12. CUSTOMER RELATIONS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
DRAFT CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENTS AND COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR THE CITY OF TSHWANE
(From the Executive Committee: 22 January 2018 and the Mayoral Committee: 7 February 2018)

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to obtain approval of the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaint Management Policy of the City of Tshwane.

2. STRATEGIC PILLARS

2.1 A City that cares for residents and promotes inclusivity;

2.2 A City that delivers excellent services and protects the environment; and

2.3 A City that is open, honest and responsive.

3. BACKGROUND

The Customer Relation Management (CRM) vision as set out “to provide a globally competitive customer service and superior customer experience” is a City commitment to providing excellence in customer services. This commitment requires the city to have a seamless and standard interaction approach and complaint management policies and procedures.

The City values of fairness, freedom and opportunity are addressed in the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaint Management Policy which gives effect to seamless customer experience across all engagement channels in a consistence manner. Standard professionalism, courtesy, efficiency and fairness is guided through the engagement period with customers in line with service norms and standards as detailed in the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaint Management policy.

It is the responsibility of the City to decide on the customer engagements strategy, to allow a seamless process while attending to service requests, fault reports, complaints and compliments. However, when numerous challenges arise, and customers’ needs are not met timeously and as promised through service norms and standards, customers/residents must be given avenues to communicate with the City so that their complaints and dissatisfaction with any of the City’s services can be resolved. The information gathered from engagements and customers complaints may be utilized by the city for business processes improvements and systems development. This policy will go a long way in centralising the capturing and escalations of complaints in a central system that will assist the city with better information analysis and solution proposals that are able to comprehensively resolve adhoc problems.
It will enable Service Departments to focus on operations versus turning all officials and councillors in the city to Call Centre agents. It forces the systems to deal directly with where bottlenecks lie in the system, instead of transferring problems to everyone else. This warrants extensive change management in the system going forward.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 The Customer Engagements and Complaints Management process of the City is guided by continuous improvements factors as follows:

Listening

Through this principle, the City must listen to customers and members of the public as they raise their frustrations and direct requests to the City on the communication platforms as prescribed by the City of Tshwane Communication Policy.

Learning

In line with the ISO:9001 Quality Management System of continual improvement, the City’s learning process starts with every interaction and request from customers. Through the Quality Management Principles[1], resource allocation and improvement of services delivered to customers must be factored into a process of delivering the service at all times in order to enable improved customer satisfaction and experience.

Connect

The City must be able to connect with its customers through all official channels and allow proper interactions at all possible times. It is through this principle that the City and its customers will develop trust and interact effectively. Affinity with the City of Tshwane as brand of choice will be realized when the City and its customers connect.

Customized service can only be provided by the City when its employees, processes and systems allow customers to connect with the City. Important data for customer intelligence and processes improvement will be achieved when the connect principle is applied through planning.

Influence

The framework will guide customer experience through official channels and allow customer experience and satisfaction regarding engagement channels in order to influence improvements in channel expansion or elimination. This principle allows customers and the City to be influenced through best practices and/or the specified needs of the City or its customers.

This principle allows open sharing of views and preferences, which may be considered by either the customers and/or the City. Use of the City’s official channels may be changed through application of this principle.

Optimize
Optimal assessment of each request or query received through the engagement channels will lead to improvement in the services offered by the City, ie the method of delivering such services, the measures needed to improve effectiveness, analysis of the delivery process, and application of all the necessary improvements. This principle cuts across the management responsibility of each service that is offered and resource-managed by the City.

By optimizing the use of resources when the City considers engagement channels, processes will be continually improved and the need to optimize available technological tools will be identified. With the optimize principle, more is gained from the process and inefficiencies are eliminated during the process.

4.2 Accessibility

The city is accessible through different channels for customer engagements and complaints reporting purpose as follows:

Telephony

- This channel can be accessed 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year through non-emergency contact centre on this number: 012 358 9999 or 080 111 1556;
- Customers will go through Integrated Voice Recording (IVR) and will have options to select a service they want or hold for to be assisted by consultants; and
- Calls are answered within 20 seconds (three rings) in line with turnaround times, and 80% of all information requests are resolve on the first contact.

Voice self-service

- This channel can be accessed 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year; and
- Voice self-service option is available through IVR and customers can access the latest account balance on their account by selecting self-service option on this number: 012 358 9999 or toll free number 080 111 1556.

Walk-in centres

- Customer care walk-in centres are located within City of Tshwane seven (7) regions and can be accessed during weekdays Monday- Friday, 7h45-15h30; and
- Customer can expect average waiting time of 20 minutes in line with turnaround times, and 80% of all information requests are resolve on the first contact.

On-line customer self-service portal
• This channel can be accessed 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, through City of Tshwane self-service kiosks found at walk-in centres and or [https://www.e-tshwane.co.za](https://www.e-tshwane.co.za); and

• Customers can access monthly utility statements, pay municipal utility bill, submit meter readings and access other municipal services as names on this website.

On-line mobile platform and mobile application

• The platform will be available 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year; and

• All customer services will be available on the platform including bill viewing, payments transactions, logging of service request/query, tracking of request progress, viewing of feedback on the logged request and service rating.

Social media platforms (Facebook and twitter pages)

• These channels are available 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year;

• Customer who contact the city through this channels and request service for specific house-hold must expect to be referred to more private space for verification purpose;

• For verification purpose and compliance with Protection of Personal Information Act customers may be requested to provide more information on their account before receiving further assistance; and

• All interaction will be acknowledged and be responded to within two (2) hours in line with turnaround times.

E-mail

• This channel is available 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year;

• All interactions will be acknowledged within 48 hours in line with turnaround times; and

• All emails can be directed to customercare@tshwane.gov.za.

SMS

• This channel is available 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year; and

• SMS can be used to report power failure by sending text message starting with the word “power” followed by account number to 082 612 0333 or 44676

4.3 Complaints reporting
When reporting complaint customers can expect a resolution of their complaint to be resolved within 25 working days from the time that a complaints are is logged as reported by individual customers or referred to the City by other institutions such as –

- the Premier’s hotline;
- the President’s hotline; and
- The Public Protector.

Customers may log their complaints through the following channels:

- a verbal expression of dissatisfaction with respect to the service after the deficient act/action to immediate supervisor or manager;
- a complaint/suggestion box placed at all interaction point;
- a touch-keypad system after the service is rendered;
- a walk-in by the complainant;
- a telephone call to a contact centre;
- a fax to a contact centre;
- a letter or email to the contact centre; and
- e-Tshwane or a web-based complaint-lodging system.

5. COMMENTS OF THE STAKEHOLDER DEPARTMENTS

5.1 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Cognisance is taken of the contents of the report.

The purpose of this report is to obtain approval of the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaint Management Policy of the City of Tshwane.

The Group Financial Services Department supports the proposed policy as the proper management of engagements and complaints will lead to improved service delivery and customer satisfaction.

The Group Financial Services Department will render further financial comments on future reports relating to the proposed policy.

5.2 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

The purpose of this report is to obtain approval of the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaint Management Policy of the City of Tshwane.

The Emergency Services is in support of the policy as well as the recommendations to the report.
5.3 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

Cognisance is taken of the report on the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaint Management Policy of the City of Tshwane. The initiative to standardise the management of nonemergency complaints is supported as is the proposed public participation process.

5.4 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD: CITY STRATEGY AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Cognisance is taken of the contents of the report. The purpose of this report is to obtain approval of the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaint Management Policy of the City of Tshwane. City Strategy and Organisational Performance Management Department supports in principle the proposed policy and it anticipates that it should improve customer satisfaction.

It should however be stated that the report does not mention any research done to inform this policy by finding out how citizens want to engage with the City and register their complaints. Further, the policy does not cater for complaints and requests made by those without access to computers, smart phones and generally those not electronically connected. Such limitations are exclusionary in nature and should be avoided. City Strategy and Organisational Performance also proposed that the report should also refer to availability of languages that citizens can use to make complaints or queries or ask questions using all the mediums of communication mentioned in the policy towards inclusivity.

Provided that the comments above are addressed, City Strategies and Organisational Performance supports this policy.

5.5 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD: COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

The Group Communication and Marketing (GCM) Department takes note of the content of the report about the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaints Management Policy and supports it. Group Communication and Marketing (GCM) agrees that the City of Tshwane should be guided by a uniform approach in the management of customers' complaints and engagements as this will enhance service delivery and customer satisfaction and ultimately foster brand loyalty.

The Group Communication and Marketing (GCM) Department will play its role to promote and communicate the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaint Management Policy by using platforms to the city's disposal like social media, publications (internal and external newsletters), media, corporate mails, website etc.

5.6 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD: ENVIRONMENTAL AND AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT

The Environment and Agriculture Management Department takes cognisance of the report and its recommendations are supported.

5.7 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD: GROUP HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT
Group Human Capital Management Department supports the Draft Policy for Customer Engagements and Complaints Management. This is in line with the prescripts of the White Paper on Transforming of Public Service Delivery of 1997 and the institutionalisation of the eight Batho Pele principles. This department will also support the initiative through training and change management.

The department also supports the vision of being a globally competitive city but acknowledges that a lot of work needs to be done to gather support from all staff and role players to achieve this vision of Customer Relations Management. The report is therefore supported.

5.8 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD: GROUP LEGAL AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES

Note is taken of the purpose and contents of the report and annexures thereto.

It transpires from the report that it is important that the City of Tshwane be guided by a uniform approach in the management of customer's complaints and engagements with customers.

The proper management of engagements and complaints will lead to improved service delivery and customer satisfaction.

Section 95 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000, (MSA), with reference to customer care and management, states the following:

"In relation to the levying of rates and other taxes by a municipality and the charging of fees for municipal services, a municipality must, within its financial and administrative capacity -

- establish a sound customer management system that aims to create a positive and reciprocal relationship between persons liable for these payments and the municipality, and where applicable, a service provider and

- establish mechanisms for users of services and rate payers to give feedback to the municipality or other service providers regarding the quality of the services and the performance of the service provider."

In accordance with section 11(3)(a) and (j) of the MSA a municipality exercises its legislative or executive authority by -

- developing and adopting policies; and

- monitoring the impact and effectiveness of any services, policies, programmes or plans.

The proposed policy was examined and it complies with the legislative requirements noted above and the recommendations are supported.

5.9 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD: GROUP PROPERTY
The Department does not have any principle objection against the recommendations captured in the report.

5.10 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD: HEALTH

A. Malaka

Contents of the report is noted. It would be advisable that the policy also take into consideration District, Provincial and National health complaints standard protocols that might be different to the prescripts of this policy, in term of complaints turn around time and reporting protocols. It is therefore advisable that special consideration be taken when implement this policy to currently available district, provincial and national complaint management policy of which the city should adhered to. To this end it is advisable that this policy infuse all prescripts of district, provincial, national, health complaint policy and standard protocols in respective to all health functions.

L. Nemuthenga

Cognisance is taken of the report and the report is support. The policy should cover the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that include escalation process and steps to be taken to resolve complaints and/or attend to reported faults. Feedback mechanism should also be established to provide feedback to the complainant or the person who reported a fault on an ongoing basis. An automated system will be of great value in ensuring that all faults and complaints are monitored and resolved within the stipulated timeframes. The Health Department will develop service delivery improvement plans aligned to the norms and standards as reflected in the policy. The department will establish complaints submission system supported by an effective monitoring and reporting mechanism. Reports will be submitted in line with the requirements of the policy.

5.11 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD: HUMAN SETTLEMENT

The contents of the report is hereby noted and acknowledged. The suggested procedure in this report have the support of the Human Settlements Department. It addresses the challenges that this Department experienced on a regular basis, namely the reporting of urgent maintenance (electricity and water) problems after hours and over weekends. The seamless approach will improve customer management and satisfaction. That funds be made available for training and development of the staff who will be tasked in managing the system. The new approach will reduce unnecessary customer trafficking city wide.

5.12 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD: REGIONAL OPERATIONS AND COORDINATION

'The purpose of this report is to obtain approval of the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaint Management Policy of the City of Tshwane'.

The Regional Operations and Coordination (ROC) Department through its 7 Regions is ready to support Customer Relations Management with public consultation on this policy.
The Regional Operations and Coordination (ROC) Department supports the approval of this policy as it will enhance service delivery in Regions.
5.13 COMMENTS OF THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The purpose of this report is to obtain approval of the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaint Management Policy of the City of Tshwane. The approval of the policy is recommended as it will assist with resource allocation that will advance the improvement of customer experience as set out in the Batho Pele principles.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 HUMAN RESOURCES

None.

6.2 FINANCES

None.

6.3 CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FACTORS


City of Tshwane Vision 2030

6.4 COMMUNICATION

Draft Customer Engagements and Complaint Management Policy to be made available on the city public website and all customer care centres across the city.

6.5 PREVIOUS COUNCIL OR MAYORAL COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

None.

7. CONCLUSION

It is important that the City of Tshwane be guided by a uniform approach in the management of customers' complaints and engagements with customers.

The proper management of engagements and complaints will lead to improved service delivery and customer satisfaction. One complaint management system will be rolled out across all municipal department and regional office to ensure seamless approach. City of Tshwane management must commit to resolution of complaints received as its one of critical elements towards customer centricity organization.

The Mayoral Committee on 7 February 2018 resolved to recommend to Council as set out below:
During consideration of this item by Council on 22 February 2018, and after Councillors SJ Mabona and P Sutton addressed Council on this matter, it was resolved as set out below:

ANNEXURES:
A. Draft Customer Engagements and Complaints Management Policy
B. Complaint Management Process Flow

RESOLVED:

1. That the content of the report be noted.

2. That the Draft Customer Engagements and Complaints Management Policy for the City of Tshwane be approved.

3. That the policy be taken for public consultation.
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1. PREAMBLE

Engagements channels and complaint management is first but important step to which lead to the satisfaction of customers in their interactions with the City. The policy is crucial for the operations of city as it give effect to resources allocation for efficiency in responding to customers.

Engagements Channels and Complaint management policy objectives is to outline official engagement channels with the City for the purpose of service request, information request, enquiries and complaints when customers have not received services as promised. It is important for the City of Tshwane customers to be informed of the channels to use for the purpose of requesting service and or complaint and the benefits of using official channels when interacting with the city..

The city policy position on engagement channels and complaint management gives effect to the institutionalised engagements approach and effective complaint management system.

2. DEFINITIONS

“COUNCIL” means City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality

“MUNICIPAL AREA” means the area under council’s control and jurisdictions

“CUSTOMER” means people who may have Business Partner number with Council and all others who may want to request information and or query the Council services

“CHANNEL” means of interaction with the Council by public member

“SERVICE REQUEST” is are quest for the service that will be routed to various departments within the City on Tshwane, It has an service turnaround times linked to it

“INFORMATION REQUEST or ENQUIRY” is purely a request that will be closed immediately by agents for example information request (client requested the latest statement or a procedure to apply for the vacant land).

“COMPLAINT” is about service request which remained unresolved for an extended time period out of turnaround times or complaint about specific CoT employee “
3. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

3.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, Chapter 10, Section 195(1)

This document states the following:

Public administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the Constitution, including the following principles:

(a) A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained.
(b) Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted.
(c) Public administration must be development-oriented.
(d) Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.
(e) People’s needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making.
(f) Public administration must be accountable.
(g) Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.

3.2 Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), Chapter 2, Subsection 6:

This act states the following:

Duties of municipal administrations

1. A municipality’s administration is governed by the democratic values and principles embodied in section 195(1) of the Constitution.

2. The administration of a municipality must-
(a) be responsive to the needs of the local community;
(b) facilitate a culture of public service and accountability amongst staff;

and

(e) give members of the local community full and accurate information about the level and standard of municipal services they are entitled to receive;

3.3 White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997

This document sets out the following eight transformation priorities – the Batho Pele principles – that aim at making the public service people-centric:

1: Consultation
Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, where possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered.

2: Service standards

Citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect.

3: Access

All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled.

4: Courtesy

Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration

5: Information

Citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.

6: Openness and transparency

Citizens should be told how national and provincial departments are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge.

7: Redress

If the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response.

8: Value for money

Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money.
This act states the following:

It is the responsibility of any person directly or indirectly contracting with the State or exercising public power to promote equality by-

a) Adopting appropriate equality plans, codes, regulatory mechanisms and other appropriate measures for the effective promotion of equality in the spheres of their operation;

b) Enforcing and monitoring the enforcement of the equality plans, codes and regulatory mechanisms developed by them; and

c) Making regular reports to the relevant monitoring authorities or institutions as may be provided in regulations, where appropriate.

3.5 Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003) and Municipal SCOA Circular 80
These documents state that each municipality must, within its financial and administrative capacity, establish a sound customer management system as prescribed in the MSA.

3.6 City of Tshwane Vision 2030:
The following strategic pillars are applicable:

- **Pillar 2**: A city that cares for customers and promotes inclusivity
- **Pillar 3**: A city that delivers excellent services and protects the environment
- **Pillar 5**: A city that is open, honest and responsive

4. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- To guide management of customer interaction channels for the Council;
- To inform customers of the official engagement channels with intention of eliminating misunderstandings on how customers should report incidents and request service from the Council;
5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENTS AND COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

Provision of customer care in the City of Tshwane is guided by the following principles that allow City employees to effectively hear and resolve customers’ requests, while the City is informed of customers’ needs through the same process.

5.1 Listening

Through this principle, the City must listen to customers and members of the public as they raise their frustrations and direct requests to the City on the communication platforms as prescribed by the City of Tshwane Communication Policy.

5.2 Learning

In line with the ISO:9001 Quality Management System of continual improvement, the City’s learning process starts with every interaction and request from customers. Through the Quality Management Principles\(^1\), resource allocation and improvement of services delivered to customers must be factored into a process of delivering the service at all times in order to enable improved customer satisfaction and experience.

5.3 Connect

The City must be able to connect with its customers through all official channels and allow proper interactions at all possible times. It is through this principle that the City and its customers will develop trust and interact effectively. Affinity with the City of Tshwane as brand of choice will be realised when the City and its customers connect.

Customised service can only be provided by the City when its employees, processes and systems allow customers to connect with the City. Important data for customer intelligence and processes improvement will be achieved when the connect principle is applied through planning.

5.4 Influence

The framework will guide customer experience through official channels and allow customer experience and satisfaction regarding engagement channels in order to influence improvements in channel expansion or elimination. This principle allows

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\(^1\) ISO 9001:2015
customers and the City to be influenced through best practices and/or the specified needs of the City or its customers.

This principle allows open sharing of views and preferences, which may be considered by either the customers and/or the City. Use of the City’s official channels may be changed through application of this principle.

5.5 Optimise

Optimal assessment of each request or query received through the engagement channels will lead to improvement in the services offered by the City, i.e. the method of delivering such services, the measures needed to improve effectiveness, analysis of the delivery process, and application of all the necessary improvements. This principle cuts across the management responsibility of each service that is offered and resource-managed by the City.

By optimising the use of resources when the City considers engagement channels, processes will be continually improved and the need to optimise available technological tools will be identified. With the *optimise* principle, more is gained from the process and inefficiencies are eliminated during the process.

6. ENGAGEMENTS AND COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

6.1. Service request, information request and fault reporting procedure

The council shall engage with customers through the following official City of Tshwane customer engagement channels:

- Telephone
- E-mail
- Fax
- Walk-in centres
- Self-service (E-Tshwane)
- Facebook
- Twitter
When customers engage with the council for the purpose of requesting a service, information, enquire of service progress and reporting a fault, the standard interaction conceptual approach shall be followed.

6.1.1. Personal profile content

- Confirmation of the profile content and security checks.
- Profile updates of personal information must be performed when necessary.
- All profile content must be populated and viewed on all channels when a customer interacts with the City.

6.1.2 Knowledge management

- The City’s Knowledge Management Portal/Repository must be utilised at all times when interacting with customers.
- Only information available and signed off in the Knowledge Portal/Repository may be shared with customers.
- Self-service channels will allow information to be sourced from public knowledge in the City’s Knowledge Repository and on its website.

6.1.3 Service profile

- Customers’ service profiles must be used as the basis for service requests.
- When new services are requested, customers' service profiles must be updated accordingly.
6.1.4 Artificial intelligence

- Artificial intelligence must be used at all times when attending to customers’ requests in order to avoid repetitive/multiple logging of service requests.

- For proactive interaction and affirming of previous requests, artificial intelligence must be used.

- An overall view of all customers’ interactions with the City must be available up to the point of resolution.

6.1.5 Feedback

- Customers will be provided with feedback on their service request in the form of a reference number, progress/status update, and participation in a service satisfaction survey.

6.1.6 Campaign management

- Customers’ service requests and enquiries must be used to update the City’s campaigns requirements.

- Information on proposed future City’s campaigns may be gathered during the interaction with a customer.

6.2 Complaint management handling procedure

6.2.1 Mechanism of logging a complaint

- a verbal expression of dissatisfaction with respect to the service after the deficient act/action to immediate supervisor or manager;

- a complaint/suggestion box placed at all interaction point

- a touch-keypad system after the service is rendered;

- a walk-in by the complainant;

- a telephone call to a contact centre;

- a fax to a contact centre;

- a letter or email to the contact centre;

- e-Tshwane or a web-based complaint-lodging system;

- self-service kiosks/stations,
Non-emergency contact centres and walk-in centres of the City of Tshwane as the first points of contact will be administrators of the complaints management.

6.2.2. Complaint resolution turn-around times

City of Tshwane complaint management and resolution must ensure that customers’ complaints are resolved within 25 working days from the time that complaints are lodged or referred to the City by other institutions such as –

- the Premier’s hotline;
- the Presidential hotline; and
- The Public Protector.

Once the 25 working days within which a department has to resolve a complaint have lapsed without the complaint being resolved, the complainant becomes entitled to approach –

- an independent statutory institution such as the Public Protector; or Any statutory prescribed mediatory institution based on the nature of the complaint
- Complaints that relate to corruption should be referred to the City’s anti-corruption hotline, which is managed by the Forensic Investigation Unit, or the provincial or national anti-corruption hotline, which is managed by the Public Service Commission.

Corruption-related complaints are not part of what this policy and are dealt with by a separate process.

6.2.3. Complaint management stages

Stage 1 (immediate attention and resolution by front-line staff):

- Front-line service staff members deal with the initial submission of complaints and attempt to resolve them. Resolving complaints on first contact saves money and time by avoiding additional contacts, and builds customers confidence in city.
- Verbal complaints at this stage should be acknowledged immediately or within 24 hours and should be resolved accordingly by immediate supervisor in accordance with standard operating procedures.
• If not resolved within informal options of resolution as per standard operating procedure, a complaint must be converted to formal complaint and should be referred to the second stage.

Stage 2 (internal investigation by manager or complaint officer – maximum 10 working days):

• After stage 1, a manager or complaint officer in the department and or regional office must investigate complaints of a customer who is dissatisfied.

• The customer must have the privilege of having his or her complaint investigated by someone who has not been involved in the matter previously.

• The information gathered during investigation should be consolidated into a report and a decision should be taken.

• At this stage complaints should be acknowledged within 5 working days and resolved within 10 working days, from the time that they have been passed on from stage 1.

• If a complaint cannot be resolved within 10 working days, it should be escalated to stage 3 for internal review.

• The complainant should be advised of the escalation in writing.

• If a department or regional office needs more than 10 working days to resolve a complaint in stage 2, it must write to the complainant to explain why and when a response can be expected.

• A copy of such a letter should be sent to the head of the department and or Regional Executive Director in case of a regional case.

Stage 3 (internal review by head of department or his/her delegated official; Regional Executive Director or his/her delegated official– maximum 10 working days):

• If there is still dissatisfaction after stage 2, someone of higher authority carries out a further investigation and reviews the complaint.

• This person must take a fresh look at the evidence and not merely rely on the findings of stage 2.

• This stage requires that the head of department or someone delegated by the head of department signs off the solution reached at stage 3.
• The head of the department must also advise the complainant of his or her right to refer the complaint to the next level should he or she not be satisfied with the outcome of stage 3.

• The head of department or delegated official should not take more than 10 working days to review a decision, from the time that it has been passed on from stage 2.

Stage 4 (internal review by accounting officer – maximum 5 working days)

If there is still dissatisfaction after stage 3 –

• the accounting officer as the person with the highest authority in the municipality, or the person delegated by the accounting officer, carries out a further investigation and reviews the complaint;

• the accounting officer must take a fresh look at the evidence and not merely rely on the findings of stages 1 to 3;

• a solution to the problem is developed and implemented, and the accounting officer or person delegated by the accounting officer signs off the solution at stage 4; and

• The accounting officer must also advise the complainant of his or her right to refer the complaint for independent review should the complainant not be satisfied with the outcome of stage 4.

• The accounting officer or delegated official should not take more than 5 working days to review a decision, from the time that it has been passed on from stage 3.

• If the complainant is not satisfied after stage 4, he or she may approach the ombudsman (the Public Protector or any other mandated statutory institution) for an independent review (time to be determined by the review body).

The complaints management flow chart below (Annexure A) seeks inter alia to –

• summarise the complaint management process;

• facilitate easy understanding of the process; and

• Simplify the process in terms of the four stages in the proposed time line of 25 working days.
6.2.4. Complaint management process

The complaint management process shall include the following elements:

- **Screening and logging**

  This is the initial step where important information such as the name of the complainant, the nature of the complaint, the action taken and the resident’s response, place and date are captured. This will allow departmental officials to exercise control and ensure proper follow-up. A reference number must at all times be supplied to the complainants.

- **Investigation**

  This is a step whereby staff members are engaged in research to ascertain the legitimacy of the complaint. The complainant interacts with the complaint officers and is requested to give full details of the complaint if not done in writing when a complaint was logged. This will provide more facts that will help on reaching a decision on how to resolve the complaint.

- **Acknowledgement of progress or requesting additional information**

  When the complaint cannot be resolved immediately, a complaint officer needs to inform complainant of the progress and assure them that the complaint is. Prompt acknowledgment will set the complainant resident at ease, demonstrate caring and commitment to the process of preserving goodwill. Whenever possible, the complainant should be told how long it will take to complete the response to the complaint. If there is further delay, feedback should be given to the complainant on the reason for the delay and when he or she can expect to have an answer.

  Procedures should always have time limits.

- **Formulating a solution**

  A solution must be consistent with the constitutional mandate and existing policies of the City of Tshwane and the Batho Pele principles.

  When formulating a solution, departments and regional offices should consider –

  - the complainant’s expectations;
  - the department’s expectations of the complainant;
  - the cost and benefits of alternative solutions;
  - the comprehensiveness and fairness of the solution;
  - the attainability of the solution; and
  - The solution suggested by the complainant if reasonable.
• Responding

Responses should be clear and appropriate. The complainant must understand the response, and it must address the issues raised in the complainant’s original complaint. All responses must be in writing where written complaint is received and copies must be kept by municipality as proof of resolution in line with document management legislation.

7. QUALITY CONTROL

A comprehensive analysis of the complaint must be conducted by the business analysts to identify systematic and recurring complaint/problems for the executive committee to take actions in addressing them.

8. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of this policy will be effective a month after approval by the Council. The Customer Relations and Management Department will be responsible to communicate the policy to customers and departments.

9. POLICY REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed annually and be submitted for approval to the Council. In the case of events which may necessitate the review of the policy within a financial year as it was approved, such proposals for amendment will be submitted to the Council for approval.
Stage 1: Local resolution at the point of contact

**Time-frames:**
Acknowledge verbal complaints immediately or within 24 hours of Receipt

Stage 2: Local Investigation

**Time-frames for COMPLEX Complaint:** 15 working days. Acknowledge within 5 working days with a reference number and contact details. If not resolved within 15 working days, escalate to stage 3 and advise the complainant accordingly.

Note: If a department needs more time to resolve a complaint, it must write/call the complainant to explain why and when a response can be expected. A copy of the letter must be logged in a No case management system with a reference number.
**Stage 3:**
Internal Review

**Timeframes**
10 working days YES
If not resolved within 10 working days, a complainant is informed accordingly and advised of further remedies HoD to trouble shoot

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**Stage 4:**
Internal Review

**Timeframes**
10 working days YES
If not resolved within 10 working days, a complainant is informed accordingly and advised of further remedies .Accounting officer to take over process

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**Stage 5**
Complainant advised to seek review at the Public Protector

**Independent Ombudsman Review** Or any other relevant statutory mediating body