COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK REPORT

Project Name Customer Experience Program

Engagement period: 17 August to 6 September 2026

This report provides an objective summary of community feedback received during engagement. It supports informed decision-making by presenting what was heard from participants. It does not advocate for or against a proposal or recommend a decision.

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1. Executive Summary

The City of Onkaparinga is refreshing its Customer Experience Program to make interactions with council clearer, simpler, more caring and more consistent. Community members were invited to reflect on a recent experience, identify where difficulties occurred and suggest which improvements should be prioritised.

Between 17 August and 6 September 2026, 123 people made 132 contributions across the survey, customer story and conversation tools. The main survey recorded 122 responses from 117 contributors. Results were predominantly negative: 51.6% of responses rated the experience one star out of five and the weighted average was 2.24 out of five. The strongest concerns related to slow responses, limited progress updates, difficulty getting matters resolved and inconsistent follow-through.

Feedback was not uniformly negative. Participants also described helpful, empathetic and knowledgeable staff, prompt operational responses and positive experiences with libraries, Customer Relations and other frontline teams. These examples showed that respectful communication, clear explanations and timely action can significantly improve how an interaction is experienced.

The main themes were:

- faster responses, clearer timeframes and regular progress updates
- simpler processes and information that is easy to find, understand and trust
- staff who listen, show empathy and have the knowledge or authority to help
- consistent ownership across channels, including the ability to track requests and outcomes
- accessible choices for people who cannot or prefer not to use digital services.

Some feedback concerned rates, council expenditure and debt, Chief Executive remuneration, elected member conduct, governance transparency or the merits of individual decisions. These matters cannot be resolved through the Customer Experience Program, but they influenced the tone of some responses and are acknowledged separately in this report.

The feedback will be provided to the Customer Experience Program team and relevant service areas to help prioritise improvements. Council will report back to the community as actions are confirmed and implemented.

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2. Project Overview

The Customer Experience Program is helping council better understand and improve how people experience its services, whether they make contact by phone, online, in person or through a council facility. The refreshed program is guided by the principles of clarity, simplicity, empathy and consistency, expressed to the community as services that are clear, simple, caring and consistent.

Engagement was undertaken to understand recent customer experiences, identify where people encounter difficulty or frustration and determine where improvement efforts may have the greatest impact.

Scope of community influence

Participants could influence which customer experience issues council focuses on first, identify areas of service they find unclear, difficult or inconsistent, and suggest improvements to communication, support and the way requests are handled.

The engagement could not influence individual service decisions already made, legislative or regulatory requirements, or budget decisions made through formal Council processes. It also could not resolve individual customer requests.

3. Engagement Overview

The engagement method for this project was consult. Community engagement was undertaken from 17 August to 6 September 2026.

The purpose was to understand recent customer experiences, identify common issues across services and contact channels, and gather ideas for making interactions with council clearer, simpler, more caring and more consistent.

The broader A better way Your Say project recorded 897 views, 518 visits and 413 unique visitors during the engagement period. The Customer Experience Program page recorded 377 visits and 326 unique visitors. Across the engagement, 123 people made 132 formal contributions through the survey, customer story and conversation tools.

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Engagement techniques

Technique	Purpose	Reach / Participation
Your Say project page	Provide project information, scope and participation choices	377 visits / 326 visitors to the Customer Experience Program page
Recent experience survey	Assess a recent interaction and identify improvement priorities	122 responses / 117 contributors
Share your story	Collect detailed positive, negative or mixed experiences	8 stories / 8 contributors
Join the conversation	Collect and discuss improvement ideas	2 ideas / 2 contributors
Your Say member emails	Invite Your Say members to participate	Across two campaign sends: 3,433 recipients recorded, 1,063 opens, 60 clicks and 37 bounces.
Social media	Promote the opportunity to participate	29,115 viewers; 76,322 views; 3,439 engagements; 316 link clicks.
Printed feedback forms at council offices	Provide a paper-based way to participate	Available at council offices during the engagement; no hard copy forms were received.
Posters and digital screens	Promote the opportunity in council facilities	Displayed in libraries, community centres and council offices; no reach total is available.
Telephone on-hold messages	Promote the opportunity to people calling council	Included in council telephone on-hold messaging; no reach total is available.
Alternative contact options	Provide non-digital ways to give feedback or seek assistance	Phone, in-person, email and post options were listed on the project page; no separate contribution were received using these alternative methods.

Your Say Email Results

Campaign	Recipients	Opens	Clicks	Bounces
All locations launch email	3,377	1,052	60	36
Additional launch email	56	11	0	1
Total across sends	3,433	1,063	60	37

Both campaign sends were issued on 17 August 2026. The combined figures are totals across the two sends and should not be interpreted as the number of unique recipients across both campaigns.

Digital Promotion Results

Channel / post	Viewers	Views	Engagements	Link clicks
Facebook - organic post	3,419	6,158	913	68
Facebook - paid post	25,429	69,719	2,508	237
LinkedIn	267	445	18	11

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Channel / post	Viewers	Views	Engagements	Link clicks
Total	29,115	76,322	3,439	316

The paid Facebook post recorded 96 landing page views. Separately, the Your Say project page recorded 241 visits from social media (46.5% of 518 visits), followed by 204 direct visits (39.4%) and 47 website referrals (9.1%). Social platform link clicks and Your Say visits are defined differently and should not be directly compared as a conversion rate.

About the Results

Participation was voluntary. The results describe the views of contributors and should not be interpreted as representative of all residents or customers. One person may have contributed through more than one tool, so the project total of 123 unique contributors is lower than the sum of contributors reported for the individual activities.

The 132 contributions are the online contributions recorded in the supplied Your Say reports; no separate offline contribution total was included. Open-text comments were thematically analysed and summarised, and individual customer matters are not reproduced or assessed in this report. Social media metrics and Your Say visitation metrics describe different stages of the participation pathway and are reported separately.

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4. What We Heard

OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

The final feedback showed a clear concentration of negative recent experiences, particularly within the main survey. Of 122 survey responses, 63 rated their overall experience one star and 16 rated it two stars. Twenty-eight responses rated the experience four or five stars. The eight customer stories produced a more mixed picture: the platform classified four as positive, one as mixed and three as negative. Stories included praise for empathetic assistance, helpful library support and rapid operational action, alongside concerns about unanswered enquiries, incomplete work, communication tone and enforcement interactions.

Feedback was received across a range of services and contact channels. The most frequently selected service areas were roads, footpaths, parking and traffic service requests (29 responses); planning and development (22); other services (15); rates (12); waste collection (11); and animal management (10). Phone (39) and email (33) were the most common interaction channels, followed by in-person contact (17).

KEY SURVEY RESULTS

Measure	Final result
Overall experience rating	Average 2.24 out of 5; 51.6% gave one star
Easy to get what was needed	58.2% disagreed; 23.0% agreed
Kept informed about what would happen next	51.6% disagreed; 23.8% agreed

Measure	Final result
Handled within a reasonable timeframe	51.6% disagreed; 30.3% agreed
Listened to the customer	49.2% disagreed; 36.1% agreed
Treated the customer with respect	27.9% disagreed; 40.2% agreed; 26.2% were neutral

COMMON THEMES

Theme 1 – response time, updates and closing the loop

Participants repeatedly asked for quicker responses, reliable call-backs, acknowledgement that a matter had been received and regular updates while it was being considered or completed. Several people described requests being closed without a clear explanation, outcome or notice that work had been completed. Others said promised responses did not occur or arrived much later than expected.

This theme was strongly supported by the survey results: 51.6% disagreed that council kept them informed about what would happen next and 51.6% disagreed that their request or enquiry was handled within a reasonable timeframe. Suggested improvements included clear service timeframes, automatic acknowledgements, progress notifications and more detailed completion messages.

Theme 2 – simple, clear and accessible information and processes

Many participants wanted information and service processes to be easier to navigate. Of the 120 people who answered whether they searched before contacting council, 70 had looked for information. Only 12 of those 70 found everything they needed; 22 found some of it, 31 could not find it and five were unsure whether the information was correct.

Open-text comments referred to online forms that did not accept reports, processes that felt convoluted, inconsistent responses through the My Local Services app and difficulty obtaining simple information. Participants also asked council to retain printed or staff-assisted options for people who do not use apps, online forms or printers. The feedback suggests that simplicity must include both better digital pathways and supported non-digital alternatives.

Theme 3 – listening, knowledge, empathy and respect

Experiences with staff were mixed. Some participants felt they were not listened to, received incorrect or overly generic information, were spoken down to or were repeatedly referred to another person. In the survey, 49.2% disagreed that council listened to them. Views about respect were more balanced, with 40.2% agreeing they were treated respectfully, 27.9% disagreeing and 26.2% selecting neutral.

Positive comments showed what participants valued: staff who were patient, empathetic, friendly and willing to explain options; employees who helped even when the enquiry had reached the wrong organisation; and staff who followed up personally. Of the 42 respondents who rated additional information supplied by staff, 23 found it helpful and 16 found it unhelpful. These experiences indicate that tone, active listening and confidence in the information provided are central to a caring customer experience.

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Theme 4 – consistent ownership and self-service tracking

Participants wanted a clearer sense that someone owned their request from start to finish, including when matters moved between teams or required a manager. Suggestions included a customer login or portal where people could view enquiries, payments, expected timeframes, progress and outcomes. Both ideas in the conversation tool were tagged as relating to a customer self-service portal, and similar suggestions appeared in the survey comments. The conversation summary did not include the full text of the two ideas, so this finding is limited to the supplied tag and related survey feedback.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

Other suggestions included providing enough detail in call-back messages so customers understand the subject of the call, using personalised responses where possible, providing clearer information when a request is completed or closed, and reviewing character limits so people can explain complex issues and possible solutions.

Participants also suggested retaining paper-based information and feedback options, providing direct contact details or clearer pathways to responsible teams, reconsidering how the term customer is explained, targeting engagement promotion to affected communities, and providing clearer information about the role of elected members and local ward engagement.

MATTERS OUTSIDE THE PROJECT SCOPE

A substantial number of open-text comments raised broader concerns about rates, council expenditure and debt, Chief Executive remuneration, elected member behaviour, political affiliations, governance transparency and the timing or merits of specific Council decisions. Other comments sought action on individual planning, waste, road, footpath, drainage, parking, animal management or public safety matters.

These comments have been acknowledged because they formed part of the feedback received. However, the engagement cannot determine formal budget or governance matters, reconsider decisions already made or resolve individual service requests. Where relevant, the way these matters were communicated or followed up has informed the customer experience themes above.

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5. Evaluation

The engagement met its purpose of identifying common customer experience issues. Rating questions and open-text responses produced consistent findings about response times, communication, service ownership, accessible information and staff interactions. The customer stories added practical examples that helped explain the survey results.

The results do not confirm that all intended stakeholders were reached. Of the 119 survey respondents who provided an age, 73.1% were aged 45 or over and no respondents aged 17 or under were recorded. Five of the eight customer story contributors were aged 65 or over. A suburb was provided by 114 survey respondents, but the summary export listed only the 20 most recent responses, so a complete geographic distribution could not be assessed from the supplied report.

The participation options allowed people to provide either a brief response or a more detailed account. The main survey did not require registration, and 64.2% of the 67 evaluation respondents said it was easy to provide feedback. Most survey responses (93.4%) concerned experiences within the previous year, supporting the focus on recent interactions.

The available data does not show which promotional activities were most effective. Evaluation respondents could select more than one way they heard about the project, and separate reach or contribution totals were not recorded for offline channels. Future campaigns would benefit from consistent source and conversion tracking across promotion methods.

The evaluation identified areas for improvement. Only 27.7% of 65 respondents agreed they understood what they could and could not influence, and 36.9% agreed there was enough time to find out more and respond. Participants also raised concerns about free-text character limits. These results

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indicate that future engagement should explain the scope of influence more prominently, allow sufficient time and space to respond, retain accessible non-digital options and consider targeted approaches for younger people.

ENGAGEMENT EVALUATION RESULTS

Evaluation statement	Agree / easy	Neutral	Disagree / hard
It was easy to provide feedback (n=67)	43 (64.2%)	19 (28.4%)	5 (7.5%)
Information was easy to find (n=65)	23 (35.4%)	32 (49.2%)	10 (15.4%)
Information was clear and easy to understand (n=65)	33 (50.8%)	21 (32.3%)	11 (16.9%)
Understood what could and could not be influenced (n=65)	18 (27.7%)	27 (41.5%)	20 (30.8%)
Enough time to find out more and respond (n=65)	24 (36.9%)	25 (38.5%)	16 (24.6%)
Knew how to contact the Your Say team (n=65)	29 (44.6%)	15 (23.1%)	21 (32.3%)

6. Next Steps

- Review the community feedback.
- Translate the confirmed themes into prioritised improvement actions.
- Publish this final feedback report and explain what was heard, how the feedback was considered and what will change as a result.

6. Sign-off

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7. Appendices

- **Appendix 1** –Your Say survey results and participation report
- **Appendix 2** – Social media results report

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