CUSTOMER CARE POLICY

VERSION HISTORY				
VERSION	APPROVED BY	REVISION DATE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE	AUTHOR
1.0		N/A	N/A	Ella Victor
1.1	Board	March 2026	Various	Muhammed Saley

1. Introduction

1.1 As a service-oriented public body, the Landscape and Waste Management Agency ("**LWMA**" or "**the Agency**") is committed to ensuring that customer service excellence is integral to planning, resourcing, and delivery of all the services it provides.

1.2 This Customer Care Policy ("**the Policy**") aims to ensure that the public and other key stakeholders that interact with the Agency receive a consistently excellent standard of customer service from the Agency and that there is fair treatment of all customers[1] and stakeholders.[2]

2. Purpose and aim of the Policy

2.1 The purpose of this Policy is:

a. to provide quality service to all customers and other stakeholders who interact with LWMA;
b. to ensure that the public is provided with the relevant information as and when needed in an appropriate format;
c. to ensure any complaints made by customers, stakeholders or other persons that are lodged with the Agency are addressed promptly and, as far as possible, to the full satisfaction of the complainant;
d. to ensure that customers and other stakeholders receive consistent and fair treatment at all times;
e. to reduce financial and time costs incurred arising from poor customer service;
f. to equip LWMA staff with knowledge and competencies to continuously enhance the service standards according to changing needs of the public and other stakeholders who interact with the Agency;
g. to ensure that feedback is taken seriously and actioned appropriately; and
h. to provide greater opportunity to communicate with the Agency through electronic and other means, including social media.

2.2 The Policy aims to ensure that LWMA maintains an environment where customers, stakeholders, and the public more generally feel valued, and that their views are taken into account when the Agency is tailoring its services.

3. Application of the Policy

This Policy applies to all LWMA staff and managers.

[1] For the purposes of this Policy, "customer" refers to members of the public who interact with the Agency.
[2] For the purposes of this Policy, "stakeholders" includes service providers and contractors, government ministries, departments and agencies, other public bodies, and any other person that the Agency interacts.

4. Standards and values

4.1 In order to ensure consistency in the customer service standards of the Agency, staff are expected to:

a. ensure that all communications they engage in is simple and user friendly;
b. comply with this Policy and any other documented frameworks and guidelines set by the Agency;
c. comply with any standards and performance targets[3] that are set by the Agency or managers.

4.2 The following overarching customer service standards apply:

a. Enquiries, complaints, and queries received from customers or stakeholders should be acknowledged within one (1) working day of receipt and responded to substantively within ten (10) working days.
b. Incoming telephone calls should be answered within 15 seconds, with an expectation that 90% of all such incoming calls will be answered within this timeframe.
c. Staff should ensure that they show empathy when speaking to customers or members of the public.
d. Staff should seek to ensure that, where necessary and appropriate, disabled customers or other stakeholders are provided with assistance when seeking to access LWMA offices or premises.
e. Staff should seek to engage customers, stakeholders, and the public more generally in the process of developing and enhancing our services by employing an "outside-in"[4] approach as the basis for enhancing customer services.
f. Staff should aim to provide customer service that treats people fairly and consistently, without discrimination, favouritism, or capriciousness.
g. Staff should, at all times, project customer-friendly gestures and ensure that they are calm, unflappable, and courteous in their dealings with others, remembering that they are public servants.
h. Staff should seek to escalate matters to supervisors or managers where they are faced with discourteous behaviour from customers, stakeholders, or members of the public.
i. Staff must, at all times, ensure that confidentiality is maintained in respect of any dealings with customers or stakeholders that necessitate such confidentiality to be upheld.

5. Customer and stakeholder interaction

5.1 Face-to-face contact

a. Customers and stakeholders will be greeted in a polite and courteous manner.
b. Staff will always give their full attention to the customer or stakeholder. Where a staff member is dealing with a face-to-face enquiry or complaint, they should aim to ensure that the customer or stakeholder is given necessary attention and are not left unattended or wondering what is happening.

[3] These standards and performance targets will be reviewed regularly and informed by feedback from staff, customers, stakeholders, and the public.
[4] An outside-in approach is a strategic mindset that prioritises customer and stakeholder needs to guide decisions.

c. Wherever possible, staff will aim to resolve the customer or stakeholder's enquiry or complaint during the first contact.
d. The member of staff who meets a customer or stakeholder at the first point of contact will ensure that adequate information regarding the customer or stakeholder's enquiry or complaint is obtained, but at the same time ensure confidentiality, especially when dealing with sensitive enquiries or complaints in a busy reception area. Where possible, staff should seek to find a private space to discuss such enquiries or complaints.
e. Staff at first point of contact will give customers or stakeholders the option of seeing specialist members of the Agency.
f. Where staff need to make enquiries or find another member of the Agency to deal with the matter, they should ensure that the customer or stakeholder is not left unattended for more than fifteen (15) minutes in reception or other room without providing an update on issues or progress, either directly or via a colleague. Where possible, the customer or stakeholder should be made aware of the expected waiting time for the resolution of the issue.

5.2 Telephone calls

a. Staff are expected to answer telephone calls within fifteen (15) seconds (i.e. after two (2) rings).
b. Calls to departments or sections (excluding the customer service team) should be answered as follows:

"Good morning/afternoon,

You have come through to [*insert name*] in LWMA's [*insert name of department*]"

c. Staff in the customer services team should answer calls as follows:

"Good morning/afternoon,

You have come through to [*insert name*] in LWMA's customer services team.

How may I help?"

d. Staff should aim, wherever possible, to resolve the customer or stakeholder's enquiry or complaint during the first contact.
e. Telephones will be attended during published opening hours.
f. If staff are away from their desk, telephones should be diverted to another person/section, or a message should be taken by another member of staff.
g. Staff should seek to ensure that they never leave the customer or stakeholder with the impression that the staff member who answers the call is unable to assist.
h. Where the customer or stakeholder requires a callback from a particular member of staff who is unavailable at the time the customer or stakeholder first calls the Agency, the customer or stakeholder will be asked when would be convenient for such a callback (where applicable) or the message can be written down on a slip to be taken up by the relevant personnel upon resuming duty in the office.
i. If a call is put on hold, the customer or stakeholder must be told why this is happening and kept updated if the waiting time is longer than expected.

5.3 Written correspondence

a. Incoming written correspondence, including emails, should be acknowledged within one (1) working day of receipt and responded to substantively within ten (10) working days.
b. The presentation and content of any written correspondence must be clear, easy to understand, accurate, and include a contact name and number.
c. All issues raised by the customer should, as far as possible, be acknowledged and responded to within the correspondence.

5.5 Complaints procedure

a. Staff will aim to resolve all complaints raised by customers or stakeholders immediately and informally.
b. Staff will inform the customer or stakeholder that, if the informal resolution is not to their satisfaction, they may make a formal complaint to the Agency and explain how to do this.
c. Formal complaint must be done in writing to the CEO. The CEO will decide to whom the complaint should be delegated for resolution. The private secretary to the CEO will keep a record on all incoming complaints.
d. Where any complaint is raised, the Agency should ensure that the customer or stakeholder is provided with an acknowledgement of their complaint within one (1) business day of receipt, with a substantive response being sent (where possible) within fifteen (10) working days. To the extent that additional time is required, the customer or stakeholder should be informed.
e. Heads of Departments will analyse any complaints about the service in their respective units and take remedial action so that problems do not recur.
f. These service failures may involve:

    i. Unjustified delays in the provision of services.

    ii. Poor service standards.

    iii. Failure by the Agency to follow policies, rules, or procedures.

    iv. Failure to by the Agency to inform people of their rights or entitlements.

    v. The provision of inaccurate or misleading information or advice by the Agency.

5.6 Suggestions

a. The Agency considers that customers, stakeholders, and LWMA staff members should be encouraged to make suggestions through a suggestion book located in the reception area of LWMA's main offices.
b. Staff should inform customers and stakeholders that they can either make suggestions through that book or otherwise send any suggestions by email to the Agency.
c. Where the Agency implements changes as a result of a suggestion and where the customer, stakeholder of staff member has provided their name and contact details, the customer, stakeholder or staff member should be made aware of the changes made to services as a result of their suggestion.

5.7 Customer and stakeholder health and safety

All customers visiting LWMA offices or premises should be protected from any health and safety risks in line with the Agency's health and safety policy.

6. Staff training and development

Staff in the Agency will be provided with relevant training and development to enable them to satisfy customer expectations and ensure their customer services skills remain up-to-date.

7. Staff name badges

7.1 In line with s.5(f) of the Public Officers' Ethics Act 2008, staff should be neatly dressed at all times in order to ensure that a professional impression is reflected to customers, stakeholders, and members of the public who may be in or around the vicinity of any LWMA office or premises.

7.2 Where appropriate, staff should wear printed name badges that specify their name and designation.

8. Buildings and signage

8.1 Reception points should be attended at all times during opening hours.

8.2 Receptionists and the area around the reception should be welcoming.

8.3 Reception points will display clear and accurate opening times.

8.4 Details of services and the names of relevant personnel will, where necessary and appropriate, be displayed clearly in all reception areas.

9. Information/communication

9.1 Information that is provided to customers, stakeholders, and the general public will be clear, concise, and accurate; written in plain English and reviewed regularly.

9.2 Relevant information relating to the Agency will be published in line with the Access to Information Act 2018.

9.3 Any information or communications that are to be sent to customers, stakeholders, or members of the public should be sent timeously.

10. Availability and access

The Agency will ensure that the public have information about:

a. The Agency's opening times.
b. The location of the Agency's offices and other premises.
c. The names of managers.
d. The facilities and services available.
e. Access details.

The above will be available through either print or social media.

11. Staff conduct, awareness and safety

11.1 Staff working in the information office should arrive on time and should not leave the office unattended.

11.2 Permission should be sought from a supervisor if a staff member wishes to leave the Information Office for whatever reason.

11.3 Staff will be courteous and polite in their dealings with customers or stakeholders.

11.4 Staff should treat customers and stakeholders in the same way they expect to be treated. Staff are entitled to expect that they will also be treated with courtesy and respect by customers and stakeholders.

11.5 Where a customer or stakeholder does not treat a staff member in a polite or courteous manner and subjects the staff member to verbal abuse or physical threats, the staff member should take the following steps:
a. Stay calm and controlled.
b. Seek to de-escalate the matter by using active listening techniques and non-threatening but assertive communication to seek to explain why the customer or stakeholder's behaviour is unacceptable.
c. Inform the customer or stakeholder that they will bring the discussion to an end if they continue to be impolite, discourteous, or abusive.
d. Repeat and reframe.
e. Raise the matter with a supervisor or manager to seek assistance.
f. Take note of the interaction and provide it to their supervisor or manager.

11.6 In the case of an extended dispute, frontline staff members should seek assistance from their immediate supervisor or manager.

11.7 Staff members should have regard to any policies on how the Agency will handle abuse of its staff.

11.8 The Agency will not tolerate abuse or abusive behaviour, including verbal abuse, threats, harassment, bullying, or any other antisocial conduct that demeans LWMA staff. The same applies to LWMA employees to clients, too.

11.9 The Agency will consider what action to take against any such perpetrator on a case-by-case basis, which may include, but is not limited to, issuing warning or cease or desist letters, filing complaints

with the Police on behalf of the staff member, taking action against service providers under any contract the Agency has in place where it is found that a service provider has engaged in such conduct, and any other action deemed appropriate, necessary and proportionate in an individual case.

12. Customer and stakeholder information

Staff should be aware that any information that LWMA holds may be subject to release under the Access to Information Act 2018 and may be subject to a subject data access request under the Data Protection Act 2023.

13. Review of this Policy

13.1 This policy will be reviewed at least one every two (2) years.

13.2 The Agency will have systems and processes in place that allow it to monitor and evaluate its customer service standards and performance.