

COUNCIL POLICY



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| Policy name | Customer Service |
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Abstract

The policy is aimed at ensuring Gunnedah Shire Council (GSC) staff provide consistent, positive customer service across the organisation and to provide guidance on GSC's expectation of staff in providing quality customer service.

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| Dates | Policy or amendment approved | 17 Jul 2013 |
| | Policy or amendment takes effect | 17 Jul 2013 |
| | Policy is due for review (up to 4 years) | 17 Jul 2017 |
| Endorsed by | MANEX | |
| Approved by | Gunnedah Shire Council, at its Ordinary Meeting of Council held TBA Resolution number: 425 | |
| Policy Custodian | Manager of Customer Service and Communication | |
| Relevant to | All Staff | |
| Superseded Policies | | |
| Related documents | Customer Service Charter Customer Service Standards Complaints Policy | |
| Related legislation | <i>The Local Government Act 1993</i> The Local Government (General) Regulations 2005 | |
| File number | 816635 | |

Contents

1. Purpose
2. Scope
3. Definitions
4. Policy principles
5. Policy statement
6. Accountability, roles and responsibilities
7. Acknowledgements
8. Version control and change history

1. Purpose

The policy is aimed at ensuring Gunnedah Shire Council (GSC) provides consistent, positive customer service across the organisation to both external and internal customers and to provide guidance on GSC's expectation of staff in providing quality customer service.

2. Scope

The policy applies to all employees and contractors of GSC in the provision of customer service to both external and internal customers.

3. Definitions

Customer - Any person or organisation having dealings with GSC, including but not limited to ratepayers, residents, visitors to Gunnedah Shire and other members of staff.

4. Policy principles

GSC is committed to the provision of timely, efficient, consistent, positive and quality service which meets customer's expectations and is provided by polite and helpful Council staff.

5. Policy statement

GSC strives to ensure that our customers receive timely, efficient, friendly, consistent and quality customer service each and every time.

5.1 Council's Responsibilities

At all times Council aims to:

- Treat customers courteously and with respect.
- Deal with customers in a polite and helpful manner.
- Listen to customers and take their views into account.
- Provide customers with necessary and relevant information.
- Treat customers fairly and take account of their particular needs.
- Act on our commitments in a timely manner.

- Value customers' privacy by treating all personal information confidentially.
- Leave a "visit card" with our name and contact number following a visit to a customer's residence if that customer is absent at the time.

5.2 Customer's Responsibilities

To make our job easier in providing our services we ask customers to:

- Treat Council Officers with respect.
- Respect the privacy, safety and needs of other members of the community.
- Provide accurate and complete details.
- Phone to make an appointment for a complex enquiry or a need to see a specific Officer.
- Phone the Officer nominated on correspondence sent to the customer and quote the file number of the letter.

5.3 Customer Service Standards

GSC Customer Service Standards will be developed by 1 August 2013 in accordance with this Customer Service Policy, providing a standardised approach to managing contact with customers. The Customer Service Standards will clearly define what a customer can expect when dealing with council via the following contact mediums.

- Face to Face
- Telephone
- Letter, email, fax
- Website
- Meetings

The Customer Service Standards will provide measurable levels of customer service and give staff guidance on the obligations they have when dealing with customers, ensuring quality customer service.

GSC Customer Service Standards will be reviewed at least annually to ensure the customer service provided by council is meeting the needs and expectations of our customers.

5.4 Customer Service Charter

A GSC Customer Service Charter will be developed by 1 August 2013 which will outline the standards of customer service a customer can expect when dealing with council. The Customer Service Charter will cover council dealings with customers by a variety of contact mediums including face-to-face, telephone, letter, email, fax, and website.

The Customer Service Charter will be based on a summary of Council's Customer Service Standards; the charter will be able to be viewed on council's website and will be available for customers to view at any council staffed building.

5.5 Customer Service Monitoring

Customer Service Monitoring will be conducted by the Manager of Customer Service and Communication to ensure organisation wide compliance with the customer service framework.

The Customer Request Management System (Dataworks) will be utilised to track and gather statistical data on customer requests received by council that have been actioned in accordance with council's customer service standards.

The customer request statistics will be reported to Manex on a monthly basis.

Monitoring will also incur bi-annually in the form of internal or external mystery shopping with the results reported to Manex accordingly.

5.6 Training

Training will be provided on customer service standards and general communication skills on an as needs basis, as identified by a staff member's Manager.

Effective 1 August 2013, customer service training will form part of the staff induction process.

Requests for training are to be referred to the Human Resources Officer, Training and Administration. The Human resources will then discuss the needs of the officer with the Manager, Customer Service and Communication.

6. Accountability, roles and responsibilities

All Staff

All Staff are responsible for ensuring they adhere to the Customer Service Standards at all times and must aim to provide positive, consistent and high quality customer service.

Managers

Managers are responsible for monitoring the level of customer service provided by their staff. Managers are also responsible for modelling positive and consistent customer service based on the GSC Customer Service Standards.

Directors

Directors are responsible for customer service within their department and ensuring the implementation of this policy in their department.

The General Manager

The General Manager is responsible for ensuring organisation wide compliance with the policy.

6.1 Policy Custodian

Director Corporate Services.

6.2 Responsibility: Responsible Officer

The Manager of Customer Service and Communication.

7. Acknowledgements

The following acknowledgments are made recognising institutions or documents that have provided a basis, instructive comment or templates that have been used to develop Council's Customer Service Policy.

1. Devonport Council 'Customer Service Charter'.

8. Version control and change history

| Date | Version | Approved by & resolution no. | Amendment |
|-------------|---------|------------------------------|-----------|
| 23 May 2013 | 1 | Circulate to Manex | |
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