



**WESTERN
DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION**

Western Development Commission (WDC)

Customer Service Action Plan 2019– 2024

June 2021

Western Development Commission (WDC) Customer Service Action Plan (2019 – 2024)

The WDC Customer Service Action Plan 2019 – 2024 sets out the relevant steps the WDC will take to deliver on the commitments in its Customer Charter up to the end of 2024 in line with its [Strategic Statement 2019 – 2024 ‘Work Smarter, Live Better’](#). The actions, indicators and timelines are set out in accordance with the [12 Guiding Principles of Quality Customer Service](#), which were agreed by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in 2000. This Action Plan includes details of how the WDC will measure its performance and report the results. Implementation of this Action Plan is one of the key strategies the WDC will pursue to support the achievement of the objectives in its Strategic Statement. The CEO will implement the Plan and undertake his/her duties in accordance with the [Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour](#) as well as [The Ombudsman’s Guide to Standards of Best Practice for Public Servants](#).

IMPLEMENTING THE GUIDING 12 PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

1. Quality Service Standards

Publish a statement that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
<p>Ensure that the Customer Charter is available in the office and online.</p> <p>Ensure that the Charter is published on the website and available in work areas</p> <p>Ensure that this Customer Action Plan is published on the WDC Website and available in other formats on request.</p>	<p>Customer Charter and Action Plan are available and displayed in appropriate areas and accessible from the WDC Website.</p>	Ongoing
<p>Monitor and evaluate Quality Service Standards as set out in the WDC Charter and Action Plan</p>	<p>Conduct Customer Service Feedback Surveys</p> <p>Create a feedback area on the WDC Website</p>	<p>Every three years</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Reporting of Customer Service progress annually</p>	<p>Progress reported in Annual Reports</p>	Annually
<p>Promote awareness of Quality Service Standards and the 12 principles of Customer Service among WDC staff</p>	<p>Internally by e-mail, communicate at staff meetings.</p> <p>Training provided when required</p>	Ongoing
<p>Work with stakeholders and Government Departments to improve Customer Service</p>	<p>Continue to use best practice when communicating with stakeholders and Government Departments</p>	Ongoing

2. Equality/Diversity

Respect the principles of equality and the diversity of our customers in the delivery of all services. Ensure that no-one will be treated unfairly on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community.

Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and for those facing geographic barriers to services.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
<p>Promote Staff Awareness on the role of equality, both internal and external</p>	<p>Staff are aware of the Principles of Equality and Diversity.</p> <p>Information circulated to all Staff</p>	Ongoing

Include staff awareness by including awareness in the Policy and Procedures file, at the Facilities and Employee Wellbeing Committee Meetings and where necessary through training and development	Included in Policies and Procedures file, training and communication through staff meetings	Ongoing
Implement the principles of the Code of Practice for the Employment of People with Disability in the public service and ensure compliance with the employment targets under Part 5 of the Disability act 2005.	Implementation of Principles. Strive to achieve employment targets in accordance with Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005	Ongoing
Equality and Diversity is central to the Agency policy and legislative development	Adhere to legislation and procedures	Ongoing

3. Physical Access

Provide clean, accessible public office that ensures privacy, complies with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
Ensure Office is maintained to the required standard for both customers and staff	Feedback from customers and staff.	Ongoing and every three years
Up-to-date Health and Safety Statements are in place. Adequate procedures are in place for any emergencies	Health and Safety Statements updated to required legislation and implemented accordingly. Health and Safety Rep has appropriate training in employee safety procedures and First Aid Response (FAR).	Ongoing and refresher training every two years.
Disability access to building	Wheelchair accessibility is provided as well as wheelchair accessibility to toilets.	Ongoing

4. Information

Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact, and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of and that the information available on public service websites follows the guidelines on web publication. Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
Ensure language is clear in information leaflets, application forms, newsletters, and website. 'Easy to Read' option.	Feedback from customers and stakeholders.	Ongoing with feedback sought every three years from customers and stakeholders.
Meaningful engagement/ interaction with social media in order to present key information.	Monitor information on social media sites and to ensure it is clear and relevant.	Ongoing
Ensure that information on the WDC website is up-to-date, current, timely and accurate.	Feedback from Stakeholders / Customers	Ongoing with quarterly reviews of website.

5. Timeliness and Courtesy

Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and the minimum delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer.

Give contact names in all communications to ensure ease of ongoing transactions.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
Ensure all staff are aware of the guidelines with regard to the procedures for answering the phone	Guidelines included in the Customer Charter and the Policy and Procedures File	Ongoing
Aim to consistently meet the standards of service as set out in the Customer Charter and ongoing review of performance	Customer/Stakeholder feedback through communications with stakeholders.	Ongoing
Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) requests meet the statutory requirements and relevant contact person provided.	Statutory requirements are met. Contact person is included on website and relevant correspondence	Ongoing
Promote the use of social media, website, and e-zines to circulate information.	E-mail reminders. Technical Support provided	Ongoing

Promote and support the use of E-invitations systems. E-mail signatures to include contact details, e.g. Name, Title, Department, phone and e-mail.	Technical support provided	Ongoing
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6. Complaints procedures

Maintain a well-published, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
Ensure all staff is aware of the Customer Complaints Procedure. Publish and prominently display the WDC's Customer Charter in all offices to assist staff in handling complaints.	Customer Charter easily accessible to all staff.	Ongoing
Publicise the WDC Complaints procedures widely through the WDC Website and in the Customer Charter	Customer Charter prominently display and on the WDC Website	Ongoing
Monitor queries and complaints received.	Queries assessed and Complaints dealt with in a timely manner	Ongoing
Address all complaints in line with the procedures set out in the Customer Charter.	Complains dealt with accordingly and in a timely manner.	Ongoing

7. Appeals

Similarly, maintain a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
Awareness that options are available to the customer/stakeholder if they are dissatisfied with the decision made in relation to the services provided	Details of how to make an appeal are available in the Customer Charter.	Ongoing

8. Consultation and Evaluation

Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service of delivery.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
Consult with Customers and Stakeholders to understand their needs and expectations with regard to Customer Service and in line with Consultation for Public Sector Bodies	Carry out consultations in line with the guidelines on Consultation for Public Sector Bodies.	Ongoing
Using all methods possible including technology to assist input from Customers/ Stakeholders	The process becomes more accessible through the use of different methods of consultation.	Ongoing
Input from Stakeholders/ Customers every three years to identify issues.	Stakeholder/Customer feedback. Note Issues raised. Address these issues.	Every three Years
Continue to gain feedback from stakeholders/ customers regularly on the quality of service received from the WDC.	Add a Comment Card to the website. Customer Survey form circulated.	Ongoing Circulate Surveys every three years

9. Choice

Provide choice, where feasible, in service delivery, including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice and quality of delivery.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
Ensure that Information is readily available on request in a user-friendly manner appropriate to the Stakeholder/Customer's needs, e.g., e-mail, soft copy, hard copy, audio and is easy to read.	Stakeholder/Customer Feedback Satisfaction is measured by Stakeholder/Customer feedback.	Ongoing Survey every three years
Continue to upgrade and enhance the WDC Website regularly so that customers can access information and services provided.	Stakeholder/Customer feedback Satisfaction as measured by feedback	Ongoing

10. Official Language Facilities

Provide quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages

Action	Indicator	Timeline
Implementation of the WDC Official Languages Scheme 2013 – 2016 under the Official Languages Act 2003	Scheme is drafted in line with commitments set out.	Ongoing
Encourage staff to learn Irish/improve their Irish language skills	Provide training for staff who are dealing directly with customers through the Irish Language	Ongoing
Communicate with the Office of an Coimisinéir Teanga	Communications ongoing	Ongoing

11. Better Co-ordination

Foster a more coordinated and integrated approach to the delivery of public services.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
Engage with Department of Rural and Community Development, DPER, Houses of the Oireachtas and other stakeholders with regard to common goals.	Co-ordinated approach to policies and legislation Co-ordinated agreement on working together to achieve goals	Ongoing
Strengthen communication and consultation with the Departments and Stakeholders	Satisfied with level of communication and consultation Monitor through regular feedback	Ongoing and Survey every three years
Continue to engage with other sectors, including the general public, non-governmental agencies, business and voluntary sectors	Groups are satisfied with level of communication, Customer Service and support.	Measured through feedback every three years.

12. Internal Customer

Ensure staff recognised as internal customers and that they are adequately supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
Develop internal communication functions, e.g. Staff Meetings, Facilities and Employee Wellbeing Committee, Housekeeping Committee and Management Meetings.	Monthly Staff, Committee and Management Meetings.	Ongoing
Continue to develop the WDC's internal communications functions, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Microsoft Teams to facilitate remote working • Ongoing development of website • Productions of monthly e-zines • Organisation of Staff/Committee/Management Meetings 	Comprehensive and informative internal communication initiatives implemented.	Ongoing
Identify training and development needs of staff through the PCC process	Training provided as requested	Annually & Ongoing
Ensure regular feedback to determine internal customer satisfaction and address any issues arising.	Feedback received, analysed, and issues raised addressed.	Ongoing
Continue to enhance internal communications and information-sharing mechanisms	Enhanced communication and information-sharing in the workplace.	Ongoing

General Data Protection Regulations [GDPR]

In addition to the 12 Guiding Principles of Quality Customer Service, the WDC is also committed to managing the collection, processing, storage, use and disclosure of certain information relating to individuals, as required under the new General Data Protection Regulations May 2018. The new GDPR practices will update and harmonise data protection law for the EU much of the emphasis will be on transparency, security and accountability by data controllers and processors. It will also standardise and strengthen the right of the EU citizens to privacy of their personal data.

Action	Indicator	Timeline
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Guidelines on GDPR and security and confidentiality of personal data reviewed	Procedures and Guidelines Policy complete and published on WDC website. Update as new legislation is announced	Ongoing
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Location and Contact Details of the WDC Office.

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Review History

Version	Date
V1	May 2019
V2	June 2021