



PUBLIC POLICY OF GRIFFITH CITY COUNCIL

Classification:	COUNCIL MATTERS
Policy Title:	Customer Service
DAKS Reference No:	CS-CP-601
Previous Policy Number:	202
Original Adoption Date:	14/01/03
Policy Revision Date:	March 2013
Policy Revision No:	1

Policy Objective:

1. To provide guidance for staff and Councillors in dealing with customers.
2. To ensure that all customers are treated in the same manner.
3. To ensure Council resources are used in the best available way.

Policy Statement:

Service Commitment

1. Council staff and Councillors shall strive to meet the needs of our customers in a professional and ethical manner with courteous and efficient service. Staff and Councillors shall:
 - a) treat all customers with respect and courtesy
 - b) listen to what customers have to say
 - c) respond to customer enquiries promptly and efficiently
 - d) act with integrity and honesty when liaising with customers
 - e) consult customers about service needs
 - f) ensure customer enquiries/requests are clearly understood

Standards of Service

2. Council staff shall strive to respond to correspondence received from customers (written, faxed or emailed) within five (5) days. An acknowledgement letter may be sent where investigations are such that more than 5 days is required to enact a response.
 3. Telephone calls to Council's switchboard shall be answered as quickly and efficiently as possible.
 4. Council staff shall answer incoming calls by clearly stating their name and position or branch/division. Unanswered calls shall divert to another member of staff or to voice mail.
 5. Staff making outgoing calls shall identify themselves by name and council/division/branch, as appropriate, and shall clearly outline the purpose of the call.
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6. Reception area and customer service centre staff shall greet customers as quickly as possible and in a professional and helpful manner.
7. Staff required to visit a customer external to Council facilities shall attempt to contact the customer first and make an appointment. At the beginning of a Council visit, staff shall clearly identify themselves and the purpose of the visit.
8. Council staff are to wear appropriate name badges to identify themselves when dealing with the public.

Customers Who Cannot Be Satisfied

9. Customers who cannot be satisfied are people who are not satisfied with Council responses to their enquiries and continue to maintain or assert that the Council is either unable to, or unwilling to assist them further and disagree with the action Council has taken in relation to their complaint or concern.
10. If in the opinion of the General Manager a customer cannot be satisfied and all appropriate avenues of internal review or appeal have been exhausted and the customer continues to write, telephone and/or visit Council the following actions may be taken:
 - a) the General Manager may write to the customer restating Council's position on the matter if necessary and advising that if the customer continues to contact Council regarding the matter Council may:
 - i) not accept any further phone calls from the customer
 - ii) not grant any further interviews
 - iii) require all further communication to be put in writing
 - iv) continue to receive, read and file correspondence but only acknowledge or otherwise respond to it if:
 - the customer provides significant new information relating to their complaint or concern; or
 - the customer raises new issues which in the General Manager's opinion, warrant fresh action
 - b) the General Manager shall advise Councillors of any correspondence issued in accordance with clause 10(a)
 - c) the customer shall be given an opportunity to make representations about Council's proposed course of action
 - d) if the customer continues to contact Council after being advised of Council's proposed course of action, the General Manager may, after considering any representations from the customer, advise the customer that any or all of points i) - iv) above will now apply



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Customers Who Make Unreasonable Demands

11. Customers who make unreasonable demands are those people whose demands on Council start to significantly and unreasonably divert Council's resources away from other functions or create an inequitable allocation of resources to other customers. Such demands may result from the amount of information requested, the nature or scale of services sought or the number of approaches seeking information, assistance or service.
12. If in the opinion of the General Manager a customer is making unreasonable demands on Council and the customer continues to write, telephone and/or visit the agency the following actions may be taken:
 - a) the General Manager may write to the customer advising them of Council's concern and requesting that they limit and focus their requests and that if the customer continues to place unreasonable demands on the organisation the Council may:
 - i) not respond to any future correspondence and only take action where, in the opinion of the General Manager the correspondence raises specific, substantial and serious issues; or
 - ii) only respond to a certain number of requests in a given period
 - b) the General Manager shall advise Councillors of any correspondence issued in accordance with clause 12(a)
 - c) the customer shall be given an opportunity to make representations about Council's proposed course of action
 - d) if the customer continues to contact Council after being advised of Council's proposed course of action, the General Manager may, after considering any representations from the customer, advise the customer that either or both of points i) - ii) above will now apply

Customers Who Raise Numerous Generalised and Repeated Demands

13. If in the opinion of the General Manager customers are making numerous generalised and repeated demands that are difficult for staff to understand the following actions may be taken:
 - a) the General Manager may notify the customer that:
 - i) only the Public Officer will deal with them in future
 - ii) they must make an appointment with the public officer or have an agreed monthly meeting at a set time; or
 - iii) all future contact with Council must be in writing
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- b) the General Manager shall advise Councillors of any notification issued in accordance with clause 13(a)
- c) the customer shall be given an opportunity to make representations about Council's proposed course of action

Customers Who Constantly Raise The Same Issue With Different Staff

14. If in the opinion of the General Manager a customer is constantly raising the same issues with different staff the following actions may be taken:
- a) the General Manager may notify the customer that:
 - i) only the Public Officer will deal with them in future
 - ii) they must make an appointment with the Public Officer or have an agreed monthly meeting at a set time; or
 - iii) all future contact with Council must be in writing
 - b) the General Manager shall advise Councillors of any notification issued in accordance with clause 14(a)
 - c) the customer shall be given an opportunity to make representations about Council's proposed course of action

Customers Who Are Rude, Abusive or Aggressive

15. Rude, abusive or aggressive behaviour may include rude or otherwise vulgar noises, expressions or gestures, verbal abuse of either a personal or general nature, threatening or offensive behaviour, physical violence against property or physical violence against a person.
16. If in the opinion of any staff member rude, abusive or aggressive comments or statements are made in telephone conversations or interviews, the staff member may:
- a) warn the caller that if the behaviour continues the conversation or interview will be terminated
 - b) terminate the conversation or interview if the rude, abusive or aggressive behaviour continues after a warning has been given.
17. Where a conversation or interview is terminated in accordance with clause 16, the staff member must notify the General Manager or the relevant Assistant General Manager of the details as soon as possible.
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18. If in the opinion of the General Manager any correspondence to Council contains personal abuse, inflammatory statements or material clearly intended to intimidate, it will be returned to the sender and not otherwise acted upon.

General

19. In all of the situations referred to in this policy, adequate documentary records must be made and maintained on the appropriate Council file.
20. Where the General Manager determines to limit a customer's access to Council in any of the ways specified in this policy, the General Manager must advise the Council as soon as possible of the relevant circumstances and the action taken and forward such advice, where appropriate, to the ICAC, Department of Local Government and the NSW Ombudsman for information.

Definitions:

None

Exceptions:

None

Legislation:

Local Government Act 1993

Policy Owner:

Governance & Administration

Related Documents:

Customer Service Guarantee

Policy History:

Date of Adoption/Amendment	Minute Number
14/01/03	25
11/03/03	248
08/03/05	70
11/05/10	0142



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Customer Service Guarantee Griffith City Council

We are committed to achieving these standards

If there is any way you think we can improve our level of service please contact us on
6962 8100



Using the Telephone, we will...

- ☎ Answer your call promptly.
- ☎ Greet, and identify ourselves (including Council name).
- ☎ Be professional, polite and pleasant.
- ☎ Return your call within 1 working day or as soon as possible.

On a personal level we will...

- 😊 Greet you when you visit us and identify ourselves.
- 😊 Wear name badges and give staff names in all dealings with you.
- 😊 Treat you as we would like to be treated ourselves with respect and courtesy.
- 😊 Listen carefully and identify your needs by asking questions and confirming details.
- 😊 Treat your inquiry as an opportunity to help you.
- 😊 Treat your complaints as an opportunity to put things right.
- 😊 Always make a service promise and ensure that we follow through.
- 😊 Provide interpreter services if required

For all your enquiries we will...

- ➔ Respond within 5 working days by way of letter or phone call.
- ➔ If the enquiry can not be finalised within this time a letter will be sent outlining action being taken with the responsible officer's name and contact number.

Our Goals

Council staff and councillors shall strive to meet the needs of our customers in a professional and ethical manner with courteous and efficient service.

Staff and Councillors shall:

- (a) treat all customers with respect and courtesy
 - (b) listen to what customers have to say
 - (c) respond to customer enquiries promptly and efficiently
 - (d) act with integrity and honesty when liaising with customers
 - (e) consult customers about service needs
 - (f) ensure customer enquiries / requests are clearly understood.
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