

## 10.6. Customer Feedback and Complaints Report July - December 2022

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**ENDORSED BY:** Shane Sullivan, Executive Manager Governance

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

### **PURPOSE:**

To provide a summary of the complaints and compliments received during the period 1 July to 31 December 2022.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report is provided to Council every six months. It compares the number of complaints to the total number of customer contacts for the period 1 July to 31 December 2022, summarised below:

|                                   |        |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Total number of Customer Contacts | 36,591 |
| Number of Compliments             | 93     |
| Number of Complaints              | 22     |

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no direct financial implications relating to this report.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**1.THAT** the Customer Feedback and Complaints Report: 1 July to 31 December 2022 be received.

## LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

### 5. Our Civic Leadership

#### 5.2 Strong civic leadership and customer focussed services

## BACKGROUND

Council's *Complaints Handling Policy* requires that a report be provided to Council detailing the registered complaints received biannually.

This six-monthly report summarises the complaints and compliments received by Council, and recent trends in the number and type of complaints. It highlights areas where improvements to customer service may be required, along with other customer feedback and consultation results.

## CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement is not required.

## DETAIL

This report contains a summary of complaints and compliments received over the period 1 July to 31 December 2022.

### 1. Contacts with Council

During this period, (incoming) contacts with Council totalled 36,591 (Table 1), compared with 32,428 for the period 1 January to 30 June 2022.

| <b>Table 1: Contacts with Council</b>        | <b>1 Jul to 31 Dec 2021<br/>Same period previous<br/>year</b> | <b>1 Jan to 30 June<br/>2022<br/>Previous period</b> | <b>1 Jul to 31 Dec 2022<br/>This period</b> |
|--|---|--|---|
| Requests for Service<br>(letter, email, fax) | 19,771  | 21,254   | 22,669                                      |
| Depot  | 5,005   | 5,449  | 4916  |
| Library                                      | 4,800   | 5,725  | 8890  |
| Complaints                                   | 7   | 6  | 22  |
| Compliments                                  | 67  | 62   | 93  |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>29,651</b>   | <b>32,428</b>  | <b>36,591</b>                               |

## 2. Complaints

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

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

Trends in the number and type of complaints received and complaints handling are registered and assessed biannually by each Director. Reports provide the following information about each complaint:

- the outcome of each investigation;
- 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 and Public Interest Disclosures are not included in this report. Nor are requests for Privacy Internal Review, Government Information (Public Access) Act Internal review.

### 2.1 Complaints Received

Council received 22 complaints during the period 1 July to 31 December 2022. Twelve of the complaints were considered justified or partially justified. The twelve complaints in general terms related to:

1. Delays in service provision;
2. Levels of service that were not provided fully in accordance with Council policies and procedures.

Complaints justified or partially justified, by Division:

| <b>Division</b>                     | <b>Complaints justified or partially justified</b> |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| City Strategy                       | 7  |
| Open Space & Environmental Services | 2  |
| Engineering and Property Services   | 2  |
| Corporate Services                  | 1  |
| Community and Library Services      | 0  |
| Governance                          | 0  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                        | <b>12</b>  |

A complaint is deemed justified when the investigation has shown the complaint to be valid and that it occurred under Council’s area of control/responsibility. There were ten complaints that were deemed unjustified following investigation, there was no evidence to suggest the officer in each case was undertaking their role against protocol.

The decision whether a complaint is justified or unjustified/unsubstantiated is confirmed by the responsible Director. Complaints received were classified as follows:

| <b>Classification</b>                        | <b>No. Complaints</b> | <b>No. Justified</b> |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Level of program/service                     | 7                     | 5                    |
| Inadequate information                       | 0                     | 0                    |
| Staff behaviour                              | 8                     | 3                    |
| Compliance issue                             | 0                     | 0                    |
| Lack or delay in service provision           | 6                     | 4                    |
| Inadequate/no response to previous complaint | 0                     | 0                    |
| Council policy                               | 0                     | 0                    |
| Other  | 1                     |                      |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>22</b>             | <b>12</b>            |

Compared to the previous report to Council in September 2022, justified and partially justified complaints have increased from two to twelve and have also increased compared with the same period last year from seven to eleven.

Where a Division has complaints, the Director is sent a report highlighting these complaints to improve customer service.

## **2.2 Complaint Resolution**

In accordance with Council’s *Complaints Handling Policy*, a complaint must be resolved within 10 working days of being received. It is noted that the policy is undergoing a periodic review and that changes may be made to the content of future report.

Directors have discretion in 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.

Fifteen (68%) of all the complaints received during this period (including those unjustified) were resolved within 10 working days. This compares to a total of 33% of all the complaints resolved within 10 working days over the 1 January to 30 June 2022 period.

No complaints received remain unresolved and there are no major trends or issues that require specific attention.

## **2.3 Complaint Escalation to Public Officer**

Two complaints were escalated for investigation during the period.

One was an investigation into the removal of Council Bus Shelters without the necessary process and approvals. This was complaint was found to be substantiated and resulted in a subsequent report to Council.

A second complaint was escalated during the period in relation to a Development Application process. This complaint remains open for investigation and agreement has been obtained from the complainant in this regard.

### **3. Compliments**

Council reviews the compliments received to identify areas of good/better/best practice.

Council received 93 compliments for the period.