



**GLAMORGAN SPRING BAY
COUNCIL**

Glamorgan Spring Bay Council

**Statement of Expectations
Issue Resolution Policy No. 6.7 Version [1.0]**

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1 Overview

Councillors recognise that the democratic process of local government involves holding and expressing different and sometimes opposing viewpoints.

It is a normal, and vital function of this process that all views are expressed and shared in a considered and informed way.

Although all Councillors must strive to engage in positive, constructive and respectful interactions, issue, conflict and/or disputes may arise. Issues may also arise in the relationships between the Mayor and General Manager, and the Councillors and General Manager.

The primary purpose of this issue resolution policy is to provide Councillors and the General Manager with support to resolve issues, conflicts or disputes in a manner that enables them to move forward and establish and maintain effective working relationships, so as not to damage the reputation or overall performance of the Council or any individuals.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council Code of Conduct and the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council Statement of Expectations.

Regular training and development will be provided to Councillors to ensure awareness and adherence to the Code of Conduct and Statement of Expectations.

2 Scope

The intent of this policy is to provide an elective framework for Councillors and the General Manager wanting to resolve an issue, conflict or dispute in an informal, conciliatory manner.

In the interests of maintaining good governance and earning the highest level of confidence in our Council from our community, the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council has endorsed this Issue Resolution policy as a complimentary document to the Statement of Expectations and as a first recourse prior to the use of the legal framework of the Code of Conduct.

The policy does not displace any external avenues provided for by legislation for the reporting and resolution of issues and disputes. The Code of Conduct sets out avenues for reporting real or perceived breaches by Councillors.

The policy does not deal with allegations of criminal misconduct as they are to be raised with the relevant authority.

3 Related Policies and Legislation

This policy relates to and depends on other Council policies, as well as legislation, including:

- Glamorgan Spring Bay Council Code of Conduct
- Glamorgan Spring Bay Council Statement of Expectations

4 Issue Resolution Undertaking

In the interests of ensuring that the Council operates as effectively as possible it is important that all Councillors and the General Manager recognise that they hold an individual and collective responsibility to demonstrate high standards of conduct in undertaking their duties as representatives of the community and the Council.

Where there may be interpersonal issues, conflict and disputes, the first recourse in addressing differences should involve an informal proactive approach, recognising the need for the respectful treatment of colleagues at all times.

Prior to commencing a formal Code of Conduct Complaint, Councillors who are parties to any disagreement should endeavour to resolve their differences through informal discussion, recognising that they have been elected to act in the best interests of the community. Similarly, the General Manager should endeavour to resolve any disagreement with the Mayor or Councillors through informal discussion, recognising that the General Manager must also act in the best interests of the community of Glamorgan Spring Bay.

5 Issue Resolution Options

Where appropriate, the parties to an issue, conflict or dispute are encouraged to use their best endeavours to resolve their issue, conflict or dispute in a courteous and respectful manner, between themselves, and to stop any behaviour that is causing issues, conflict or dispute.

Where parties have not been able to resolve their issue between themselves, the following informal options are available:

5.1 Respectful Conduct Advisor

Upon the request of an elected member, a Respectful Conduct Officer (RCA), who is not an employee of the Council, may be assigned by the General Manager to support the Councillors to participate in informal resolution processes. If the General Manager is a party to the matter to be resolved, the RCA is to be assigned by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, or as agreed by the parties to the matter.

The role of the RCA would be to provide support and practical assistance to the Parties, individually or collectively.

In selecting persons to act in the capacity of RCA, the General Manager, Mayor, or Deputy Mayor will take into account the nature of the issue under discussion, an appropriate skills-set within the local government context, experience in issues resolution and interpersonal skills which can most likely assist in resolving matters of conflict.

5.2 Additional Assistance Towards Resolution

If attempts have been made to resolve an issue through direct approach, and through the intervention of an RCA, then the following steps provide further mechanisms through which resolution may be achieved.

5.2.1 External Assistance

Councillors or the General Manager wishing to undertake informal issue resolution may, in discussion with the RCA, seek assistance from an independent facilitator, mediator, counsellor or such other assistance which they may consider appropriate in resolving the issue at hand.

5.2.2 Internal Measures for Dealing with a Matter Involving the General Manager

If an issue is brought forward by a Councillor against the General Manager, the Councillor may request that the General Manager's Performance Review Committee (GMPRC) review the matter and provide a recommendation to the parties. The GMPRC may request the RCA to attend the meeting where the matter is discussed, to provide background and independent advice.

5.2.3 Internal Measures for Dealing with Matters between Councillors

If after intervention by an RCA a matter between Councillors remains unresolved, the Parties may request that the issues be discussed in a closed council session by the full Council. The RCA is to be invited to attend the closed council session to provide background and independent advice, and to arbitrate where necessary.

Any Party electing to take their issue on to any of the above steps ideally should accept that every effort is being made to resolve a potentially disruptive issue within Council, and be prepared to compromise or adapt if necessary.

Where an issue cannot be resolved in by these processes, the formal Code of Conduct process for Councillors may provide the next steps for the parties involved. If the case involves the General Manager's behaviour, Council will decide what further steps it wishes to take.

6 Commitment to the Policy

Councillors are required upon election to commit their adherence to the Code of Conduct and to Council's policies. Councillors may also make the following declaration of their commitment to the Statement of Expectations:

I acknowledge that I have been elected by the community to a position of significant responsibility with the expectation that I will act in accordance with the principles and behaviours of good governance and demonstrate values which are accepted within our society.

I declare my commitment to abide by this expectation by attesting my adherence to the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council Statement of Expectations Policy.

A newly appointed General Manager will be asked to make the following statement at the first open Council meeting following appointment:

I acknowledge that I have been selected by Council to a position of significant responsibility with the expectation that I will act in accordance with the principles and behaviours of good governance.

I declare my commitment to abide by this expectation by attesting my adherence to the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council Statement of Expectations Policy.

7 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in June 2022, and thence forth at least 12 months before an ordinary Council election, and again at least 12 months but no more than 15 months after an ordinary Council election.

The initial review (in June 2022) may be conducted earlier if Council so determines.

8 Attachments (if applicable)

Nil.