



## **Report to General Manager**

Attachments:  
Nil

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**SUBJECT:** Customer Feedback and Complaints Report: 1 January to 30 June 2016

**AUTHOR:** Ian Curry, Manager Governance and Committee Services

**ENDORSED BY:** Sandra Moore, Acting Director Corporate Services

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the complaints, both justified and partially justified, and compliments received during the period 1 January to 30 June 2016. A comparison is made to the total number of customer contacts that Council received during the same period.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Nil

### **Local Government Act 1993: Section 23A Guidelines - Council Decision Making During Merger Proposal Period**

The Guidelines have been considered in the preparation of this report and are not applicable

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**1. THAT** the report be received.

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## LINK TO DELIVERY PROGRAM

The relationship with the Delivery Program is as follows:

Direction: 5. Our Civic Leadership

Outcome: 5.5 Customer focused Council services

## BACKGROUND

Council's Complaints Handling Policy requires that a report be provided to Council on a six monthly basis, detailing the registered complaints received for the year to date.

Production of a biannual complaints/compliments report is recognised as good practice, gives a summary of the complaints/compliments received across Council and outlines current trends in the number and type of complaints being received by Council. It is used to monitor performance and highlight areas where improvements to customer service may be required along with other customer feedback and consultation results.

Complaints received from residents and other members of the public are treated with the utmost seriousness. Council aims to handle complaints in a professional, respectful and timely manner in order to resolve the issues raised by complainants, and where possible, to avoid a repeat of a similar incident.

Council uses the compliments received to identify areas of good/better/best practice by staff and incorporate those practices in other areas of Council.

## CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement is not required.

## SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

The following table provides a summary of the key sustainability implications:

QBL Pillar	Implications
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nil.</li></ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nil.</li></ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nil.</li></ul>
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Services, policies and process/procedures may require a review as a result of complaints received.</li><li>• If Council fails to respond satisfactorily to complaints and where justified and appropriate, to take action, it risks losing public confidence and damaging its overall reputation.</li></ul>

## DETAIL

This report contains a summary of complaints and compliments received, in the period 1 January to 30 June 2016.

### 1. Contacts with Council

During this period, contacts with Council (incoming) totaled **36047** (see Table 1).

<b>Table 1: Contacts with Council 1 July to 31 December 2015</b>	
Requests for Service	34511
Complaints	13
Compliments	52
Other	1461
<b>Total</b>	<b>36047</b>

### 2. Complaints

Complaints are defined by Council as an expression of dissatisfaction with Council's policies, procedures, charges, staff, agents or quality of service. Complaints may relate to a specific incident or issue involving Council, or to matters of a more philosophical or general nature regarding Council's processes and/or procedures.

Trends in complaints handling, as well as in the number and type of complaints received are registered and assessed biannually.

A more concise report has been prepared compared to previous periods.

Details of complaints received and action taken, are provided by each Director on a biannual basis to Council's management executive (MANEX). Reports provide relevant details of the complaint, including the following information:

- The outcome of the investigations in each instance;
- Action taken to address the complainant's issues;
- Feedback from the complainant where possible, as to satisfactory resolution of the complaint or otherwise;
- Whether the complaint was justified; and
- Recommendations or actions taken to improve service.

Code of Conduct complaints are not included in this report. The Public Officer will prepare a statistical summary of Code of Conduct complaints received for the statutory Annual Report, which will be reported to Council in due course.

#### 2.1 Complaints Received

Council received 13 complaints during the period 1 January to 30 June 2016 made by 13 complainants. 10 (77%) of the complaints were considered to be justified or partly justified.

A complaint is deemed justified where the investigation has shown the complaint to be valid and that it occurred under Council's area of control/responsibility. It should be noted that the decision as to whether a complaint is justified or unjustified/unsubstantiated is determined by the appropriate Director.

Overall, justified complaints recorded against Council have decreased from 14 in the first half of 2015/16 to 10 in the second half of 2015/16.

Each Director has access to reports analysing complaints in respect of their own service and will use this information to actively improve the overall management of their service and improve the service the customer receives. Some specific issues can be identified from those complaints considered to be justified and these are addressed by the relevant division.

Directors have discretion with reference to the recommendations they make but must ensure that appropriate action is taken to reduce the likelihood of further complaints being received on the same issue.

## **2.2 Complaint Resolution**

Council has service level agreements for responding to customers in accordance with the Complaints Handling Policy. A complaint must be resolved within 10 working days of being received. Of all the complaints (including those unjustified) 78% of complaints were resolved within 10 working days in the second half of 2015/16 compared to 89% in the first half of 2015/16.

No complaints received remained unresolved.

From an analysis of the complaints, there do not appear to be any major trends or issues that require specific attention.

## **3. Compliments**

The report also provides information on the compliments received by Council during the period.

### **3.1 Compliments Received**

For the period 1 January to 30 June 2016, the number of compliments received decreased significantly from 117 to 52.

However, Council received significantly more compliments than complaints this year.