

Customer Experience Policy

Responsible Directorate:	<i>Corporate Strategy & Performance</i>
Responsible Service Unit:	<i>Customer & Information Services</i>
Contact Person:	<i>Customer Liaison Officer</i>
Date of Approval:	<i>16 July 2024</i>
Council Resolution No:	<i>CS04-07/24</i>

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The customer experience encompasses the sum of all experiences a customer has with an organisation and its service offerings.

2. OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE

Objective

The City of Wanneroo (City) encourages customer feedback across all our touchpoints and connections, and value our customers letting us know where we could improve or what works well so that we can celebrate our customer service achievements.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Support the City's corporate values of customer-focused, accountability, respect, improvement, and collaboration;
- Ensure an accessible process that is easy to understand is in place for customers to lodge a compliment, feedback or complaint.
- Ensure that feedback and complaints are investigated impartially, fairly and within prescribed timeframes;
- Ensure a system is in place for complaint handling that will identify trends, eliminate causes of complaints and improve operations and customer service delivery;
- Provide an overview of how the City will deal with unreasonable complainant conduct;
- Reflect best practice as outlined in the Australian Standard Guidelines and the Ombudsman Western Australia Guidelines on complaint handling; and
- Reward and recognise employees who receive compliments for their service delivery.

3. KEY DEFINITIONS

DEFINITIONS: Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only.

Complaint	Dissatisfaction with the services or products of the City and its contractors, or with the actions of employees or Council in the provision of those services or products. A complaint is not... A request for a service to be delivered; or A complaint against another resident.
Complaints Officer	Means the person who is the complaints officer under section 5.120 for the local government concerned as defined in the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> .
Complainant	Person, organisation or its representative, making a complaint.
Compliment	An expression of praise, admiration, or congratulation.
Customer Experience	Customer experience encompasses the sum of all experiences a customer has with an organisation and its service offerings. Throughout the duration of their relationship with that organisation and the interaction with the organisation's service, systems and people, these experiences impact the customer's perception and feelings of that organisation.
CLO	Customer Liaison Officer
Feedback	A reaction or response to a process or activity in the aim of initiating improvement in service delivery.
Ombudsman	The Ombudsman serves Parliament and Western Australians by investigating and resolving complaints about the decision making of public authorities and improving the standard of public administration.
Misconduct	Misconduct occurs when a public officer abuses their authority for personal gain, causes detriment to another person, or acts contrary to the public interest (Source: Corruption and Crime Commission)
Unreasonable Complainant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitual or obsessive conduct. This includes behaviour by a person who: – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Cannot be satisfied despite the best efforts of the City; ➢ Makes unreasonable demands on the City where resources are substantially and unreasonably diverted away from its other functions or unfairly allocated (compared to other customers); • Rude, angry and harassing conduct; or .

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aggressive conduct |
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4. SCOPE

This policy applies to compliments, feedback and complaints relating to the City of Wanneroo and its services about:

- Decisions made by employees of the City;
- The conduct of employees, contractors and volunteers of the City; and
- Practices, policies and procedures of the City.

5. IMPLICATIONS

This Policy aligns with the following objectives within the Strategic Community Plan 2021-2031:

7 - A well-governed and managed City that makes informed decisions, provides strong community leadership and valued customer focused services.

7.1 Clear direction and decision making

7.2 Responsibly and ethically managed

7.5 Customer Focused Information and Services.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

To achieve the intent of this policy the City will:

- Adopt a customer-focused approach that encourages open feedback and a commitment to resolving complaints;
- Accommodate the communication needs of complainants, including those with disabilities or limited English proficiency, be flexible and considerate of their preferences;
- Ensure all employees are aware of the Customer Experience Policy;
- Have a dedicated Customer Liaison Officer (CLO) who will oversee all compliments, feedback and complaints, including the processing, assessment, investigation, resolution and audit of compliments, feedback and complaints;
- Provide complaint handling materials for employees, including processes and procedures in the handling of effective complaint management, and training opportunities; and
- Monitor, report and evaluate response times on the handling of compliments, feedback & complaints.

COMPLIMENTS

Compliments provide clear indications on what our community values about the work we do. Listening to what the City's customers have to say:

- Indicates which aspects of City Services customers value;
- Helps to build a balanced picture of how services impact on customers;
- Provides the City with an opportunity to share compliments among its employees demonstrating good practice in the services provided; and
- Helps to boost morale and provide recognition to employees.

FEEDBACK

As part of our ongoing commitment to customers, the City encourages feedback as part of its commitment to providing great service. As part of our commitment to providing excellence in customer service the City will:

- Listen to feedback;
- Create an environment where feedback is seen as a means to continually improve our services; and
- Ensure that employees acknowledge and respond to feedback in a timely manner.

COMPLAINT

If a complaint is lodged, the City will action the complaint as quickly as possible and will keep the complainant (and if applicable, the person who is the subject of the complaint) advised of the progress details of the resolution and reasons.

The following will not be registered as complaints due to the fact that each of the below is covered under a separate process or policy:

- An initial request for council services;
- A request for documents, information or explanation of policies or procedures;
- A request for the council to exercise a regulatory function;
- The lodging of an appeal or objection in accordance with a statutory process, standard procedure or policy;
- A submission relating to the exercise of a regulatory function; and
- A petition.

The CLO and/or relevant officers from the Service Unit will investigate and may determine to take the following courses of action: -

- Take no further action and give the complainant reason/s;
- Resolve the complaint by use of other appropriate strategies such as, but not limited to, mediation, informal discussion or negotiation;

- Discontinue the assessment in circumstances where it becomes evident that the matter would be referred to another body or person and advise the complainant accordingly.

Unless lodging a complaint anonymously (refer to Anonymous Complaints) at a minimum, the following information is to be supplied in order to effectively process the complaint:

- Name and address.
- Contact details.
- Complaint details.
- Date of occurrence of complaint.

Customer correspondence, telephone conversations or interviews which proceed in an inflammatory manner (e.g. excessive swearing, derogatory comments etc.) will not be acted on. Where this occurs, the City has the right to terminate conversations or interviews after warning the customer of that intention.

ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

An anonymous customer complaint will only be investigated where reasonable and sufficient information is provided which enables an investigation to be carried out. If this is not the case the complaint will be closed with no action taken.

COMPLAINTS REGARDING EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF WANNEROO

Complaints relating to employees regarding to the provision of a service or product will be referred to the CLO in the first instance. The CLO will then refer the complaint to the appropriate Leader for investigation, and People & Culture will be advised of the staff complaint received.

Customers will receive an acknowledgement of their complaint although will not be provided with any details in relation to action taken against an employee (if applicable) as this should remain confidential.

In addition to an acknowledgment, in some instances it may be appropriate to offer an apology to a customer, or to provide evidence to refute a complaint.

Should a customer specifically state they are making a disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act (**PID Act**), the complaint will be directly referred to the City's PID Officer (refer to The Public Interest Disclosure Act – (PID Act), information below).

UNREASONABLE COMPLAINANT CONDUCT

Inappropriate behaviour includes being aggressive and/or verbally abusive towards City employees. It also includes threats of harm and violence, , making inappropriate demands on employees' time and the City's resources including excessive contact with the City regarding the same enquiry and refusing to accept the City's decisions and recommendations

in relation to an enquiry/complaint. When complainants demonstrate such behaviours, the City considers their conduct to be 'unreasonable'.

To respond to and manage unreasonable complainant conduct, the CEO may determine it is appropriate to implement a protocol whereby the complainant's access to the City will be limited and/or to adapt the way the City interacts with or delivers services to the complainant (amongst other appropriate measures) by restricting:

- **Who the complainant has contact with** – limiting a complainant to a sole contact person;
- **What the complainant can raise with the City** – restricting the subject matter of communications that the City will consider and respond to;
- **When the complainant can have contact** – limiting the complainant's contact with the City to a particular time, day or length of time, or curbing the frequency of their contact with the City;
- **Where the complainant can make contact** – limiting the locations where the City will conduct face-to-face interviews to secured facilities or areas of the City's offices, building and facilities; and
- **How the complainant can make contact** – limiting or modifying the forms of contact that the complainant can have with the City.

Prior to the CEO making a determination of unreasonable complainant conduct, every reasonable effort will be made to resolve the matter through various strategies between the City and complainant. Where a decision is made to restrict or adapt the service provided to the complainant, generally in relation to a specific complaint, this would not prevent the complainant from contacting the City in regards to another service offering, as long as their conduct or behaviour does not continue to be unreasonable.

If a complainant is unsatisfied with the City's decision regarding unreasonable complainant behaviour, they can request the City to reconsider its decision by presenting any information to support their request. In the event the decision remains the same, the complainant will be referred to WA Ombudsman.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT AN ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE OF COUNCIL

Any person may make a formal complaint about a Council Member, Committee Member or Candidate for a breach of the Council Member, Committee Member and Candidate Code of Conduct. The Complaint must be made on the relevant prescribed form, available from the City of Wanneroo website:

https://www.wanneroo.wa.gov.au/info/20003/your_wanneroo/17/codes_of_conduct.

All complaints will be directed to the Complaints Officer.

A serious breach will be dealt with under the *Local Government Act* and Model Code of Conduct Regulations.

ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT – CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION

Allegations against employees of the City concerning misconduct will be dealt with independent of the City's complaint handling process.

In the first instance they will be referred directly to the City's People & Culture team for determination including whether there are reasonable grounds for notification to the Crime and Corruption Commission or the Police.

Further information is available from the Commissions website – www.ccc.wa.gov.au.

THE PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ACT 2003 - (PID ACT)

The PID Act is designed to facilitate the disclosure of suspected misconduct by public officers. This legislation specifically covers improper conduct, corruption, irregular or unauthorised use of public resources, conduct involving a substantial and specific risk of injury to public health, prejudice to public safety or harm to the environment.

Before making a disclosure it is important that you are aware of the rights and responsibilities imposed on you and others under the Act. Further information is available through the City's Public Interest Disclosures Policy available on the City's website:

[https://www.wanneroo.wa.gov.au/info/20003/your_wanneroo/357/fraud_and_misconduct./](https://www.wanneroo.wa.gov.au/info/20003/your_wanneroo/357/fraud_and_misconduct/))

Enquiries regarding the City of Wanneroo and the Public Disclosure Act 2003 can be directed to the Executive Manager Governance and Legal Services.

COMPLAINTS IN REGARDS TO BREACHES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1995

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (the Department) has in place a comprehensive complaints handling system for the management of complaints received from local governments, residents and other agencies for a variety of matters such as local government administrative procedures and breaches of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Complaints in this category will be dealt with independent of the City's complaint handling process and should be sent to the Department directly.

Generally, all complaints to the Department need to be in writing, however in some instances verbal complaints are accepted. Their procedure for managing complaints is available from their website – <https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/>

PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS

The City of Wanneroo will ensure that a fair and proper procedure is used when making a decision in regards to complaints and that the decision-maker is free from bias when reading or listening to the details of a complaint.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Personally identifiable information concerning the complainant will not be made publicly available to the offending party except to the extent required in law and/or with the express consent of the complainant.

Appropriate security will be utilised within the City's EDRMS and CRM System. Customers seeking anonymity should note that the City of Wanneroo cannot guarantee that they will not be identified during investigation, and as such, it is the customers right to decide if they would like to proceed with the complaint.

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION

Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the way in which a complaint has been dealt with and/or the final determination of the complaint by the City, the complainant may request a secondary review. However, this should only be supported when new information is presented that was not already initially considered. If no new information is presented for review the customer will be informed of the most appropriate external body such as the Western Australia Ombudsman or the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Coordinator Customer Relations Centre in conjunction with the CLO will be responsible for overseeing this policy.

9. DISPUTE RESOLUTION (if applicable)

All disputes in regard to this policy will be referred to the Director Corporate Strategy & Performance in the first instance.

10. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

11. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- AS/NZ 10002:2022 - Guidelines for complaints management in organisations;
- *Local Government Act 1995*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*;
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013*;
- *Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*;
- *State Records Act 2000*;
- Dealing with unreasonable complainant conduct;
- Managing unreasonable complainant conduct – Practice Manual

12. REFERENCES

AS/NZ 10002:2014- Guidelines for complaints management in organisations

13. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Coordinator Customer Relations Centre

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Next Review	Record No.
1	March 2014	11/81586
2	July 2016	11/81586v1
3	August 2018	11/81586v3
4 – Minor Changes (CE09- 05/18)	August 2018	11/81586v4
5 – October	August 2020	11/81586v5
6 – October	October 2023	11/81586v6
7 – October	October 2026	11/81586v7