



# NORTHERN MIDLANDS COUNCIL

## POLICY MANUAL

### CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER

**Originated Date:** Adopted 5 May 2003 – Min. No. 156/03 (as Policy 46)

**Amended Date/s:** Revised 19 December 2005 – Min. No. 427/05  
Revised 21 September 2009 – Min. No. 255/09  
Revised 28 May 2012 – Min. No. 119/12  
Revised 26 May 2014 – Min. No. 118/14  
Revised 27 June 2016 – Min. No. 160/16  
Endorsed 20 July 2018 – Min. No. 217/18

**Applicable Legislation:** Section 339F of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

**Objective** To advise the service that can be expected from Council, and the procedures that can be taken if you are not satisfied with Council decisions or actions.

**Administration:** Corporate Services

**Review Cycle/Date:** At least once every two years. Next review 2020.

#### OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

Council aims to provide innovative, efficient, equitable and quality service for **all** the community.

We will deal with our customers in an open, honest and courteous manner and respect their privacy at all times.

Our decision-making processes will be fair and accountable, considering the economic, environmental and social sustainability of any proposed action.

#### HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER

To ensure fast, efficient, quality service we request that our customers:

- promptly report any concerns they have to Council
- provide us with accurate information
- respond to our requests for further information as soon as possible
- treat Council Officers with respect
- make appointments to see Council officers
- respect the privacy, safety and needs of other members of the community.

#### COUNCIL SERVICES

To support a safe and healthy community Council offers the following services:

- Infrastructure construction and management (roads, footpaths, bridges, parks, reserves, recreation grounds, pools and halls).
- Planning and development assistance and supervision (planning, building and plumbing)
- Environmental health and public safety monitoring (food premises registration, immunisations, fire hazard abatements, animal control, emergency management)
- Promotion and support for economic development, community development and tourism.

#### IMPROVING OUR SERVICE

Council aims to continually improve its customer service by:

- undertaking regular customer satisfaction surveys
- listening to customer suggestions on how we can improve our services



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- providing employee training
- adopting appropriate new technology.

### MAKING A COMPLAINT

If you are dissatisfied with a decision of Council, level or quality of service, or behaviour of an employee or agent, you are entitled to make a complaint to the Council.

Complaints should be made directly to the Manager of the Department relevant to the complaint. Please ensure your complaint identifies as simply as possible your issue, providing enough information for Council to investigate the complaint.

#### IN WRITING:

Via post: PO Box 156, Longford, Tasmania 7301  
Via email: [council@nmc.tas.gov.au](mailto:council@nmc.tas.gov.au)  
Fax: 6397 7331

#### IN PERSON:

Municipal Office: 13 Smith Street, Longford  
(open from 8.30 am to 5.00 pm)  
(if you wish to speak to a specific Council officer an appointment is recommended)

#### PHONE

Council Office	Telephone:	6397 7303
from southern areas (local call)	Telephone:	6391 5566
Works Depots	Telephone:	6397 7303

### RESPONDING TO A COMPLAINT

The relevant Department Manager will provide a response to your complaint:

- i) in writing, if you have lodged a written complaint; or
- ii) verbally, if your complaint was given in person or over the telephone.

Council will endeavour to respond to your complaint within twenty (20) working days. If a Councillor has submitted a complaint on your behalf we will also endeavour to respond to the Councillor within twenty (20) working days.

Sometimes it is not possible to meet this deadline, e.g. where a complaint is a complex one and Councillors are to be briefed on the outcome of the investigations. In these cases we will endeavour to keep the customer informed of progress.

### REVIEW OF THE OUTCOME OF YOUR COMPLAINT

Experience has shown that the majority of complaints will be satisfactorily resolved by the relevant Manager. However, if you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint you may request a review of the complaint by Council's General Manager.

A request for a review of the complaint to the General Manager is to be in writing.

The General Manager will inform the customer of the findings on completion of an investigation.

If appropriate the relevant Manager or the General Manager may enter into informal discussions or mediation with you with a view to resolving the complaint.

- The Ombudsman located at NAB House, Level 6, 86 Collins Street, Hobart 7000.
  - Phone: Free call from landlines in Tasmania 1800 001 170
  - email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.tas.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.tas.gov.au)



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- Local Government Division, Level 5, 15 Murray Street, Hobart (GPO Box 123, Hobart, 7001) Phone (03) 6232 7022.

While you are entitled to refer a complaint directly to these bodies at any time, we encourage you to allow the Council to investigate the complaint first.

### **PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION**

Council has a commitment to protection of Personal Information provided by a customer to Council in accordance with the requirements of the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* and the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

### **REPORTING**

The General Manager is to provide Council with a report at least once a year of the number and nature of complaints received in accordance with section 339F(5) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

### **AVAILABILITY**

This *Customer Service Charter* is available:

- For public inspection at the Council Office during normal office hours.
- On the Council's website free of charge.
- For purchase from the Council Office.

### **REVIEW**

This *Customer Service Charter* is to be reviewed at least once every two years in accordance with section 339F(4) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.