

FEEDBACK POLICY

Purpose

This policy relates to the management of feedback received by the City of Karratha (the City), including the capture, handling, resolution and reporting of feedback in the form of compliments and complaints.

This policy aims to:

- Provide a process for customers to give, and staff to respond to feedback
- Ensure feedback is handled impartially, confidentially, and effectively with a focus on fairness and resolution
- Enable corrective actions where needed
- Identify areas of strong performance and customer satisfaction
- Promote feedback as a tool for ongoing service improvement
- Reinforce the City's values of Leadership, Integrity, Teamwork and Innovation.

Definitions

Complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction with the Council's decisions, policies, procedures, charges, employees, agents or the quality of the services it provides.

For the purposes of this policy, a complaint is not a:

- Service Request
- Request for information, assistance or explanations of policy or procedure
- Report of damaged or faulty infrastructure (e.g. road pothole)
- Report of hazards (e.g. fallen tree branch)
- Report concerning neighbours or neighbouring property (e.g. noise or unauthorised building works)
- Report of failure to comply with laws regulated by Council
- An issue that is the responsibility of another authority or service provider, or
- The lodgement of an appeal or objection in accordance with a standard procedure (e.g. objection to a Development Application)

Some types of complaints may have processes separate to this policy, or the Council may have statutory obligations that govern the way they are dealt with. These are outlined in Appendix A.

Complainant means the person lodging a complaint.

Compliment means an expression of praise or regard for service received or performance given.

Councillor Request means a formal request for information or assistance made by a Council Member to the Chief Executive Officer.

Council Member means a person who is currently serving a term of office as an elected member of the Council in accordance with the Act.

Commented [JJ1]: Full review 09/01/26 to adjust to a Feedback Policy rather than only complaint as per Exec feedback. Reviewed in conjunction with Camden Council Policy as a guide for best practice, discussions with Chloe and the WA Ombudsman Complaint Management guidelines. Previous comments from ELT incorporated. Reviewed by Chloe 12/01 with changes accepted to present refreshed document for review.

Commented [JJ2]: replaced internal code of conduct values with those reflected in Council Policy

Commented [JJ3]: Reviewed additional policies table relevant to City. Moved to appendix and included LG Act points

Commented [CM4]: As discussed, lets include this in the table as an appendix.

Commented [JJ5R4]: updated

Feedback refers to information provided by customers, residents, or service users to the City regarding their experiences with services, programs, or staff interactions. It may include compliments, complaints, suggestions, or general observations.

Service Requests are formal communications from customers or residents seeking action or assistance from the City on specific services, assets, or issues, such as maintenance, repairs, parking, waste collection, infrastructure or Ranger matters. Unlike feedback or complaints, they involve a request for service delivery or issue resolution, helping the City respond effectively and uphold service standards.

The Act means the Local Government Act 1995.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees of the City and persons carrying out work on behalf of the City including contractors and volunteers must operate in accordance with this policy.
- Anyone who has contact with City employees or utilises City facilities or services is eligible to provide Feedback.
- This policy applies to Feedback in the form of Complaints or Compliments, as defined in this policy.

Commented [JJ6]: Added from my draft. Confirmed with Chloe to include

Policy Statement

1. OUR SERVICE COMMITMENTS

The City of Karratha is committed to inclusive, respectful, timely, and responsive service delivery. We will uphold the following commitments as we deliver services to our community:

Place-based: Tailoring policies and services to the unique needs, characteristics, and aspirations of local communities.

Culturally-informed: Respecting and uniting diverse cultural identities and values, including Traditional Owners, in planning and decision-making processes.

Inclusive: Ensuring equitable access to resources and services, fostering participation and belonging for all community members.

Sustainable: Balancing economic, environmental, and social factors to support long-term community wellbeing and resilience.

Dynamic: Embracing innovation and adaptability to address emerging challenges and opportunities.

Fair: Promoting fairness, transparency, and equity while challenging inequalities and upholding individual rights.

2. HOW TO LODGE FEEDBACK

Feedback may be lodged with the City in the following ways:

- Email: enquiries@karratha.wa.gov.au
- Mail: City of Karratha
PO Box 219
KARRATHA WA 6714
- Website: <https://www.karratha.wa.gov.au/council/contact-us>
- Phone: 08 9186 8555
- In Person: By making an appointment to talk to the employee with whom you have been dealing or visiting Customer Service during office hours – weekdays from 8:30am – 4:30pm, excluding public holidays at:
Lot 1083 Welcome Road
KARRATHA WA 6714
- Customer Feedback Surveys

2.1 Anonymous Feedback

Anonymous feedback will only be investigated where there is sufficient information, and the allegation is of a serious nature. The City will be unable to provide feedback or communicate the outcome of the Complaint without knowing the identity of the Complainant.

2.2 Accessibility and Inclusion

Interpreting services and alternative formats are available on request, to support inclusive access for all customers as per our Customer Service Charter and Disability, Access & Inclusion Plan 2024 - 2029.

Assistance may be requested from a Customer Service Officer to lodge Feedback if required.

3. HOW COMPLAINTS WILL BE HANDLED

Staff involved in receiving or handling Complaints must act with courtesy and respect, ensuring a professional and supportive environment. Complaints will be responded to promptly, handled objectively, fairly and confidentially.

In order to respond to and resolve Complaints as promptly and effectively as possible, a four-tier approach is employed by the City.

Commented [JJ7]: ** to be created prior to roll out (as part of new Voice of the Customer program being developed) and linked to website - link to be inserted

Commented [JJ8]: Actions required as per Implementation Plan

Commented [JJ9]: Added reference to DAIP

Commented [JJ10]: Added from WA Ombudsman

3.1 First Tier: Frontline

1. To facilitate early resolution of Complaints, in the first instance, customers are encouraged to provide Feedback on the Complaint to the appropriate City Officer who provided the service or dealt with the issue.
2. An employee receiving a Complaint should deal with the Complaint at that time or refer it immediately to the appropriate City Officer who may be able to resolve the Complaint on the spot.
3. Complaints will be forwarded to the appropriate next level supervisor to review, investigate and respond (Second Tier) where a complaint:
 - Cannot be resolved after speaking with the appropriate City Officer (First Tier)
 - Is directly regarding the Officer
 - Is received in writing.
4. Where a Complainant wishes to lodge a Complaint regarding a City employee or persons carrying out work on behalf of the City but the identity of the employee or person carrying out work cannot be initially identified (i.e. an interaction with a previously unknown City Officer, a driver of a City vehicle etc), the City Officer taking the Complaint will gather the information in writing and refer it to the People & Culture Team for investigation, progressing the Complaint to the Second-Tier.

Commented [JJ11]: **discussed with Chloe - confirmed to include and direct to P&C as they relate to employee conduct

3.2 Second Tier: Internal Escalation

1. All Second-Tier Complaints will be acknowledged in writing within **1 business day** of receipt, giving contact details of the City Officer who will be responsible for the investigation.
2. All Second-Tier Complaints will be investigated and responded to within **7 business days**.
3. Where this time frame cannot be met, the appropriate City Officer will contact the Complainant via telephone prior to the time limit expiring, advising the Complainant of the reasons for the delay and providing a revised time frame.

3.3 Third Tier: Internal Review

1. If a Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their Complaint, they may request an internal review which will be escalated to the relevant Director for their consideration.
2. In the event that the Complainant intends to appeal the decision of the Director, the CEO will review the decision made.

3. In the event that the Complainant is dissatisfied with the CEO's determination, they may seek an external review from the WA Ombudsman (Fourth Tier).

3.4 Fourth Tier: Independent Review

1. Where Complaints cannot be resolved by the City or the Complainant is dissatisfied with the CEO's determination, the Complainant may be referred to the WA Ombudsman.

3.5 Tier Escalation

Complaints will move from one tier to the next if:

- The Complaint is unable to be resolved at each tier, as identified above;
- The Complaint is about the employee's own conduct;
- The employee has a real or perceived conflict of interest, and it is not appropriate that they deal with the complaint;
- The customer requests it;
- The Complaint is outside the staff members' delegation or area of expertise; or
- An employee is alleged to have committed a serious criminal offence, acted corruptly or engaged in other serious or controversial conduct.

3.6 Complaint Outcomes

Where a Complaint is determined to be justified, an appropriate response will be provided. Depending on the Complaint, this may lead to one or more of the following remedies being applied:

- An apology
- An explanation
- The desired service being provided
- Mediation
- A change in, or review of, a decision
- A correction of misleading records
- A refund of any overcharged or incorrectly charged monies
- A review and/or change in Council policy, procedure or practice
- Referral to an external agency.

The City Officer responsible for the investigation will maintain contact with the Complainant and advise them of the results of the investigation in writing. This will include details of any proposed remedies if appropriate.

There may be occasions where the City cannot resolve a Complaint to the satisfaction of the Complainant. In such cases, the City may initiate conciliation or another form of alternative dispute resolution procedure or may refer the Complainant to an external agency or legal remedy.

Commented [VM12]: Can we step this out a bit more? A formal complaint should be managed by the Director in the first instance. On appeal it is reviewed by the CEO.

Commented [JJ13R12]: Noted and Director/ CEO added as 3rd Tier

3.7 Vexatious, Frivolous and Malicious Complaints

While the City strives to respond to all Complaints, there may be instances where no further reasonable action can be taken to address or resolve the issue, whether it is a real or perceived concern.

The CEO may decide not to respond to or manage a Complaint if it is deemed that:

- No further reasonable action can be taken, and this has already been communicated to the Complainant
- The Complaint is trivial, frivolous, or made with intent to cause harm to others
- Addressing the Complaint would place an unreasonable or disproportionate burden on the City's resources

The CEO may limit services to unreasonable Complainants by applying specific restrictions, such as:

- Limiting contact to set times or requiring appointments
- Restricting communication to written correspondence
- Responding only to new or substantive information
- Directing all contact through a designated officer or team.

The Complainant will be notified in writing by the CEO of the reasons, the restrictions, and their duration.

Commented [JJ14]: Removed point regarding abusive behaviour - noted in point 6, CS Charter & Managing Aggression Policy

4. HOW COMPLIMENTS WILL BE HANDLED

1. The City will regularly monitor Compliments about its services and staff to ensure best practice is celebrated and promoted. All Compliments will be logged in the City's Customer Service system and forwarded to the relevant Director and Manager.
2. Employees who consistently demonstrate excellent customer service will be recognised through performance feedback and the City's Reward and Recognition program.
3. While the City values positive feedback, all customers are treated equitably. Compliments may inform recognition but do not influence service prioritisation. Services are delivered in line with established policies and standards.

Commented [JJ15]: **Discussed with Chloe - confirmed to log as ICS's - Customer Service - Compliments as well as complaints in the same manner (effectively creating a register that can be pulled). To be rolled out with frontline and EA's

5. HOW FEEDBACK WILL BE RECORDED

5.1 Recording of Complaints

1. If a Complaint is unable to be resolved at the frontline, details of the Complaint are to be gathered and provided in writing to the relevant next level supervisor for review, investigation and response.

Complaints will be entered into the City's Customer Service system as an Incoming Customer Service (ICS) Complaint, this system will serve as the City's Complaints Register.

Commented [JJ16]: **discuss with Chloe - should all complaints be captured whether resolved at the front line or not for tracking purposes?

Commented [VM17R16]: At Tier 2?

Commented [JJ18R16]: It was intended that the tier 1 person initially receiving the complaint would gather the required information, enter into the system and then hand onto the relevant tier 2 supervisor/ manager. They would then respond as per tier 2. If the relevant tier 2 person is available - they would take the call or speak to the person presenting however the tier 1 officer could still enter the information into the system. If the tier 2 person is not available, the system entry would act as notification of the complaint to them. Tier 1 or EA's therefore are the ones entering into the system and referring as required

2. Complaints will be recorded and managed under one of the following categories:
 - **Service Complaints** – where the Complaint relates to how a specific service was delivered, including delays, errors, quality, or standard of the service provided, or a perceived failure to provide a service.
 - **Conduct Complaints** – where the Complaint involves the behaviour or actions of City employees, contractors, or representatives acting on behalf of the City.
3. Records will also be maintained on the Complaints review, any investigations carried out and the response provided to the Complainant.
4. The record of the Complaint in the City's Complaints Register will include:
 - Complainant's contact details
 - Issues raised and desired outcomes
 - Steps taken to manage the complaint
 - Final outcomes, including findings, recommendations, and decisions
 - Any outstanding actions
 - Other relevant information.
5. Documentation related to the complaint should be recorded against the Complaint record and stored in accordance with the City's Record Keeping Policy.

Commented [JJ19]: **discuss with Chloe - do you prefer categories o delete

5.2 Recording of Compliments

1. When a Compliment is received regarding the City's services or staff, it should be documented and forwarded to the relevant Director and Manager for acknowledgment and, where appropriate, recognition of the staff member or team involved.
2. Compliments will be entered into the City's Customer Service system as an Incoming Customer Service (ICS) Compliment, this system will serve as the City's Compliment Register. This ensures positive feedback is captured consistently and contributes to ongoing service evaluation and staff development.
3. Records may include the nature of the Compliment, the service area or staff member involved, and any follow-up actions taken (e.g., acknowledgment or recognition).

Commented [JJ20]: Add info to procedure on who will enter

6. UNREASONABLE CUSTOMER CONDUCT

The City is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for both customers and staff. Abusive, inappropriate, offensive language or otherwise unreasonable conduct directed at City staff or representatives will not be tolerated and may result in restricted access to services in accordance with the City's Managing Public Aggression During Work Activities Procedure.

Commented [JJ21]: **discuss with Chloe - we don't have a policy - Charter provides expectations, can this be referred to or do we need a policy?

7. REPORTING AND MONITORING

All Feedback will be recorded in the City's Customer Service & Record Management system.

Complaint data will be analysed to identify any systemic or recurring problems which need to be rectified to improve processes and customer satisfaction with City services. All feedback

information will be used to identify and implement improved practices where required and for identified customer groups (i.e. people with disabilities, young people, people from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds)

Commented [JJ22]: Added from Ombudsman Best Practice

Customer Feedback will be reported through the following avenues:

Commented [JJ23]: **discussed with Chloe to confirm reporting avenues. Bi-annual report to be implemented

- Quarterly Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reporting to the Executive Leadership Team and Management Group
- Bi-annual Customer Feedback Report to the Executive Leadership Team
- Periodically to Council's Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Customer Service Supervisor - Will be responsible for this policy and will oversee the following functions:

- Keeping the policy up to date
- Communications, education and monitoring strategies
- Providing a point of contact about the meaning and application of the policy
- Reporting.

Manager Governance - Will be responsible for the overarching implementation and monitoring of this policy.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Ensures that appropriate systems and resources are in place for managing Complaints effectively.

Directors, Managers and Officers – Are responsible for investigating and resolving Complaints in their areas of service.

Council Members – Play a critical role in representing the community and maintaining public trust in local government. However, they are not responsible for managing service delivery or resolving operational issues directly.

When responding to Complaints, Council Members will:

- Refer all Complaints received to the CEO for management via a Councillor Request, in accordance with the City's governance protocols
- Avoid actions or commentary that could damage the reputation of the City
- Be open and accountable to the community in the district
- Represent the interests and concerns of residents respectfully and impartially.

Commented [LR24]: Do we have a complementary procedure that deals with: how complaints should be recorded, appropriate file numbers, who they should be referred to if received direct to an officer rather than the enquiries email, when to consider whether Governance/HR should be advised (eg: code of conduct breach) etc? Would be helpful to review that in line with the Policy.

Commented [JJ25R24]: Procedures and Implementation Plan created

Commented [JJ26]: ** discussed with Chloe - confirmed this info can sit under R&R

Related Documents

Legislation & Local Laws	<p><i>Children and Community Services Act 2004</i></p> <p><i>Local Government Act 1995</i></p> <p><i>Freedom of Information Act (WA) 1992</i></p> <p><i>Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024</i></p> <p><i>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003</i></p> <p><i>Public Sector Management Act 1994</i></p> <p><i>State Administrative Tribunal Act 2004</i></p>
--------------------------	---

Commented [JJ27]: Added as reference for where other types of complaints will be addresses - see appendix A

	<i>State Records Act 2000</i> <i>Local Government Property Local Law 2018</i>
Relevant Delegations	
Strategies & Plans	City of Karratha Council Plan 2025-2035
Related Council Policies	City of Karratha Code of Conduct - Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates City of Karratha Employee Code of Conduct City of Karratha Public Interest Disclosure City of Karratha Record Keeping
Procedures, Documents & Forms	Ombudsman Western Australia Guidelines Complaints Management City of Karratha Customer Service Charter City of Karratha Managing Public Aggression During Work Activities Procedure City of Karratha Grievance Resolution Procedure City of Karratha Feedback Policy Procedure

Policy Owner

Directorate	Corporate
Department	Governance

Review Management

Next review due:	March 2029
------------------	------------

Version Management

Version	Date	Council Resolution #	Description
1.0			
2.0			
3.0			

Commented [SK28]: Any reason 1 year? Probably 2 years as a minimum

Commented [JJ29R28]: updated

Commented [JJ30R28]: Changed to 3 years as discussed with Chloe

Appendix

Commented [JJ31]: Table created to identify additional types of complaints dealt with under other policies. Moved parts relevant to LG Act to table also

Appendix A: Complaints covered by other policies or statutory obligations

COMPLAINT	DETAIL	POLICY / REFERENCE
Elections, Disclosure of Financial Interests and Conduct Complaints	Specific Parts include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part 4 - Division 9, Electoral Process • Part 4 - Division 10, Validity of Elections • Part 4 - Division 11, Electoral Offences • Part 5 - Division 6, Disclosure of Financial Interests and Gifts, and • Part 5 - Division 9, Conduct. Please refer to the CG09 Public Interest Disclosure Policy. 	Refer to <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> , Council's Public Interest Disclosure Policy CG09
Code of Conduct Complaints	Related to Council officials such as Councillors, members of staff of Council, administrators, Council committee members, conduct reviewers and delegates of Council. Complaints may relate to breaches of the standards of conduct prescribed under the Code of Conduct and may include suspected corrupt conduct, maladministration, competitive neutrality concerns, criminal activity or serious and substantial waste.	Refer to Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates; and Code of Conduct for Employees
Child Protection Complaints	Related to disclosure or allegation of child abuse or conviction against a current Council employee.	Refer to <i>Children and Community Services Act 2004</i> , Council's Code of Conduct
Public Interest Disclosures	Related to a report made by a public official that meets the requirements of the <i>Public Interest Disclosures Act 2003</i>	Refer to <i>Public Interest Disclosures Act 2003</i> , Council's Public Interest Disclosure Policy CG09

Commented [JJ32]: City Child Safe Awareness Policy in the process of being created

Privacy Breach Complaints	Related to public sector agencies. Complaints may relate to breaching any information protection principles of the <i>Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024</i>	Refer to <i>Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024</i>
Staff Grievances	Related to a grievance lodged by an individual employee of Council about another employee or work-related problem.	Refer to City's Grievance Resolution Procedure