



Boyne Tannum Bowls Club

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Complaint Handling and Dispute Resolution Policy (2022)

Introduction

This Complaint Handling and Dispute Resolution Policy aims to provide a structured approach to resolving complaints and disputes that is fair and equitable, and that will lead to solutions that are acceptable to all parties.

This policy is not to be applied to disciplinary matters relating to suspension and / or termination of membership. This area is covered by articles 7.1 to 7.9 of the club's Constitution.

Definitions

Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, made to the club, related to the club's activities, operations, policies, volunteers or the complaints handling and dispute resolution process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Complainant

A party that makes a complaint or files a formal charge, for example, a member of the public, club members, volunteers, suppliers and contractors.

Dispute

Means an unresolved complaint. In other words, it is a matter that has been dealt with as a complaint under this Policy, but where the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome. In the case of a Complaint being elevated to a Dispute, a Complainant who is also a member of this club may appoint any person to act on their behalf.

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to outline a set of procedures to effectively and fairly respond to complaints and disputes in a professional and timely manner.

This Policy provides a process for handling and resolution of complaints and disputes between Boyne Tannum Bowls Club Inc and its members, volunteers, members of the public, suppliers and contractors relating to club activities and operations.

The objectives of this Policy are to establish a process to:

- Record, action and resolve complaints and disputes;
- Provide complainants who are dissatisfied with a decision, a referral to an external process for resolution of their complaint; and
- Review and monitor the club's performance against the procedures outlined in this Policy.

Overview

The complaint and dispute resolution process at the Boyne Tannum Bowls Club operates in two stages:

- An internal dispute resolution process under which the club will use its best efforts to resolve a complaint or dispute to the mutual satisfaction of the club and the complainant; and
- Failing resolution, an external dispute resolution process under which a complainant, dissatisfied with the club's decision, can refer the complaint to an external mediation body for resolution.

Effective and Efficient Complaint and Dispute Resolution Process

The club will adopt an effective and efficient complaint and dispute resolution process that:

- Is documented;
- Is communicated to club members, volunteers, suppliers, contractors and visiting members of the public (if required);
- Has stated time limits for each stage of the process; and
- Is reviewed annually.

Committee and Management Commitment

The Committee of the Boyne Tannum Bowls Club are committed to the implementation of this Policy, as evidenced by:

- Ensuring that club members, volunteers, suppliers and contractors are aware of this Policy; and
- Implementing management systems and reporting procedures to ensure timely and effective complaints handling and disputes resolution, and monitoring.

Complaint Handling and Dispute Resolution Officer

The club will appoint annually a member of good standing and repute to the role of internal Complaint Handling and Dispute Resolution Officer (CHADRO), who will be responsible for managing and coordinating the implementation of this Policy.

All complaints should be directed to the CHADRO.

Communication

This Policy should be displayed in a public area within the club and be made available on request to members, volunteers, suppliers and contractors. Periodically, the CHADRO must remind the above mentioned stakeholders about this Policy.

Internal Resolution of Complaints and Disputes

Procedures for Receiving Complaints

If a complaint is submitted to the Boyne Tannum Bowls Club, the club:

- must, if the complaint is verbal, either resolve it “on the spot”, or if that is not done, request the complainant to submit a written complaint to the CHADRO;
- must, if the complaint is in writing, acknowledge in writing receipt of the complaint as soon as practicable and in any event within 14 days from receipt, and enclose a copy of this Policy for the complainant’s information;
- must ensure that the complaint receives proper consideration resulting in a determination by the CHADRO as the person designated by the club as appropriate to handle complaints;
- must act in good faith in dealing with and resolving the complaint;
- must investigate the complaint including by:
 - o Seeking all relevant information from the complainant; and
 - o Obtaining all relevant information from club members and volunteers.
- may give any appropriate remedy to the complainant, including any of the following:
 - o Information and explanation regarding the circumstances giving rise to the complaint;
 - o An apology; and
 - o at its sole discretion, compensation for loss incurred by the complainant.
- must communicate to the complainant in relation to the complaint as soon as practicable and in any event not more than 45 days after receipt by the club of the complaint:
 - o The determination in relation to the complaint;
 - o The remedies (if any) available to the complainant; and
 - o Information regarding any further avenue for complaint.

When a Complaint will be Treated as Resolved by the Club

Written Complaints - where the complainant has been notified in writing of a decision and no response has been received, the complaint will be treated as resolved by the club.

Verbal Complaints - will be treated as resolved by the club where:

- o The complaint has been resolved to the complainants satisfaction “on the spot”; or
- o Where the complainant has been notified of a decision about a complaint and no response has been received.

Confidentiality

The complaint handling and dispute resolution process will keep the complainant’s identity private to guard against inconvenience or discrimination.

Sensitivity

The club will treat each complaint separately and on its merits.

Recording the Complaint

Complaints and Disputes Register

The CHADRO must ensure that a Complaints and Disputes Register is established, maintained and kept up-to-date.

The Register will be comprised of a copy of each Complaint Report (refer **APPENDIX A**).

At a minimum, the Register must include the following information about every complaint that is received:

- Date complaint is made;
- Nature of complaint / issue;
- Action taken to investigate the complaint;
- Date resolved; and
- How resolved.

The CHADRO must periodically review the Register to check that complaints are being handled appropriately, including in accordance with this Policy, and within the required timeframes.

The Complaints Register must also be tabled annually at club Committee meetings.

Timetable for Complaints Handling

The club will attempt to resolve complaints and notify the complainant as soon as possible. The club's performance and time standards for complaints handling are at **APPENDIX B**.

Annual Review of this Policy

The CHADRO is responsible for ensuring this Policy is adhered to.

Periodically (at least annually), the CHADRO will review this Policy and report the outcome of this review to the club Committee.

If an Individual asks about the Complaint Handling and Dispute Resolution Procedures

If an individual asks for information about the club's complaints handling and dispute resolution methods, club members or volunteers must refer the request to CHADRO as soon as possible. The CHADRO must ensure the individual is provided with a copy of this Policy within seven business days of the request.

If an Individual asks for Assistance in Formulating or Lodging Complaint

If an individual asks for assistance in the formulation and lodgement of his/her complaint, members and volunteers must refer the request to the CHADRO as soon as possible. The CHADRO must ensure reasonable assistance is provided to the individual.

Where a Complaint is not Resolved to an Individual's Satisfaction

For each complaint that cannot be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction within the above mentioned 45 days, the CHADRO must inform the complainant in writing that they have the option to pursue resolution of their complaint with Central Queensland's Dispute Resolution Centre and provide details about how to access them. Refer **APPENDIX C**
