

# COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT POLICY

### 1. Scope

This Policy is applicable to all Rockhampton Regional Council (RRC) Councillors, staff, volunteers and contractors.

This Policy does not apply to complaints made under the *Right to Information Act 2009* or the *Information Privacy Act 2009*. Complaints made under these pieces of legislation are managed under Rockhampton Regional Council's policies:

- RRC Right to Information Policy
- RRC Information Security Policy
- RRC Privacy Complaint Handling Procedure

### 2. Purpose

This Policy sets out Council's legislative obligations and approach to managing, handling and reporting on complaints.

### 3. Reference (eg Legislation, related documents)

Local Government Act 2009  
Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010  
Crime and Misconduct Act 2001  
Ombudsman Act 2001  
Public Sector Ethics Act 1994  
Integrity Act 2009

RRC Actionable Communications Procedure  
RRC Administrative Action Complaint Management Procedure  
RRC Reporting Official Misconduct Policy

### 4. Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:

**Affected Person:** A person who is apparently directly affected by an administrative action of Council.

**Administrative Action:** A decision or failure to make a decision, an act or a failure to do an act, the formulation of a proposal or intention, the making of a recommendation by Council.

**CEO:** Chief Executive Officer of Rockhampton Regional Council

**Council:** Rockhampton Regional Council

## **5. Context**

### **5.1 Complaints about Council's Services**

Council takes all complaints about its services seriously and is committed to responding quickly and efficiently. Complaints may be lodged by an affected person either in writing or verbally. The department referred to in the complaint will be responsible for the initial investigation.

Council will follow the Actionable Communications Procedure to investigate complaints initially.

Complainants not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation conducted by the department may appeal the decision to the CEO for investigation under the Administrative Action Complaint Management Procedure.

### **5.2 Complaints about Council Staff**

Complaints about the behaviour or actions of Council staff may be made either in writing or verbally. Council's section People, Performance and Wellbeing (PPW) are responsible for the initial investigation and will follow their approved policies and procedures.

Once PPW have finalised the investigation, the staff member may be able to appeal the decision. The appeal investigation will be undertaken by the Ethics and Integrity Unit.

### **5.3 Complaints about the CEO**

Complaints about the behaviour or actions of the CEO may be made either in writing or verbally. The Ethics and Integrity Unit is responsible for the investigation of the complaint. The Ethics and Integrity Unit will adhere to all relevant State legislation in conducting the investigation and report to Council the outcome of the investigation.

### **5.4 Complaints about Councillors**

Complaints about the behaviour or actions of Councillors may be made either in writing or verbally. The CEO maintains responsibility for investigating these complaints. The CEO may refer the complaint to the Ethics and Integrity Unit for investigation. The Ethics and Integrity Unit will investigate the complaint and apply all relevant Council policies, procedures and State legislation. The Ethics and Integrity Unit will report the outcome of the investigation to the CEO. The CEO is responsible for completing or delegating any follow up actions arising from the investigation.

### **5.5 Referrals from Outside Agencies**

Council may receive complaint referrals from outside agencies such as the Queensland Ombudsman, Crime and Misconduct Commission, the Public Sector Commission, etc. These referrals will be made to the CEO. The CEO may refer the complaint to the Ethics and Integrity Unit for investigation.

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ADOPTED/APPROVED:	Council Meeting, 28 June 2011	Policy No: POL.A2.12/Page 2
AMENDED:	Version No. 1	
DUE FOR REVISION:	June 2013	
REVOKED/SUPERSEDED:		
GROUP:	Office of the Chief Executive Officer	
SECTION:	Office of the Chief Executive Officer	

The Ethics and Integrity Unit will investigate the complaint and apply all relevant Council policies, procedures and State legislation. The Ethics and Integrity Unit will report the outcome of the investigation to the CEO. The CEO is responsible for completing or delegating any follow up actions arising from the investigation.

## 5.6 Communications with Complainants

Council is committed to transparency in its operations. Council will keep a complainant informed of the progress of the complaint investigation; however Council does not consider the release of personal information to complainants as appropriate.

## 5.7 Role of the Ethics and Integrity Unit

Council's Ethics and Integrity Unit is responsible for:

- Providing advice to Council departments investigating complaints about Council's services under the Actionable Communications Procedure;
- Investigating all complaints referred by the CEO;
- Coordinating other Council units assisting in the investigation of complaints. The Ethics and Integrity Unit is solely responsible for generating reports in relation to investigations where another unit has provided assistance/consultation, e.g. where the Ethics and Integrity Unit requests assistance from Internal Audit, the Ethics and Integrity Unit is the only unit able to report on the investigation;
- Updating the Public Interest Disclosure database;
- Being the Central Registrar for Council's complaint registers;
- Reporting to the CEO and Council as required on Complaints.

## 5.8 Reporting on Complaints

Council will report on complaints as per the relevant State legislation.

The Ethics and Integrity Unit will report on complaints at the CEO's discretion.

## 6. Evaluation Process:

This Policy is reviewed when any of the following occur:

1. The related information is amended or replaced.
2. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the Council.

Notwithstanding the above, this Policy is to be reviewed at intervals of no more than two years.

## 7. Responsibilities:

Sponsor	Chief Executive Officer
Business Owner	Chief Executive Officer
Policy Owner	Chief Executive Officer
Policy Compliance	Governance and Innovation

**8. Changes to Policy:**

This Policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by the Council.

**EVAN PARDON  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**