

POLICY

Policy Name	Request for Service Policy
Policy Category	Statutory Policies
Department / Officer	Governance
Date Adopted	28 September 2015
Date/s Reviewed	
Review Frequency	Biennially
Strategic Plan Reference	4.3 Increase participation of the community in local government planning and operations
Attachments	Nil

1. Purpose

A key component of Council's operations is to respond to requests for work to be undertaken or a service provided. This Policy sets out Council's approach to:

- Managing a *request for service*;
- Distinguishing between a *request for service* and a *complaint*;
- Using information/feedback to improve a service or operation.

2. Scope

This Policy will be applied to all requests for a Council service or feedback on a service. This Policy does not apply to complaints – refer Council's Complaint Handling Procedures.

3. Policy Statement (Summary)

Council is committed to providing a quality service to customers in a fair and efficient manner and to use information to identify ways in which we can proactively improve services.

4. Legislation and Compliance

Section 270 of the Local Government Act 1999 requires Council to develop and maintain policies, practices and procedures for dealing with any reasonable request for the provision of a service or for the improvement of a service provided by the Council.

Council is also required to deal with requests in a timely, effective and fair way and to use information gained from the community to improve its services and operations.

5. Definitions

Employee includes a person employed directly by the Council in a full time, part time or casual capacity (whether that position is permanent or contractual) and persons providing services to, or on behalf of, the Council even though they may be employed by another party.

Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service delivered by the Council or its representatives that has failed to reach the standard stated, implied or expected. This includes complaints about a service that has been, or should have been delivered.

Request for Service is an application to have Council or its representative to take some form of action to provide or improve a Council service.

Feedback can take the form of comments, both positive and negative, about services provided by Council without necessarily requiring a corrective action, change of services or formal review of a decision. Feedback may, however, influence future service reviews and delivery methods.

6. Policy Content

7.1 Principles

The principles that underpin this Policy are:

- Fairness: treating customers fairly requires impartiality, confidentiality and transparency at all stages of the process.
- Accessibility: to be accessible there must be broad public awareness about Council's policy and a range of contact options.
- Responsiveness: this will be achieved by providing sufficient resources, well trained staff and review and improvement of the systems.
- Efficiency: customer requests will be dealt with as quickly as practical while adhering to this policy.
- Integration of different areas of Council where the customer request overlaps functional responsibilities.

7.2 When should a Request for Service become a complaint?

Where Council has failed to meet the normal standards for a service which has been, or should have been delivered Council's Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure will apply. Where ambiguity exists, Council will deal with a matter as a *request for service*, rather than a complaint, in the first instance.

7.3 Request for Service process

A person can make a request for service in a number of ways:

- Completion of the appropriate form on Council's website www.victor.sa.gov.au or at the Council office
- Telephone - (08) 8551 0500
- Fax - (08) 8551 0501
- Email – localgov@victor.sa.gov.au

- Letter – PO Box 11 Victor Harbor SA 5011
- Visit the Council office – 1 Bay Road, Victor Harbor

Requests for major work or feedback for new services/improvements should be submitted electronically or in writing, where possible.

Requests for service will be assessed and responded to in the context of:

- An assessment of risk including public safety and emergencies
- Using Council resources effectively
- Relevant Council policies and procedures
- Established Service standards and response times for regular Council activities
- Guidelines and conditions of externally funded programs
- Statutory responsibilities

7.4 Service Improvements

Council will use information gained from the community to improve its services and operations from both an operational and strategic perspective.

7.6 Review and evaluation

In order to ensure Council continues to provide the best possible service responses to its customers, this policy will be subject to periodic evaluation and review.

7. Risk Management

This Policy assists Council to comply with Section 270 of the Local Government Act 1999 and enhances Council's ability to respond to risks associated with community safety, environmental or asset management.

8. Implementation/Delegations

The Chief Executive Officer is delegated responsibility to implement this Policy.

9. Related Documents

Request for Service Procedure
Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure
Internal Review of a Decision Procedure

10. Availability of Policy

This policy is available on Council's website at www.victor.sa.gov.au. It may also be inspected or purchased at the Principal Office of the Council at 1 Bay Road, Victor Harbor.