

2025

# Customer Care Policy

**Document Version  
Number:**

1.0

**Issue Date:**

8<sup>th</sup> July 2025



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí  
Cork City Council



## Table of Contents

Revision History .....	3
1. Introduction .....	4
2. Relevant Legislation .....	5
3. Purpose & Scope .....	6
4. Policy Details .....	7
5. Roles & Responsibilities .....	11
6. Monitoring/ Review/ Reconciliation .....	12
7. Communications Plan.....	13
8. Appendix I – Cork City Council Customer Charter.....	14
9. Appendix II – Cork City Council Code of Conduct.....	15

## Revision History

---

### CURRENT DOCUMENT VERSION

Version No:	Date:	Reasons for Issue:
[1]	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2025	Customer Care Policy

### REVISION APPROVAL

Process Owner	Signature:	Print Name:	Date:
		All Staff	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2025
SEO/SE/ Cognate	Signature:	Print Name:	Date:
		CATHERINE KELLY	1 <sup>ST</sup> May 2025
Director of Services	Signature:	Print Name:	Date:
		REBECCA LOUGHRY	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2025

### PREVIOUS VERSIONS

Version No.	Date	Reason for Issue

## 1. Introduction

---

The Customer Care Policy has been created to reflect Cork City Council's commitment to providing excellent public services to the people of Cork by working collaboratively with our stakeholders. A People Centric approach is a key corporate value to ensure we engage with people in a fair, courteous and timely manner as an Organisation that strives for continuous improvement.

Providing high quality services in a manner that is inclusive and equitable, Cork City Council has developed a Customer Charter and a Customer Code of Conduct shown in Appendices 1 and 2 of this policy document.

Corporate values include the public good, trust and integrity and innovation where the City Council seek progressive and creative approaches in the services we deliver.

Our overall objective is to:

- Foster a co-ordinated and integrated approach to the delivery of public services to our customers.

Part of any quality customer service requires a feedback procedure whose objectives are:

- To maintain well-publicised, accessible, transparent and user-friendly feedback channels for our customers.
- Develop and follow customer care procedures that deliver on response times and complaint resolution.

## 2. Relevant Context/Legislation

---

Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform 'Guiding Principles of Quality Customers Service'.

'Customer Communications Toolkit for Services to the Public'

Civil Service Renewal 2030 Strategy

Local Government Act 2001

General Data Protection Regulation 2018

### 3. Purpose & Scope

---

To develop a Customer Care Policy and Feedback including Complaints and Appeals procedure for City Council customers.

A review is timely in the context of the recent Organisational restructuring and to use the Guiding Principles of Quality Customer Service from the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform 'Guiding Principles of Quality Customer Service'.

Standards of Customer Care include:

Courtesy and Consideration

Openness and Impartiality

Access

Timeliness

Review

Feedback – what are we doing well? How can we improve?

Explaining what constitutes a Complaint.

## 4. Policy Details

---

The delivery of quality customer services is central to Cork City Council's work in public service delivery. Improving how the Council engages with its customers can be achieved through service design and delivery.

Accessibility to services that are user friendly is key and the Council will make available a web form to encourage feedback from its customers via a dedicated email address [customercare@corkcity.ie](mailto:customercare@corkcity.ie).

Customer Satisfaction can be improved in this way and also through the carrying out of surveys.

The Civil Service Renewal 2030 strategy provides a clear commitment to bring service users to the centre of what we do. Cork City Council, therefore, will continue to engage with the Quality Customer Service Network in particular around continuous service improvement.

In Quarter one of 2025, Cork City Council, following an Organisational Restructuring merged the Customer Call Centre known as the CSU (Customer Service Unit) with the staff on the public reception desk to create the Customer Care Team. This front of house team monitors customer contact, queries raised, services requested, manages visitors to council premises through the operation of a Visitor Access Policy and the Councillor portal. They create cases in the Customer Relationship Management System and can inform change and service improvement through the monitoring of customer feedback.

Customer care belongs to every staff member and section in the City Council's structure. It is also important to remember that there are internal customers e.g. around support services in Finance, ICT, People and Organisation Development, Corporate, Community and Culture and stakeholder partners.

External customers can include general queries from members of the public around council services, end users of the services whether it is the library, planning, or parks, tenants of social housing, applicants for social housing, the community, business, and educational bodies. And there are many more as we work to create a sense of place in Cork providing a quality of life through service and infrastructure delivery.

In 2024, Cork City Council updated its Customer Charter and code of conduct.

Cork City Council's **Customer Charter** sets out the principles of quality customer service you may expect from Cork City Council.

**Quality Service Standards** – We will ensure compliance with the quality service standards.

**Equality, Diversity and Human Rights** – We will ensure equal treatment of all and embrace and foster the City's diversity and strive for equal outcomes for all groups, in line with our Public Sector Duty on quality and human rights. We will work to improve access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion.

**Services in Other Languages** – We will try to accommodate our customers who wish to discuss their business through Irish or Irish sign language and other languages.

**Openness and Impartiality** – We will deal with you in a fair and open manner. We will discuss any aspects of your dealing with us, and we will explain how a decision was reached.

**Physical Access** – We will provide clean, accessible public offices that comply with occupational and safety standards and facilitate access for people with disabilities and special needs.

**Better Coordination** – We will encourage a more integrated approach to the delivery of services to our customers.

**Choice** – We will provide choices in:

- Payment methods
- Access to services
- Service delivery

**Information** – We will provide clear, helpful, accurate, and up-to-date information that can be easily understood. We will use simple language. We will use technical and legal terms only when necessary. We will explain these terms when we have to use them. We will make sure that our website and social media are kept up to date. We will protect your information.

**Seek your views** – We will seek your views and encourage and help you to take part in how we develop, provide and evaluate our services. We will monitor and evaluate our services and performance against the commitments in this charter. We will continue to review our customer services. We will encourage our customers to provide feedback about the quality of service they have received from us.

**Accountability** – We will provide our services with honesty and integrity to the highest professional standards. We will make sure we make decisions in the best public interest. We will monitor our compliance by completing annual reviews of our standards and performance. We will publish details of performance achieved.



**Council Employees** – We will make sure we all see our colleagues in the council as customers too. We will provide them with training and support. We will ask them what makes their work more effective for delivering services.

**Timeliness and Courtesy** – We will treat all our customers promptly, courteously, and with sensitivity. We will protect their privacy and confidentiality as much as we can. We will be professional and helpful. We will provide staff contact details to make sure it is easy for customers to contact staff if they need to.

**Feedback, Complaints and Appeals** – We will provide customers with an accessible, transparent, and user-friendly feedback, complaints and appeals procedure. Feedback can include suggestions for service improvement, complaints or compliments on a service done well. Complaints received are for our customers who are unhappy with our quality of service based on the Customer Charter.

### **The difference between Customer Service Requests and Complaints**

A **Customer Service Request** is a request for a Council Service in one of the following areas:

Housing Maintenance  
Potholes  
Illegal Dumping  
Littering  
Blocked Gullies  
Parking  
Faulty Street Lights  
Dogs (Barking, fouling, biting)  
Ringbuoys  
Cemeteries  
Oil Spillages  
Dangerous Structures  
Other

Uisce Eireann take care of service requests for all water and waste water services including: water supply, water quality, waste water or public sewer issues, new connections and related services, application for Discharge to Sewer Licences, billing and all other customer services.

A Customer Service Request can be made:

Phone: By ringing 021 4924000

Email: [servicecentre@corkcity.ie](mailto:servicecentre@corkcity.ie)

Online: Customer Care at [www.corkcity.ie](http://www.corkcity.ie). A one-time registration will be required on this platform to submit the online form.

A **Complaint** is when a customer is unhappy with the quality of the service received or if there is an undue delay in receiving the service.

Details of how to give feedback or make a complaint are as follows:

**Contact Details:**

**Customer Care Team, Cork City Council**

Public Reception Desk,  
Cork City Council,  
City Hall,  
Anglesea Street,  
Cork, T12 T997

Tel No: +353 21 4924000

Website: [www.corkcity.ie](http://www.corkcity.ie) , under Customer Care

Email: [customercare@corkcity.ie](mailto:customercare@corkcity.ie)

In conjunction with this Customer Care Policy, the Improved Customer Service: Fixed Telephone Line, Mobile Phone and Email Policy needs to be consistently implemented to ensure a quality of customer service across Cork City Council for appropriate use of telephones, mobile phones and email.

## 5. Roles & Responsibilities

---

Customer Care is the responsibility of all staff to work to fulfil the service standards in the Customer Charter. The charter was endorsed by the Workplace Partnership Committee, the Corporate Services Group and Senior Management Team.

The operation of the Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) in a timely manner is key to the smooth running of Customer Service Requests. Directorates' making contact with customers, and giving updates and closing cases on CRM will reduce 'repeat calls' to the customer care call centre, limit complaints and limit the issuance of reminders thereby cutting down duplication. It is the role and responsibility of assigned staff in each Directorate to update CRM in a timely and accurate manner.

Customer charter principles of 'timeliness and courtesy', 'Openness and Impartiality' and 'Information' are key here. Explaining how a decision is reached and dealing with customers promptly can significantly reduce complaints.

It is also of benefit to emphasise that the City Council values customer feedback. The principle 'Seek your views' covers this with regard to gaining customer feedback including what we do well. It can also inform the development of Frequently Asked Questions which are a very useful tool for informing the public around a service area.

The Customer Care Steering Group will be the governance body overseeing the implementation of the Customer Care Policy.

## 6. Monitoring/ Review/ Reconciliation

---

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Corporate Services Group to consider any required policy changes.

Statistics will be circulated quarterly to the Customer Steering Group

### **Target Key Performance Indicators for Corporate Customer Care**

- Quarterly number of complaints received by Directorate, and Service Area. This can facilitate a trend analysis.
- Quarterly number of complaints relating to Code of Conduct.
- Feedback/complaints replied to by Directorates within 28 days.
- Number of Out of Hours' call by service request.

Please note the Customer Care 'front of house' team has the following target KPIs:

- Calls Dropped – Industry Average <1%
- Abandonment Rate – Industry Average 5-8%
- Speed of Answer – 80% of calls should be answered in 40 seconds
- Monthly calls by service area
- Acknowledgement of complaints within 5 working days

There is potential for further KPI's around Customer care which can be developed and reviewed by the Customer Care Steering Group.

## 7. Communications Plan

---

A Global email will issue when the policy and procedure are approved by Senior Management Team.

Reminders to staff will issue.

Webpages will be updated to reflect the digital customer journey.

The Landline, Mobile Phone and Email Policy will be updated and circulated.

Customer care Steering Group will review and decide from time to time further staff communications.

Internal communication will arise from the nominees on Customer Care Steering Group for any actions that arise and need to be raised at Directorate staff meetings.

## 8. Appendix I – Cork City Council Customer Charter

# Cork City Council Customer Charter

This Charter shows how providing high quality customer service and care is a key priority for Cork City Council. Cork City Council remains committed to providing an excellent quality of service for all our customers in an effective, fair, respectful, confidential, and non-discriminatory manner.

**The Customer Charter sets out the principles of quality customer service you may expect from Cork City Council.**

	<b>Quality service standards</b> We will ensure compliance with the quality service standards.		<b>Seek your views</b> We will seek your views and encourage and help you to take part in how we develop, provide and evaluate our services. We will monitor and evaluate our services and performance against the commitments in this charter. We will continue to review our customer services. We will encourage our customers to provide feedback about the quality of service they have received from us.
	<b>Equality, diversity and human rights</b> We will ensure equal treatment of all and embrace and foster the City's diversity and strive for equal outcomes for all groups. In line with our Public Sector Duty on quality and human rights. We will work to improve access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion.		<b>Accountability</b> We will provide our services with honesty and integrity to the highest professional standards. We will make sure we make decisions in the best public interest. We will monitor our compliance by completing annual reviews of our standards and performance. We will publish details of performance achieved.
	<b>Services in Other Languages</b> We will try to accommodate our customers who wish to discuss their business through Irish or Irish sign language and other languages.		<b>Council Employees</b> We will make sure we all see our colleagues in the council as customers too. We will provide them with training and support. We will ask them what makes their work more effective for delivering services.
	<b>Openness and impartiality</b> We will deal with you in a fair and open manner. We will discuss any aspects of your dealing with us, and we will explain how a decision was reached.		<b>Timelines and Courtesy</b> We will treat all our customers promptly, courteously, and with sensitivity. We will protect their privacy and confidentiality as much as we can. We will be professional and helpful. We will provide staff contact details to make sure it is easy for customers to contact staff if they need to.
	<b>Physical access</b> We will provide clean, accessible public offices that comply with occupational and safety standards and facilitate access for people with disabilities and special needs.		<b>Complaints and Appeals</b> We will provide customers with an accessible, transparent, and user-friendly complaints and appeals procedure. This is for people who are unhappy with our quality of service. You can find details of how to make a complaint at: <b>Contact Details:</b>  Cork City Council, City Hall, Anglesea Street, Cork, T12 T997  +353 21 4924000  <a href="http://www.corkcity.ie">www.corkcity.ie</a>
	<b>Better Coordination</b> We will encourage a more integrated approach to the delivery of services to our customers.		
	<b>Choice</b> We will provide choices in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• payment methods</li> <li>• access to services</li> <li>• service delivery</li> </ul> We will use technology as much as we can to improve how we provide services and to provide online access to services.		
	<b>Information</b> We will provide clear, helpful, accurate, and up-to-date information that can be easily understood. We will use simple language. We will use technical and legal terms only when necessary. We will explain these terms when we have to use them. We will make sure that our website and social media are kept up to date. We will protect your information.		

**This Is What Makes Us Cork.**



## 9. Appendix II – Cork City Council Code of Conduct

# Cork City Council Code of Conduct

**We want to do our best for you.  
Please respect our staff.**

---

## YOUR GOAL IS OUR GOAL

1 Please treat our staff the way you would wish to be treated

2 Courtesy is a must for all



3 Please refrain from using your mobile phone

4 Parental supervision is appreciated



**We listen**



**We Help**



**We do not judge**



**We Care**

If we think your behaviour is unacceptable, we will tell you why and ask you to change it. We can take action to minimise unacceptable behaviour if:

- you refuse to adjust your behaviour
- your conduct is a risk to the safety of staff or other members of the public

We may ask that you leave the premises. If you repeat disruptive behaviour, we may ask you to leave our premises.

**We greatly appreciate your continued cooperation.  
This Is What Makes Us Cork.**



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí  
Cork City Council





**We are Cork.**