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|---------------|---|------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>POLICY</b> |  | Responsible Department       | Corporate Services |
|               |   | Original Adoption Date       | 24.02.11           |
|               |   | <b>Current Adoption Date</b> | <b>30.09.20</b>    |
|               |   | Audit Committee Review Date  | NA                 |
|               |   | Date of Review               | 30.09.23           |

| TITLE                                   | POLICY – Customer Service         |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Latest Review Changes</b>            | 17.09.20                          |
| <b>Previous Council Reviews</b>         | 24.02.2012, 24.02.2011, 29.08.18, |
| <b>Previous Audit Committee Reviews</b> | NA                                |

**Applicable Legislation:**

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**Related Policies (alphabetical list):**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Complaints Policy<br><br>Employee Code of Conduct |  |
|---|--|

**Related Procedures:**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Uniform Guideline |  |
|-------------------|--|

**Reference Documents:**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this policy is to provide all staff with guidelines and expected behaviours for the provision of acceptable standards of customer service.

Staff are to be made aware of the standards set out in this policy, and of the seriousness of failing to deliver on the standards set out in this policy. Staff are to understand that any failure to deliver acceptable standards will reflect poorly on Council as a whole.

Staff will be provided with training and support, as well as the necessary tools and equipment to support this policy.

## **2. INTENT**

The Council is committed to achieving Customer Service excellence. It will endeavour to deliver all services in a professional, courteous and timely manner.

Confidentiality and discretion will be respected at all times

## **3. COMMUNICATION**

Staff are to be courteous, patient and understanding in all communications with customers. Staff are not expected to put up with abuse or personal attacks at any time.

## **4. CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS**

Any customer complaints are to be dealt with by Council in a manner consistent with its Complaints Policy.

## **5. STAFF PRESENTATION**

Staff should always personally appear neat, tidy and well-groomed when in the presence of customers, and dressed in a way that is consistent with the Uniform Guideline.

## **6. CUSTOMER ADVICE FOR SPECIAL EVENTS**

The Council will provide the community with adequate advanced notice of special events and projects such as works undertakings, fees and charges, planned water and power outages, and any other public relations items and community events, well in advance of such taking place.

Such notice is to be designed to reduce the volume of enquiries or complaints about the special events and also allow for any such communications to be spread over a longer period of time, so aiding customer service officers in handling these communications.

## **7. STAFF ADVICE AND TRAINING FOR SPECIAL EVENTS**

Customer Service Staff shall be advised of any matters or special events that will possibly cause an influx of customer enquiry and impact on normal work schedules.

Customer Service Staff shall be advised and trained if applicable, for any response or procedure to be undertaken, as required by management to matters or special events that will possibly cause an influx of customer enquiry.

## **8. POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

To ensure compliance with a broad range of regulations, and to ensure acceptable levels of service, staff are to follow all Council policies and procedures.

Managers are to ensure contractors follow all appropriate policies and procedures, and work efficiently to meet reasonable customer/community expectations.

By following policies and procedures correctly, staff automatically provide themselves with suitable means and evidence to support their methods of operation, behaviour and by providing a record of activities.

Where a staff member believes there are items in a policy or procedure that can be improved they should present these opinions directly to their manager or at a management meeting/workgroup meeting for discussion and review, and possible amendment to the policies and procedures.

## **9. PERFORMANCE RESPONSE TIMES**

It is accepted that enquiries to Council can take many forms, relate to many different issues, and require the involvement of different people in Council. For this reason it is problematic to try to prescribe strict response times. The following are guidelines only. Notwithstanding, the underlying principle should remain that an informed response is provided as soon as practically possible.

### **9.1 Telephone Calls**

Staff will endeavour to answer all telephone calls as soon as possible. All enquiries are to be handled in a courteous and professional manner. Specialised enquiries – eg rates, water, electricity etc. are to be directed to the relevant officers. If an enquiry is unable to be answered immediately, it is reasonable for customers to be advised they will be contacted as soon as possible by the relevant staff member (see below for response time frame).

### **9.2 Response Time Frame**

For all general enquiries:

Next day response

Within 5 working days if enquiry requires further research. If the nature of the enquiry is such that it is likely to take longer than the five days to provide an informed response, and depending on the nature of the query, the customer will be with an update or estimate of timeframe.

### **9.3 Urgent Matters**

Immediate communication by physical presence or by phone

After Hours – Immediate if loss of supply or dangerous conditions exists.

## **10. REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed and evaluated no less than every three.