



Council Policy Manual

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICY							
CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Policy No:</td> <td style="width: 100px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Adopted by Council:</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">21 December 2022</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Next review date:</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">21 December 2026</td> </tr> </table>	Policy No:		Adopted by Council:	21 December 2022	Next review date:	21 December 2026
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Senior Manager:	Director Corporate Community Services						
Responsible Officer:	Manager Community Development						
Functional Area:	Corporate and Community Services						
Introduction & Background	<p>West Wimmera Shire Council (Council) believes that excellent customer service involves sharing knowledge and information in an appropriate and timely manner. This policy has been created as part of a continuing focus on customer service.</p>						
Purpose & Objectives	<p>Council must provide the local community with appropriate and accessible, well designed and coordinated customer services which meet the expressed needs of the community.</p> <p>Services must strive to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant, appropriate, and accessible Responsive to customer needs Delivered equitably, efficiently, and affectively <p>There shall be no discrimination based on disability, age, gender, sexuality, culture, belief, or language, in any of the Council's services, programs of facilities or by any other organisation which the Council supports.</p> <p>This policy applies to all Councillors, council staff members and volunteers.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> It is acknowledged that at times people may be upset over an issue and this may lead to heightened emotions. Council will treat others with respect and in a professional manner and if a customer is unable to do the same, we ask that the customer take some time to reflect and re-engage with Council at a later time.</p>						



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<p>Response to the Overarching Governance Principles of the Local Government Act 2020</p>	<p>Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2020 states that a Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles.</p> <p>This policy is in response to the following overarching governance principle/s of the Local Government Act 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the community engagement principles (section 56); (b) the public transparency principles (section 58); (c) the service performance principles (section 106).
<p>Policy Details</p>	
<p>1.</p>	<p>What we believe in</p> <hr/> <p>In meeting customer needs we believe in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Being Proactive: We actively seek ways to find solutions to problems. 2. Honesty: We act with honesty and integrity in all that we do. 3. Accessibility: We will be accessible and use plain language. 4. Responsibility: We take responsibility for our actions. 5. Responsiveness: We respond in a timely manner and keep people informed of progress. 6. Respect: We respect different views and opinions. 7. Accountability: We are accountable to our residents and this policy.
<p>2.</p>	<p>Deliverables</p> <hr/> <p>When engaging with our customers, we will:</p> <p>Face to face:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acknowledge all customers on arrival with a smile and a proper greeting. • be conscious of potential audiences when discussing confidential information and offer a more private location if required. • provide an avenue for feedback at all service points. • wear an ID badge, in a prominent position. • answer the enquiry immediately if possible. • if we cannot answer the enquiry immediately, we will respond within two working days with either an answer or the timeframe for an appropriate response / action / answer. <p>By telephone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make sure our work area is staffed or ensure someone is always contactable



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during normal business hours.

- answer all calls within five rings, where possible.
- respond with “good morning/afternoon or welcome to West Wimmera Shire, this is (name)”.
- take responsibility for every call we receive, regardless of the subject matter, wherever possible.
- never ignore a ringing phone.
- use group pickup or diversion on our phones when we are away from our desks or on leave.
- use voicemail with reference to an alternative number for contacting the main switch.
- when transferring calls introduce the caller and provide relevant details.
- answer the inquiry immediately if possible.
- if we cannot answer the inquiry immediately, we will respond to customer phone calls within two working days with either an answer or the timeframe for an appropriate response / action / answer.

In correspondence:

- provide a written hard-copy response within ten working days or an email within five working days.
use our out-of-office auto-reply system when out of the office for more than one day.
- give details of return date and alternative contact information on automated out-of-office emails.
- provide acknowledgement and regular updates of a request where it cannot be completed within ten working days.
- include an appropriate contact name, address, telephone number and email address for West Wimmera Shire Council.

Online:

- provide a comprehensive online service where customers can access information.
- ensure information is current, accurate, timely and relevant.
- ensure our website is accessible and user-friendly.
- strive to meet international guidelines for accessibility.
- use clear plain and concise language, avoiding jargon, abbreviation.
- offer feedback options.
- include a contact address, telephone number and email address for the West Wimmera Shire Council.

At meetings (internal and external) we will:



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be punctual or provide advice of non-attendance or lateness. • turn mobile phones off or to silent before meetings start. • arrive prepared and briefed for all meetings. • actively participate and represent Council in a professional manner. • wear an ID badge, in a prominent position. • ensure Minutes are distributed within ten working days of the meeting. • be flexible in scheduling venues and times of meetings. • take responsibility for all Council rooms and resources when used. • Ensure the venue is left tidy at the conclusion of all meetings. <p>With complaint resolution please also refer to our Complaints Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • treat customer complaints seriously, confidentially and in a professional manner • offer help in lodging a complaint, where needed • provide information on how, when, where and to whom to make a complaint • explain the complaint resolution process the complainant will be contacted to acknowledge receipt of their complaint within two business days. Formal advice of the outcome of the investigation of the complaint shall be made to the complainant within 30 days of the receipt of the appropriate Manager for registering and or action as required record verbal complaints in our customer service response system.
3.	<p>How will we know if we are providing good customer service</p> <hr/> <p>We will measure our customer service standards and strive to improve and enhance our customer experience.</p> <p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regularly asking our customers about the service they receive from us and using their feedback to improve our services and standards • taking note of ratings from the Customer Service component in the Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey and Council community satisfaction survey, and taking improvement action where applicable • monitoring and reviewing customer service standards • Annual staff reviews include assessment of each employee's compliance with this policy.
4.	<p>Our customers</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents, electors, members of the business community and community groups. • Future generations, residents and electors who will be affected by today's planning decisions. Government Departments and non-Government agencies.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Wimmera staff and management. • Visitors to the Shire. • Contractors and suppliers.
5.	<p>Policy Communication</p> <p>The policy will be communicated internally as well as being available on the West Wimmera Shire Council website. It will also be included as part of the new employee induction program.</p> <p>This policy underpins the West Wimmera Shire Council's Customer Service Charter</p>

Policy Adopted:	Ordinary Meeting 20/02/14	Minute Book Page 25451	RecFind 14/003286
Policy Reviewed:	Ordinary Meeting 20/09/17	Minute Book Page 36090	RecFind 17/003659
	Ordinary Meeting 21/12/22	Minute Book Page	RecFind