

Customer Service Charter

March 2018



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1 PURPOSE

This Customer Service Charter specifies the Central Coast Council's customer service commitment and principles relating to the services it provides.

2 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

2.1 Honesty and Integrity

- (a) We will treat you with respect and be courteous at all times;
- (b) We will be open, honest and genuine in all of our interactions with you; and
- (c) We will be consistent and impartial in administering our statutory and regulatory functions.
- (d) We will do what we say we'll do

2.2 Professionalism

- (a) We will always be polite, listen to your enquiry and respond in an objective and timely manner;
- (b) We will endeavour to correct things promptly when they have gone wrong;
- (c) We will provide you with relevant information and explore other options where available; and
- (d) Enquiries will be responded to within the timeframes set out in Section 6 of this document.

2.3 Privacy

- (a) We will respect our customers' privacy and handle personal and confidential information in accordance with the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*; and
- (b) We will only access confidential information for authorised work-related tasks.

3 CONTACT THE COUNCIL

3.1 In Person

- (a) The Council's Administration Centre at 19 King Edward Street, Ulverstone is open Monday to Friday from 8.00am – 4.30pm (closed on Public Holidays), Cashier available from 8.30am; and
- (b) The Penguin Service Centre at 78 Main Road, Penguin is open Wednesday to Friday from 9.30am – 12.30pm and 1.30pm – 3.30pm AEST and 9.00am – 12.30pm and 1.30pm – 4.00pm AEDT (closed on Public Holidays).

3.2 By Phone

- (a) Telephone number: (03) 6429 8900
- (b) The Council's Switchboard is operational Monday to Friday from 8.00am – 4.30pm (closed on Public Holidays), a recorded message function is available after hours that includes an after hours emergency contact number.

3.3 By Electronic communication

admin@centralcoast.tas.gov.au

[Central Coast Council website](http://www.centralcoast.tas.gov.au/) – <http://www.centralcoast.tas.gov.au/>

3.4 In Writing

You may write to:

The General Manager
Central Coast Council
PO Box 220
ULVERSTONE TAS 7315

3.5 Service Request

A service request may be lodged as an appeal for assistance to inspect, remove, replace, repair or reinstate Council infrastructure which may be damaged, missing or not operating. It can also be a request for a Council service or an appeal for action to be taken in respect of a nuisance

To make a Service Request, please use one of the following options:

- (a) Complete an online Service Request on the Council's website: [Online Service Request](#);

- (b) Complete a Service Request form, these forms are available from the Administration or Service Centres; or
- (c) Telephone (03) 6429 8900.

3.6 What Council expects in order to help you

We expect that our customers treat Council staff, Councillors and other customers/community members with respect and courtesy. We ask that when requested you make every effort to provide accurate information and work with us to solve problems. The Council does not accept anti-social behaviour, this includes: offensive/abusive language, and/or harassing and threatening behaviours.

Should you be abusive by way of threatening behaviour or abusive and vulgar language, the Council will terminate communication with you. If face to face, then we may walk away. If on a telephone, we will terminate the call. If in email, your address may be blocked.

If a staff member feels threatened by your inappropriate behaviour, the Council may notify the Police.

Should unacceptable behaviours towards the Council continue, or, you are unable to accept that the Council has done all it can to help, the General Manager may limit or cease contact with you. A decision of this nature will be communicated in writing.

4 COMPLAINTS

A complaint may be lodged as an expression of dissatisfaction, made to the Council in relation to its services, where a response or resolution is expected. Unsatisfactory conduct of an Officer(s) or failure to comply with the Service Standards will be treated as a complaint.

All complaints will be treated with seriousness, however if the complaint is found to be malicious, or is a repeated complaint to which a response has previously been given, the Council will take no further action. The customer will be informed of this decision in writing by the General Manager.

To make an official complaint, please write or call the Council and have the following details available, if relevant:

- (a) Your full name, address and telephone number;
- (b) Sufficient details for the complaint to be actioned, including:
 - (i) Location and time of event – what happened;

- (ii) Copies or references to letters or documents relevant to the complaint; and
- (c) anonymous complaints may be accepted where there is a potential risk to persons or property.

If a Council Officer, Group Leader or Director is unable to resolve your complaint, or if you are not satisfied with the suggested resolution, you may choose to escalate your complaint to the General Manager. In this case, please forward your original complaint and related information to:

The General Manager
 Central Coast Council
 PO Box 220
 ULVERSTONE TAS 7315

If you are dissatisfied with the Council's attempt to address your complaint, you may contact the Mayor or escalate your complaint further by contacting:

(a) The Ombudsman
 GPO Box 960
 HOBART TAS 7001
 Phone: 1800 001 170
 Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.tas.gov.au

(b) The Director
 Local Government Division
 Department of Premier and Cabinet
 GPO Box 123
 HOBART TAS 7001
 Phone: 03 6232 7022
 Email: lgd@dpac.tas.gov.au

While you can refer your complaint directly to these bodies at any time, we strongly encourage you to approach the Council to investigate your complaint first.

Where a customer makes a complaint that the Council, a Councillor or the General Manager has failed to comply with the *Local Government Act 1993* or any other Act or may have committed an offence under that Act, the customer may, where they are not satisfied with the response, lodge the complaint with the Director of Local Government in accordance with Section 339E of the Act.

5 LEGISLATION AND INTERNAL DOCUMENTS

Related legislation and internal documents include:

- (a) *Local Government Act 1993*
- (b) *Personal Information and Protection Act 2004*
- (c) *Right to Information Act 2009*
- (d) *Central Coast Council Communications and Engagement Policy 2016.*

6 SERVICE STANDARDS

6.1 Contact by telephone

- (a) Our staff will answer telephone enquiries promptly and courteously;
- (b) We aim to answer all questions at the first point of contact; and
- (c) If specialist attention is needed and the person required is available they will answer the call. Where the person required is not available, the call will be returned within one working day.

6.2 Contact in writing

- (a) We aim to acknowledge both written and electronic communication within three working days of receiving it and respond to the communication within 10 working days;
- (b) If we cannot respond within the set timeframes we will make contact to explain the reason for the delay and when a full reply can be expected;
- (c) We will use language that is clear and concise.

6.3 Service Requests

- (a) Where a service request is urgent and the matter places the safety of the community at a high risk, the matter will be dealt with immediately;
- (b) Where the matter is urgent and there is little risk to the safety of the community, the matter will be responded to within 24 hours;
- (c) Routine service requests will be dealt with according to the policies and procedures of the Council and guidelines as required by legislation.

6.4 Complaints

If you are dissatisfied or have concerns about the services, decisions or actions of the Council we would like to hear about it:

- (a) We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint in accordance of our services standards;
- (b) If we are unable to resolve your complaint within 10 working days we will contact you to explain why and advise the timeframe in which we will be able to resolve it;
- (c) If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been adequately resolved you can request that a review goes to the General Manager, who will then undertake an investigation of the complaint and make a determination on the matter; and

- (d) We will ensure all of our correspondence includes the name and contact details of the Officer dealing with the matter.

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires that the General Manager provide the Council with a report at least once a year detailing the number and the nature of the complaints received. Complaints received are reported in the Annual Report of the Council.