

Complaints Policy -adopted by Craik Town Council

Background

Town Council as a public administrative and legislative body can expect to receive and needs to be able to respond appropriately to complaints lodged by citizens from time to time. It is important that the Council as a corporate entity is aware of concerns in the community, Therefore, it is assumed that when a complaint is made to one member of the Council it is made to the whole Council.

General Principles

The following general principles apply when dealing with complaints from citizens:

1. All legitimate complaints are to be taken seriously
2. Anonymous complaints will not be considered
3. Complaints shall be responded to in by the least formal method that is appropriate to the situation
4. Any complaint regarding sexual or physical violence or any inappropriate sexual behaviour toward a minor or vulnerable adult will be immediately reported to the police or other appropriate civil authority
5. Complaints of a substantive nature must be in writing
6. The public are to be made aware on a regular basis regarding the proper procedure to have their complaints heard.
7. All complaints of a substantive nature are to be treated as confidential unless otherwise indicated by law or council policy

Process

1. Any Councillor receiving a minor complaint shall inform the Administrator or the Mayor and may actively engage in helping to remedy the situation.

2. When receiving a complaint of a more substantive nature the Councillor shall inform the complainant of the proper process which is as follows:

A. Complaints concerning infrastructure and related matters such as roads, water, drainage, overgrown trees and shrubs, weeds and similar matters are to be addressed by submitting a completed Request for Remedial Action form to the Administrator who shall bring the matter

to Council for discussion and resolution. The complainant may be invited to meet with Council *in camera*. The complainant will be informed of the decision.

B. Complaints concerning a staff member or volunteer are to be submitted in writing to the Administrator. Upon receiving such complaint the Administrator, after consultation with the Mayor, shall take whatever corrective or disciplinary action he or she deems appropriate according to the requirements of law, Council policies, and natural justice. The Administrator may decide to refer the whole matter to Council. In any case, the Administrator shall make a confidential report to Council indicating what the issue was and how it was responded to.

C. Complaints concerning the Administrator are to be submitted in writing to the Mayor . Upon receiving such complaint the Mayor shall consult with the Deputy Mayor. They shall meet with the Administrator and present the salient points of the complaint. In the event that the situation is satisfactorily resolved, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor shall report to an *in camera* session of Council .

If the matter is not resolved and they are of the opinion that action is required they shall present the information *in camera* to the whole Council without the Administrator present. The Council shall then take whatever corrective or disciplinary action it deems appropriate according to the requirements of law, Council policies, and natural justice.

D. Complaints concerning a member of Council are to be submitted in writing to the Mayor. Upon receiving such complaint the Mayor shall consult with the Deputy Mayor. If the complaint involves the Deputy Mayor the Mayor shall call upon a Councillor of his or her choosing. They will then meet with the Councillor concerned and present the salient points of the complaint.

If the matter is not resolved and they are of the opinion that action is required they shall present the information *in camera* to the whole Council with the Councillor concerned present. The Council shall then take whatever corrective or disciplinary action it deems appropriate according to the requirements of law, Council policies, and natural justice.

E. Complaints concerning the Mayor are to be submitted in writing to the Deputy Mayor . Upon receiving such complaint the Deputy Mayor shall consult with a Councillor of his or her choosing. They will then meet with the Mayor and present the salient points of the complaint.

If the matter is not resolved and they are of the opinion that action is required they shall present the information *in camera* to the whole Council with the Mayor present. The Council shall then take whatever corrective or disciplinary action it deems appropriate according to the requirements of law, Council policies, and natural justice.