

Council Member Behavioural Policy Review

Strategic Alignment - Our Corporation

Public

Tuesday, 21 July 2026

City Finance and Governance Committee

Program Contact:

Rebecca Hayes, Associate
Director Governance & Strategy

Approving Officer:

Anthony Spartalis, Chief
Operating Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a review of the adopted Council Member Behavioural Management Policy.

The Behavioural Management Policy (the Policy) has been in effect since 9 December 2025. When Council adopted the Policy, it also committed Council to an interim review of the Behavioural Management Policy by 31 July 2026. This report is the result of that commitment.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE CITY FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes the interim review of the Council Member Behavioural Policy as at 30 June 2026 contained within this report on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Finance and Governance Committee held on 21 July 2026.
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IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Corporation
Policy	This Policy is part of the behavioural management framework set out in the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i> (SA). This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Council Member Behavioural Support Policy and the Council Member Staff Interaction Policy.
Consultation	Not as a result of this report
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	It is mandatory for all councils to prepare and adopt a Behavioural Management Policy in accordance with section 262B of the Local Government Act 1999.
Opportunities	Not as a result of this report
26/27 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Proposed 27/28 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Not as a result of this report
26/27 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

1. On 9 December 2025, Council adopted the Council Member Behavioural Management Policy and also committed to an interim review of the Behavioural Management Policy by 31 July 2026 ([Link 1](#)).
2. The Behavioural Management Policy ([Link 2](#)) applies to the Principal Member (Lord Mayor) and all Council Members. The Policy does not apply to complaints about council employees or the council as a whole. These complaints are dealt with under separate mechanisms.
3. The Policy reflects improvements made in providing greater clarity on processes for those involved in behavioural matters and reinforcing a respectful and productive council environment.
4. Notably, the Policy implemented an approach whereby neither the Lord Mayor, nor the Deputy Lord Mayor are responsible for the initial assessment of complaints. Rather the matter is referred to a suitably qualified external assessor and then (if necessary) to a suitably qualified external investigator. This approach has assisted in resolving matters early without a full investigation.
5. Consistent with Part A1 of Chapter 13 of the *Local Government Act 1999* (SA), the external assessor has a range of options available to them to resolve the complaint including:
 - 5.1. Dismissal
 - 5.2. Referral to another agency or body
 - 5.3. Mediation, conciliation, arbitration or other dispute or conflict resolution
 - 5.4. Training, instruction, counselling, mentoring or coaching.
6. Only if a complaint is not suitable for resolution at the assessment stage, will it proceed to an investigation. If the investigator determines a breach has occurred, the matter will then be referred to the Council for consideration and action. So far, under this Policy, this has not happened.
7. As a result of this Policy:
 - 7.1. complaints received and dealt with under the Policy have been easier to address;
 - 7.2. it has been easier to identify non-compliant complaints; and
 - 7.3. the seeking of an appropriate compliant complaint from the complainant has been simplified.
8. Additionally, the Lord Mayor is able to promptly appoint a reviewer, which streamlines the process and ensures appropriate separation from the complaint assessment.
9. Since this Policy was adopted by Council on 9 December 2025, 17 complaints have been received and dealt with as at 30 June 2026. In the preceding 6-month period, a total of seven complaints were received, only two of which remain open.
10. While the number of complaints has greatly increased since this Policy was adopted compared to the previous 6-month period, it is the view of Administration that the updates made to this Policy are working as intended by requiring clarity and active participation from Council Members throughout the process.
11. A summary of complaints received and their current status is provided in the table below.

Category	Number of Complaints
Total complaints received	17
Complaints seeking informal resolution	3
Referred to Complaint Assessor	4
Resolved / closed	2
Returned to complainant (invalid/incomplete)	8

12. No required improvements have been identified to the Policy.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Link 1 – Minutes – Ordinary Council Meeting – Tuesday, 9 December 2026

Link 2 – Council Member Behavioural Management Policy

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

- END OF REPORT -