

# Feedback and Complaints Management Policy

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Feedback and Complaints Management Policy (the Policy) is intended to ensure that AlburyCity (Council) handles feedback and complaints effectively and provides an efficient, fair and accessible mechanism for resolving complaints.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This Policy relates to the management of complaints made to Council and applies to all Councillors, Council officers, and any persons carrying out work on behalf of the Council including contractors and volunteers.

## 3. What is a complaint under this Policy?

- 3.1 'Expression of dissatisfaction made to AlburyCity relating to its products, services, people or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.'
- 3.2 Based on this definition, a complaint includes, but is not limited to, an expression of dissatisfaction with:
  - Council's procedures, fees, charges, agents and quality of service provided.
  - A decision taken in implementing Council's Policy.
  - Council's decision-making process, or
  - The performance of our people including contractors and volunteers

## 4. What is not a complaint under this Policy.

- 4.1 A Code of Conduct complaint which is dealt with under the AlburyCity Code of Conduct and the Procedures for the Administration of the Code of Conduct.
- 4.2 A request for works or services – unless it is a further request where there has been no response to the initial request where, in the view of the customer, the response is unsatisfactory.
- 4.3 A complaint about an individual or event, service or business for which Council is not responsible.
- 4.4 A request for information or an explanation of Policies or Procedures.
- 4.5 A disagreement with Council's policies or a lawfully made decision.
- 4.6 The lodging of an appeal or objection in accordance with a standard Procedure or Policy, for example a complaint about an approved development or draft Policy or plan, unless this is recorded as a complaint about Council's decision-making process.
- 4.7 A Protected Disclosure Complaint. This type of complaint is dealt with under the Protected Disclosure Act 1994.

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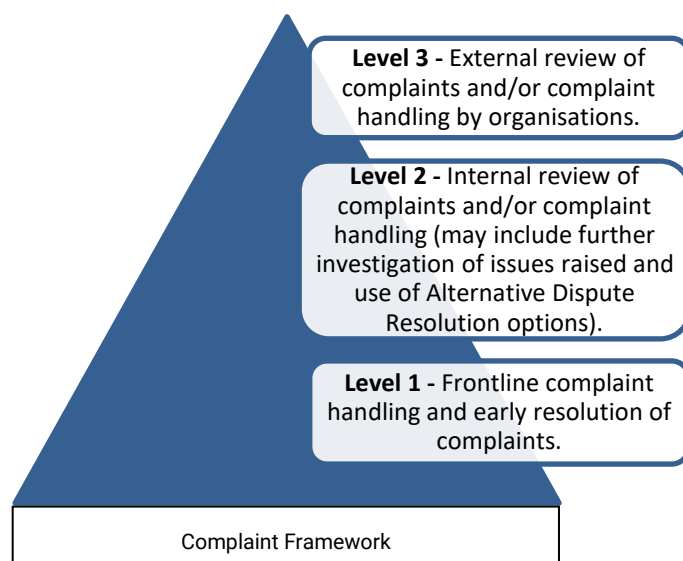
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## 5. Feedback

- 5.1 Feedback is a compliment, suggestion or comment not defined as a complaint. Council encourages feedback as this provides a business improvement opportunity. Compliments demonstrate community appreciation for excellence in service delivery and allow these efforts to be formally recognised.

## 6. Complaint Framework

- 6.1 AlburyCity's complaint framework incorporates a three-level approach to complaint handling. This approach aligns to the recommendations of the NSW Ombudsman, Effective complaint handling guidelines 3rd edition; February 2017.



- 6.2 **Level 1**  
AlburyCity aims to resolve complaints at the first level (the frontline). Officers will be adequately equipped to respond to complaints, including being given appropriate authority, training and supervision. Where this is not possible the complaint may be escalated to a more senior officer.
- 6.3 **Level 2**  
This second level of complaint handling provides for the following internal mechanisms:
- assessment and possible investigation of the complaint and decision/s already made, if the complainant remains unsatisfied with the process and/or outcome, and/or
  - facilitated resolution - a person not connected with the complaint reviews the matter and attempts to find an outcome acceptable to the relevant parties.
- 6.4 **Level 3**  
If the complaint is not resolved to the customer's satisfaction through AlburyCity's internal complaint handling Procedures, the complainant will be advised of alternate avenues such

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as the NSW Ombudsman, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the NSW Office of Local Government, Central Licensing and Regulatory Support (for children's services), or as a last resort, may be referred to a legal remedy.

## 7. Confidentiality

- 7.1 Confidentiality of complaints, including the identity of the complainant will be maintained, however for the matter to be investigated and to ensure fair process for all concerned, the details of the complaint may have to be disclosed to the relevant parties involved. This will only take place in accordance with relevant legislation or policies.

## 8. References

### Related Council Policies and Plans

- Privacy Management Plan
- Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Employee Grievance Policy Procedure
- Fraud Recognition and Control
- Procurement Policy
- Internal Investigation Procedures
- Child and Young Persons Protection Procedures
- Customer Service Charter
- Internal Reporting Policy and Procedure, and
- Compliance and Enforcement Policy

### External references – Acts and Regulations

- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth)*
- *Protected Disclosures Act 1994 (NSW)*
- *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)*
- *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)*
- Australian Standard AS 4269
- NSW Ombudsman – Effective complaint handling guidelines, 3rd Edition – February 2017
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services Regulation 2017*, and
- NSW Office of Local Government, Practice Note 9, *Complaints Management in Council*.

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## 9. Authorisation

<b>Owner</b>	<b>Directorate</b>	Business, Growth and Community – Engagement
	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Team Leader Customer Experience
<b>Authorisation</b>		
<b>Review Date</b>	February 2026	
<b>Register</b>	This Policy is included in the Public Policy and Procedure Register.	
<b>Record of Amendments</b>	April 2013	
	March 2021	Reviewed and updated

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