

## Complaint Handling Process - Continued

### Tier 2 - Internal Review

Tier two complaints occur when either:

- The complaint is referred to a Manager or Director in the first instance or
- The complaint has been investigated and considered closely by an officer and correspondence has been written to this effect. A Manager or Director is then responsible for reopening the complaint for further investigation.

### Tier 3 - External Review

If the complaint cannot be resolved to the customer's satisfaction through Council's internal complaints handling system, the complainant will be referred by Council's Public Officer to an outside agency such as the Ombudsman, the Independent Commission Against Corruption or the Department of Local Government.

### Timeframes

All complaints will be acknowledged by staff via email or letter within 2 working days.

All complaints will be addressed within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint, except where further information is waiting to be received. The relevant Manager is responsible for writing to the complainant advising of the outcome.

In the instance where further information is required, then the complainant will be advised of the progress of the complaint within 10 working days and the complaint will be addressed within 20 working days.

### Complaint Resolution

Where a complaint is justified, Council staff will explain the problem and outline the steps of action being taken to resolve the matter efficiently and to the satisfaction of both the complainant and Council.

### Learning from Complaints

Every complaint is an opportunity to identify how to improve the standard of customer service, delivery of services or policy and procedures. Complaints are an important and useful way of obtaining information that there is an issue, and how a response might be able to improve service delivery and customer satisfaction.

## Further Information

Further information on Council's complaint handling process is available in the Complaints Policy that can be obtained by requesting a copy from a Customer Service Representative or from Council's website [infogunnedah.com.au](http://infogunnedah.com.au)

### GUNNEDAH SHIRE COUNCIL

Telephone: 02 6740 2100 | Fax: 02 6740 2119

Email: [council@infogunnedah.com.au](mailto:council@infogunnedah.com.au)

Website: [infogunnedah.com.au](http://infogunnedah.com.au)

#### *In person*

63 Elgin Street, Gunnedah  
Monday to Friday 8:30am - 5:00pm

#### *In writing*

Gunnedah Shire Council  
PO Box 63, Gunnedah NSW 2380  
Email: [council@infogunnedah.com.au](mailto:council@infogunnedah.com.au)

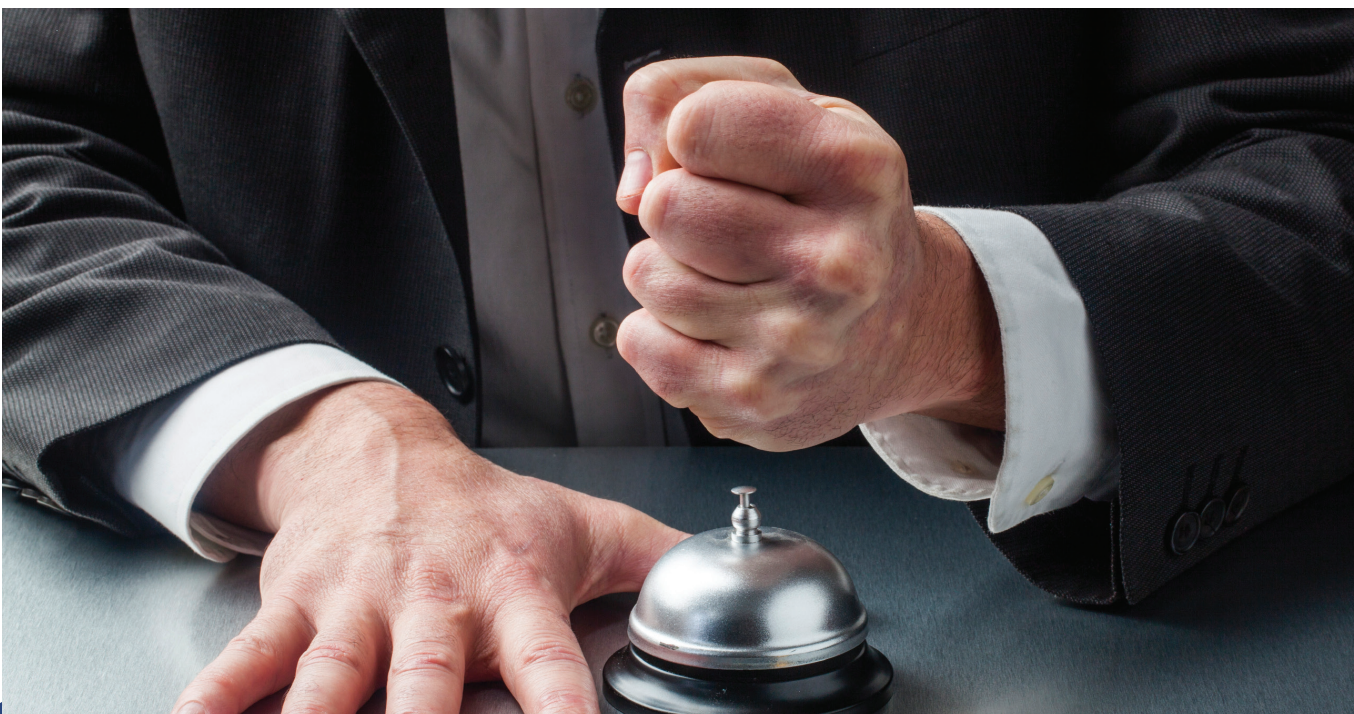


## Gunnedah Shire Council



## COMPLAINTS HANDLING

Mission: To promote, enhance and sustain the quality of life in Gunnedah Shire Council through balanced economic, environmental and social management in partnership with the people.



Gunnedah Shire Council is committed to continuous improvement and believes complaints are useful to ensuring our organisation can grow, develop and improve. We strive to deal with all complaints in a fair and impartial manner with timely resolution the end goal. Gunnedah Shire Council's complete Complaints Policy is available from [infogunnedah.com.au](http://infogunnedah.com.au).

#### What is a complaint?

An expression of dissatisfaction with the Council's decisions, policies, procedures, charges, employees, agents or the quality of the services it provides.

#### What is not a complaint?

In most circumstances the following will not be a complaint and will be classed as a customer request:

- A request for Council services (unless it is a second request, where there has been no response from the first)
- A request for documents, information or explanation of policies or procedures
- A submission relating to the exercise of a regulatory function (e.g. an objection to a development application or a submission on a policy)
- A request for information regarding Council assets or services
- Reports of hazards (e.g. fallen trees), damaged or faulty infrastructure (e.g. potholes)
- Reports concerning neighbours or neighbouring property (e.g. noise or unauthorised building works),

or an event, service or business for which Council is not responsible

- Negative feedback in a submission or a survey, or disagreement with Council's policy, procedure or lawfully made decision.

#### How to lodge a complaint

Complaints may be lodged with Council:

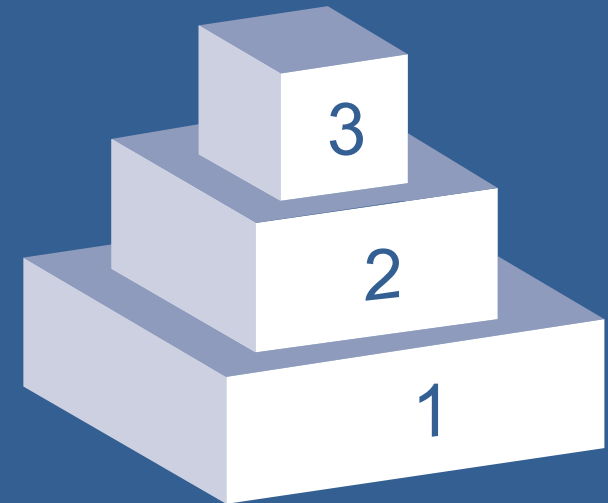
- In Person
- By telephone, facsimile, email or letter

In order to process a complaint, Council requires the name, address and contact telephone numbers of the complainant together with sufficient details of what the complaint relates to.

#### Confidentiality

Council will not accept anonymous complaints but will respect the complainant's right to privacy and will not disclose their name or any confidential information without their express permission or unless the disclosure is in accordance with GIPA (Government Information Public Access Act 2009).

#### Complaint Handling Process



Council has a three tiered approach to handling complaints. This approach aims to have the complaint resolved as quickly as possible by the person who provided the service or who dealt with the issue or where appropriate a more senior person. Staff will record all complaints in Council's Customer Relationship Management system and the resolution/ action taken.

#### Tier 1- Frontline Complaints Handling

A staff member who receives a complaint of a minor nature should deal with the complaint at the time or refer it immediately to the appropriate staff member (who was responsible for causing the complaint to be made), who may be able to resolve the complaint on the spot.

Complaints must automatically be referred by the receiving officer onto their Manager or Director if:

- The complaint is about the staff member's own conduct and he/she does not feel confident about dealing with it fairly
- The complainant requests it
- The problem is clearly outside the staff member's delegation or area of expertise
- Complaints must automatically be referred to the General Manager if a staff member is alleged to have committed a criminal offence, acted corruptly, or engaged in other serious or controversial conduct.