

COUNCIL POLICY



Policy name	Customer Service
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Abstract
The policy details Gunnedah Shire Council's commitment to delivering customer service experiences that meet the needs and expectations of our customers, and enhances Council's ability to continuously improve service provision.

Dates	Policy or amendment approved 21 Feb 2018 Policy or amendment takes effect 21 Feb 2018 Policy is due for review (up to 4 years) 21 Feb 2022
Endorsed by	Executive Management Team (EMT)
Approved by	Gunnedah Shire Council, at its Ordinary Meeting of Council held 21 February 2018. Resolution number: 11.02/18
Policy Custodian	Manager Communications and Cultural Services
Relevant to	All Staff
Superseded Policies	Customer Service (File No 816637)
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	1192027

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1. Purpose

The policy details Gunnedah Shire Council's commitment to delivering customer service experiences that meet the needs and expectations of our customers, and enhances Council's ability to continuously improve service provision.

2. Scope

The policy applies all Council officers and customers of Council.

3. Definitions

Customer - Any person or organisation that has dealings with Council.

4. Policy principles

Gunnedah Shire Council is committed to nurturing an organisational culture that values customer service and recognises that a strong customer focus is a vital part of our work.

We are committed to:

- Making genuine engagement with our customers a priority.
- Taking an integrated approach to customer service delivery supported by clear, consistent frameworks and processes that supports our ability to provide quality customer service.
- Making sure dealings with our customers are transparent, equitable, consistent and that we are accountable for the level of service delivered.
- Making it easier for people to do business with Council.
- Making it easier to build professional relationships built on trust, respect and finding solutions.

5. Policy statement

5.1 Council's Responsibilities

At all times we will:

- Treat customers with courtesy, fairness and respect.

- Listen and respond to your requests within service standards.
- Work with you to find solutions.
- Communicate with you clearly, using plain language.
- Provide you with accurate, relevant and complete information.
- Act on our commitments in a timely and efficient manner.
- Value your privacy by treating all personal information confidentially.

5.2 Customer’s Responsibilities

We ask our customers to:

- Provide us with accurate and complete details so that we can respond to your enquiry.
- Let us know when your circumstances change.
- Work with us to resolve your concerns or problem.
- Treat Council staff with courtesy and respect.
- Provide feedback so that we can work to improve our services.

5.3 Customer Service Standards

Councils Customer Service Standards have been developed in accordance with this Customer Service Policy, providing a standardised approach to the way we provide service to our customers.

Requested Service	Our Standard
Customer Service Requests	<p>Acknowledgment of request sent within 2 working days via email or letter.</p> <p>Provide a response within 10 working days or provide regular, proactive updates if the request cannot be completed within 10 working days to ensure customer is kept well informed.</p>
Reply to written/email/social media general requests.	Within 10 Working days via email or letter.
Return telephone calls and voice mail messages.	Within 2 working days.
Complaint Resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acknowledge complaint within 2 working days via email or letter. ▪ All complaints will be addressed within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint via email or letter, except where further information is waiting to be received. ▪ In the instance where further information is required, the complainant will be advised of the progress of the complaint within 10 working days and the complaint will be addressed within 20 working days. ▪ The customer will be provided regular, proactive updates during the assessment period to ensure customer is well informed.

<p>Other request, applications, duties, etc. within timeframes listed in legislation <i>e.g. Local Government Act 1993, Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, Government Information (Public Access) Act (NSW).</i></p>	<p>Any other requests or timeframes for service that is specified by legislation or Acts etc. will be adhered to and where timeframes are not listed, responses will be within 10 working days.</p>
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The Customer Service Standards clearly define what you can expect when dealing with council via the following contact mediums.

- Face to Face
- Telephone
- Letter, email, fax
- Online
- Meetings.

Council's Customer Service Standards provide a measurable benchmark for customer service provided by Council staff.

Council's 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

The Customer Service Charter is a summary of Council's Customer Service Standards.

5.5 Customer Service Monitoring

Customer Service Monitoring will be conducted by the Manager of Communications and Cultural Services to ensure organisation wide compliance with the customer service standards.

The Customer Request Management System will be utilised to receive, record, investigate, resolve, review and store service requests made by customers.

Customer request statistics will be collated and presented to Senior Management on a monthly basis to ensure compliance with council's commitment to delivering high quality customer service.

Customer Service levels will also be monitored through Customer Service Pulse Checks.

5.6 Training

Customer service training is included as a module in Council's Staff Induction training and on-boarding systems.

Opportunities for revision training are available upon request to Council's Human Resources Team.

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 and Cultural Services

6.2 Responsibility: Responsible Officer

Manager Communications and Cultural Services

7. Acknowledgements

1. Wollongong City Council Customer Service Policy (2014)
2. Eurobodalla Shire Council Customer Service Policy (2017)
3. Devonport Customer Service Charter (2017)

8. Version control and change history

Date	Version	Approved by and resolution no.	Amendment
23 May 2013	1	Circulate to Manex	
21 Dec 2017	2	Draft Policy review circulated to SMG endorsement.	Adjustments to language and approach made to align policy with Councils vision and commitment to community engagement.
21 February 2018	2.1	Amended Policy for Council Endorsement.	Minor amendments have been made to the original policy to reflect organisational changes, and in accordance with Councils ongoing commitment to Customer Service, Complaints Processing and Community Engagement.
21 February 2018	2.1	Council 21 Feb 2018 Resolution 11.02/18	