hold a hearing, if required, and the availability of the parties.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality of complaints, including the identity of the customer, will be maintained where requested and in accordance with relevant legislation and CASC policies. However, if the complaint is against a particular council employee and they request a copy of the complaint to address the matter appropriately; this may be permitted at the discretion of CASC.

REPORTING

CASC will report publicly on complaints in accordance with legislative requirements.

AUTHORITY

Council

WORKPLACE PARTICIPANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*I acknowledge:
receiving the CASC Policy;
that I should comply with the policy; and
that there may be disciplinary consequences if I fail to comply, which may result in the termination of my
employment.*

Your name:

Signed:

Date:
