

DISTRICT COUNCIL OF LOWER EYRE PENINSULA

Requests for Services



“Working with our Rural & Coastal Communities”

	CR-POL-04– REQUEST FOR SERVICES POLICY	Version No:	1.2
		Issued:	April 2019
		Next Review:	March 2022

Responsibility:	Corporate Services
Minutes reference:	C122 (2)
Applicable Legislation:	Local Government Act 1999, S270 Freedom of Information Act 1991 Australian Standard ISO 10002-2006, Customer satisfaction –guidelines for complaint handling in organisations
Related Policies/Procedures:	CR-POL-05 – Compliments & Complaints Policy CR-PRO-05 – Compliments & Complaints Procedure Elected Member Code of Conduct Employee Code of Conduct Customer Service Charter GOV-POL-08 - Whistleblowers Protection Policy GOV-POL-11 - Internal Review of Council Decisions CR-PRO-04 – Requests for services procedure
Review Frequency:	Upon election

1. PURPOSE

The District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula delivers an extensive range of services and infrastructure to communities, and discharges obligations under many pieces of legislation. Providing services to the community is a key component of Council’s operations and requests for work to be undertaken or a service provided are a regular occurrence.

Council is committed to the provision of quality service to customers and aims to provide services fairly and efficiently. It also proactively seeks ways in which it can improve its service delivery.

Section 270 of the *Local Government Act 1999* requires Council to develop and maintain a policy about “any reasonable request for the provision of a service by the Council or for the improvement of a service provided by the Council.”

This policy aims to:

- provide guidance on what may constitute a reasonable request for a service or an improvement to a service
- distinguish between requests, complaints and feedback to Council and give direction on management of requests
- establish a standardised process for assessing and processing requests including the collation of information which can be used to directly inform service delivery

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2. SCOPE

This policy is to be utilised when Council receives a request to improve, provide, or change a service.

Where Council has failed to meet the normal standards for a service which has been, or could reasonably have been expected to be delivered the Complaints & Compliments Policy and the associated procedures apply.

Where ambiguity exists, Council will deal with a matter as a request for service, rather than a complaint, in the first instance.

Requests for service will be assessed in the context of the services and work provided for in the Council's annual business plan and budget and in accordance with the conditions of externally funded programs.

3. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

Council refers to the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula

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 on behalf of the Council even though they may be employed by another party.

Business Day means a day when the Council is normally open for business, i.e. Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

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

Council also receives complaints and feedback across all areas of operations and clarification may be necessary to make the distinction between a Request for Service and a Complaint for the purposes of this policy.

A **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 could reasonably be expected to have been delivered.

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.

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4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on four principles, which will be fundamental in the way Council approaches requests for service. They 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 effective systems
- **Efficiency:** customer requests will be dealt with as quickly as practical while adhering to this policy and the Customer Service Charter

It is recognised that in some circumstances departmental overlap of different areas of Council will occur where the customer request overlaps functional responsibilities. The policy principles set out above remain relevant in such circumstances, however it is recognised that such overlap may incur additional time to respond to a request for service.

5. REASONABLE REQUEST FOR SERVICE

In determining how to respond to a request for service Council will consider:

- An assessment of risk
- Statutory responsibilities
- The content of Council’s Strategic Management Plans, Annual Business Plans, annual works program and Annual Budget
- Relevant Council policies and codes
- Established service standards and response times for regular Council activities.
- Public Safety

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6. PROCESSING A REQUEST FOR SERVICE

In Council's experience, most requests fit within well established guidelines which will be explained to an applicant at the outset. Council aims to manage requests efficiently and effectively.

Employees are provided with a level of authority to advise applicants of the likely timeframe to complete the action required. Where further evaluation is necessary before committing Council to undertake the work the applicant will be informed accordingly.

Where an applicant is not satisfied with the Council's decision, it is open to the applicant to lodge a complaint against the decision under Council's Complaints & Compliments Policy.

7. TIMEFRAMES FOR RESPONSE

The circumstances of individual requests for service will vary greatly. In the majority of cases requests will be processed promptly and the applicant advised verbally or by return post/email.

Whilst most requests can usually be resolved quickly, there are times when an investigation will be required and may take more time. If this happens, staff endeavour to keep you informed of the progress of your request.

Requests for major works or new services will be referred to Council for consideration as part of the next annual cycle of review and public consultation.

The Customer Service Charter outlines time frames for requests/complaints.

8. RECORDING REQUESTS FOR SERVICE

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

- In written form (via email, letter, feedback form on Council's website or fax);
- or,
- Verbally either via phone or in person at a Council office.

All requests will be captured in Council's electronic records management system in such a way that the information can also be analysed for service improvement opportunities.

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9. REJECTED REQUESTS

All rejected requests will be recorded and may be reconsidered at a future date, such as in conjunction with the preparation of an Annual Business Plan and associated budget. Council will receive a report on the number and nature of requests, including the percentage of rejected requests, as part of the Annual Reporting process.


10. FURTHER INFORMATION

Copies of this policy may be purchased for the fees outlined within Council’s current Schedule of Fees & Charges. This policy is available for inspection at the Council offices during ordinary business hours or on Council’s website (www.lowereyrepeninsula.sa.gov.au) at no cost.

SIGNED: 

CEO

Date: 18 / 04 / 2019



Mayor, DCLEP

Date: 18 / 04 / 2019

Version:	Issue Date:	Description of Change:
V1.2	18/4/19	Inclusion of reference to Councils customer request system.
V1.2	18/4/2019	Adopted by Council (following Council Election)