

Complaints Management Policy

Policy Type: Council Policy Policy Owner: Manager Neighbourhood Development	Policy No. CP- 101 Last Review Date: 15 November 2016
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Policy Objectives

The Elected Members, staff and contractors at the City of Melville are committed to providing an efficient, effective, systematic and consistent approach that strives for continuous improvement in the management of complaints.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all Elected Members, staff and contractors of the City of Melville that receive and manage customer feedback relating to products and services delivered by or on behalf of the City of Melville.

For the purposes of this policy, the following is not classified as customer feedback and are out of the scope of this policy:

- Feedback obtained during stakeholder and community engagement processes.
- Queries and requests for specific information.
- Requests for a direct service.
- Matters currently being dealt with or have been previously dealt with by a court, tribunal or external complaints agency.
- Matters that have already been subjected to an Internal review and an outcome has been determined.

Definitions / Abbreviations Used In Policy

Complaint: The Australian Standard on Complaints Handling (ISO 10002:2006) defines a 'complaint' as any: *"expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, related to its products [or services] or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected."*

Feedback: a generic term that includes compliments, complaints, suggestions and service requests

Request for Service: provision of a City service or some action required to be taken to address a problem or a request for a change to the way a City service is delivered. *For example a customer at the Aquatic Centre tells a staff member there is not hot water in the shower. This is a request for service and the staff member must rectify the problem. If the problem is not rectified and the customer has to repeatedly ask for hot water over several visits the request is likely to escalate to a complaint.*

Policy Statement

The City recognises that effective complaints management is integral to customer service excellence and values all complaints and encourages a people-focused and proactive approach to complaints management.

The City is committed to the following complaints management principles:

- complaints can be lodged without fear of retribution;
- the confidentiality and privacy of complainants will be protected;
- complaints will be assessed in a fair, objective and professional manner;
- complaints are resolved in a timely manner;
- ensure the application of natural justice; and
- integrate complaints information into business improvement processes.

This policy acknowledges customers, employees, Elected Members, contractors and all other parties who deal with the City of Melville have a right to provide feedback about the City's policies, products and services.

The City of Melville's Complaints Handling process, guiding principles are based on elements of the complaints handling process as identified in the International Standard ISO 10002:2006 Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations.

Fairness and Objectivity

The City's handling of customer feedback is based on the City of Melville's values and guiding principles and is in line with the standards set by the Code of Conduct and Customer Service Charter. All feedback will be addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner.

Confidentiality

Personally identifiable information concerning customer feedback should be available where needed, but only for the purposes of addressing the feedback within the organisation and should be actively protected from disclosure, unless the customer expressly consents to its disclosure.

Data Collection

The City will collect and register data on customer feedback through the City's Customer Relationship Management System (Pathway).

Remedies and Resolution of Complaints

The decision or action taken regarding the customer complaint will be communicated to the customer as soon as the decision or action is taken.

The City recognises the various remedial methods that can be used to deal with a complaint:

- A review of the issue.
- Information to the customer as to how the complaint was dealt with, upon conclusion thereof.
- A change to the decision.
- A conciliation process.
- Referral to third party for appeals e.g. State Administrative Tribunal, the State Ombudsman's Office.
- Other remedies that are considered appropriate to the circumstances i.e. an apology.

External Review

Any complainant is able to seek external review about any complaint about any Elected Members or City staff from the Ombudsman, Public Sector Commission or Department of Local Government and Communities.

The level of information provided to the City by these agencies, and that which it can report to others is constrained by the various laws and policies governing those agencies.

Reporting to the Council

Annually, at the first Governance Committee meeting held at least two months after the close of the relevant financial year, the Chief Executive Officer will report to the Committee, in a report intended for review by the Council, to inform the Council on customer service data, trends, issues and improvements as a minimum, while protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all parties, unless a written law requires otherwise. For avoidance of doubt the report for the 2015/2016 financial year will be made through the next available Governance Committee meeting after this policy is adopted. (Policy adopted by Council 15 November 2016)

References that may be applicable to this Policy

Legislative Requirements:

Procedures, Process Maps, Work Instructions:

Customer Feedback Procedure

Other Plans, Frameworks, Documents Applicable to Policy:

Customer Services Framework
Customer Feedback Operational Policy
The Australian Standards on Complaints Handling (ISO 10002:2006)

[Customer Service Charter](#)

[Customer Service Charter for Our Contractors](#)

ORIGIN/AUTHORITY

Ordinary Meeting of Council

20 September 2016

Item No.

CD16/8087

Reviews

Ordinary Meeting of Council

15 November 2016

16.1