

ITEMS FOR DEBATE

21 FEBRUARY 2024

ADOPTION BY EXCEPTION RESOLUTION

<u>RECOMMENDATION</u>	
That the Committee Recommendations for items 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 10.5 and 10.6 and the Officer Recommendations for items 11.1 and 15.1 be adopted en bloc:	
10.1	Policy and Legislation Committee – 24 January 2024 – Council Policy Review: Naming of City Roads and Assets
10.2	Policy and Legislation Committee – 24 January 2024 – Council Policy Review: Recording and Livestreaming of Meetings
10.3	Policy and Legislation Committee – 24 January 2024 – Council Policy Review: Legal Representation for Elected Members and Employees
10.4	Policy and Legislation Committee – 24 January 2024 – Amendment to delegation DA 3 - 03: To Institute a Prosecution, or to Issue an Infringement (<i>Bushfires Act 1954</i>)
10.5	Finance Committee - 7 February 2024 - List of Payments Made - December 2023
10.6	Finance Committee - 7 February 2024 - Monthly Financial Report - Year to Date 31 December 2023
11.1	DA23/0230 Building Envelope Modification, Single House and Swimming Pool: 37 Koorabin Drive, Yallingup
15.1	Elected Member Information Bulletin

ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH BY SEPARATE RESOLUTION

Item No.	Item Title	Reason
10.7	Finance Committee - 7 February 2024 - Naturaliste Community Centre Capital Funds	Absolute Majority Required
12.1	RFT16/23 Bussell Highway Stage 2	Absolute Majority Required
14.1	Committee and Working Group Appointments <i>Supplementary Agenda</i>	Absolute Majority Required

ITEMS FOR DEBATE

Item No. 14.1	Customer Service and Communications (CEO KPI)	Pulled by Cr Macnish	Page 61
<p><u>ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATION</u></p> <p>That the Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Observes the report providing measures and opportunities increasing community engagement and understanding of City processes and decisions addressing the relevant CEO KPI deliverable, but also notes the strategy to be a collection of process inputs NOT outcomes (which are yet to be fully assessed in terms of successfully delivering the desired customer service experience levels).2. Accordingly, refers the matter of consideration of the CEO's performance meeting KPI criterion #4 to the next CEO Performance Committee meeting for its advice to the Council.3. Refers the opportunity identified in the officer's report of a risk-based approach to communications and capitalising on the value offered primarily from complaints to its Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) to consider (but not be limited to) the following options moving forward:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. the CEO undertake a review of the City's complaint handling process and provide a report to the ARC outlining the risks and opportunities for improvement of the current process as it relates to customer service.b. the CEO to engage an independent auditor to undertake a review of the City's complaint handling processes and provide a report to the ARC outlining the risks and opportunities for improvement.c. the CEO include complaints handling as an area for audit in any future internal audit plan (noting that there is a report scheduled for the March ARC meeting that will address an internal audit plan).			
<p><u>REASONS FOR ALTERNATIVE</u></p> <p>The purpose of setting CEO KPIs is to drive desired operational outcomes. Establishing a strategy/approach to a matter, whilst being an appropriate start, does not in itself, deliver desired outcomes (unless the desired outcome in this case is simply to point to having a strategy). The monitoring of an outcome means measuring, understanding, and reporting factual data.</p> <p>Excellent customer service can be assured if and only if the informed customers rate it as such. The degree to which community scorecard respondents are informed is debatable.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, customers who have observed first-hand the responding processes of the City are those that have had enduring complaints. There is thus valuable information to be derived through assessment of these informed customer's issues. For this reason and in the interests of excellent customer service, it is recommended the Council require its Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) examine how best to derive the implicit value of complaints and assess risk within its</p>			

complaints handling process. Case examples to highlight areas for customer service improvement would be a worthwhile exercise and demonstrate to the public the Council wants to take the matter very seriously.

Excellent customer service can be assured if and only if the informed customers rate it as such. The degree to which community scorecard respondents are informed is debatable. Typically, customers who have observed first-hand the responding processes of the City are those that have had enduring complaints. There is thus valuable information to be derived through assessment of these informed customer's issues. For this reason and in the interests of excellent customer service, it is recommended the Council require its Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) examine generally its complaints handling process and use case examples to highlight areas for customer service improvement.

In communication and customer service terms, one considers strategic matters of; the Vasse River, Extractive Industries, the BEACH/Saltwater project, the AGM, the use of discretion in development applications as pertinent learning examples evident in the last 3 months.

A key cohort of (informed) customers that do not appear to be mentioned in the report are the elected members. This group is accessed by City customers with general customer service experiences they think require attention. The elected members also have their own customer service experiences. The ARC comprising all elected members is therefore an informed resource the Council has at its disposal (in addition to staff) to contribute to the assessment (and improvement) of the customer service of the City. Indeed it is a vital element of the City's risk framework.

The following excerpt of the report applies:

The Stakeholder Relations team currently provides advice and assistance with the drafting of 'high profile' communications and draft all media communications. Further application of a risk-based approach to communications would be beneficial, such that officers use the City's risk assessment process to determine the need for involvement by the Stakeholder Relations team. This can be further explored as part of re-invigorating the City's risk frameworks, and implemented as part of staff training in relation to communications.

In the same way the Council has established its ARC to advise it on matters of risk, the CEO Performance Committee has been established to advise the Council on matters pertaining to the CEO's attainment of performance targets. Why establish these Committees if they are not used to carry out the roles they are tasked with?

OFFICER COMMENT

In response to the performance criterion set by the Council, officers reviewed current systems, processes, and approaches and compared them to those in several other local governments, and against Council's adopted community engagement framework objectives.

Officers believe that the City's customer service and communications approach is broadly aligned to the good practice of other local governments, and to the public participation principles outlined in the community engagement framework. As outlined in the report however, there are a range of short-, medium- and longer-term opportunities for improvement, such as organisational wide training, improved feedback mechanisms, roll out of communication guides, and system enhancements such as an improved Customer Request Management system. Officers

acknowledge that the outcome of implementing these opportunities (as resourcing permits) will require further review and measurement.

With respect to referral of this criterion to the CEO Performance Review Committee, while the CEO Performance Review Committee will assess the CEO's performance against a range of criteria including the performance criteria (as per the agreed process in the CEO Performance Review Policy), officers believe the Council should consider (as recommended by officers) acknowledging the report and the existing measures and opportunities as having met the requirements of CEO Performance Criterion #4. This is the process that has been applied in relation to the other performance criteria, notwithstanding the CEO Performance Review Committee will conduct an overall performance review. Moving forward, reports in relation to CEO performance criterion can be presented to the Council (as required in the criteria) via the Committee, with the Committee as of this calendar year scheduled to meet more frequently.

In relation to part 3 of the alternative, the intent of the performance criterion was to implement a best practice customer service model, and to ensure the City's communication with its customers is understandable, uses simple language wherever possible, and clearly explains the impacts of decisions or potential decisions and why they have been made. It was not to review the City's complaints handling process which is governed by the Complaints Management Council Policy. The inclusion of a motion to review the complaints handling process is not relevant to the subject of the report which is to provide a report on performance criterion #4.

As an aside, it is noted that the strategic matters that Cr Macnish refers to with reference to 'learning examples' are largely related to expressions of dissatisfaction with a decision of Council. The Complaints Management Policy sets out the definition of a complaint as being:

'An expression of dissatisfaction with a level of service, repeated lack of promised service or response, or the conduct of any person employed by the City of Busselton, which is not anonymous, made to the City of Busselton through its Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer or any of its employees in writing or verbally, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected'.

It expressly states that a complaint is not:

- *a request for service;*
- *a request for information;*
- *the lodging of an appeal in accordance with a standard procedure or policy;*
- *a freedom of information enquiry;*
- *an allegation of a breach of the law by a third party; or*
- ***an expression of dissatisfaction with a decision (emphasis added)***

If Council was to resolve on part 3, the CEO would present a report to the Audit and Risk Committee in relation to progressing a review of the complaints handling process, but does not believe such a motion is related to the performance criterion set, and therefore recommends that the Council resolve as per the officer recommendation and address the matter of complaints management separately, most likely through pending discussions around the establishment of an internal audit plan.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ADMINISTRATION) REGULATIONS REQUIREMENT

Pursuant to regulation 11(da) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, if the amended recommendation is adopted by Council, the above Reasons will be recorded in the Minutes.