

ADMINISTRATION POLICY No 9

SUBJECT - COMPLAINT HANDLING

POLICY OBJECTIVE:

The Shire is committed to resolving complaints in a timely, fair and equitable manner.

It is important that customers are able to easily lodge a complaint and have the complaint considered by the relevant officer of department.

It is also important that if the customer is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint that the matter is able to be referred to a higher level for consideration. The customer should be informed of their rights in this regard.

Complaints will be used to review and make positive changes to the Councils policies and procedures.

BACKGROUND

This policy covers all aspects of the Shire's services including water services.

It does not relate to complaints that must be legally addressed in another manner such as the State Administrative Tribunal or under the Whistleblowers Protection legislation. Anonymous complaints are not considered under this policy.

A complaint is defined as a grievance a customer may have against the quality of a service, program or process of the Shire.

This process applies in the case of a review of a bill or charge at the customer's request

It is intended that complaints are resolved within 15 business days from the date the complaint is received.

PROCESS

The complaints process is outlined in the following steps:

1. Customers are encouraged to discuss their complaint with the officer of the department which is the subject of the complaint and to attempt to resolve the issue at this level.
2. If the complaint cannot be resolved at the first point of contact the matter will be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer and the complainant will be advised of the outcome in writing.
3. The advice to the customer in step 2 will include the details of an independent party the matter can be referred to if the matter is still unresolved or the complainant is still not satisfied.

4. Once the matter has been completed the CEO will review the circumstances of the complaint and make any relevant changes to the Shire's operations to lessen the probability of further complaints.

INDEPENDENT PARTIES

If the matter cannot be resolved to the customer's satisfaction they have the right to refer the matter to one of the following independent parties.

For general complaints

The Ombudsman Western Australia

<http://www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au/>

For water services complaints

The Energy and Water Ombudsman

<http://www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au/energyandwater/>