

# Customer Service Plan



**Latrobe City**

*a new energy in customer service*



# CEO Message

**Latrobe City acknowledges that the delivery of excellent customer service is paramount in achieving its strategic objectives as identified in Latrobe 2021.**

To highlight Council's commitment to both our customers and staff we have dedicated a strategic objective specifically for this purpose, titled Organisational Excellence. The recent launch of the Organisational Excellence Strategy set in place the framework for how Council, as an organisation, can ensure continual improvement in moving towards excellence in all areas of operations.

A key action identified in the Organisational Excellence Strategy is the development and implementation of a Customer Service Plan.

Customer service is our most direct interface with the community and contributes significantly to the wider perception of our services and our ability to increase community capacity through positive engagement.

Customers are the reason for our existence and as such are our highest priority. Every Latrobe City staff member accepts responsibility for the customer service delivered by the organisation.

Information gathered from recent customer service surveys, involving both external and internal customers, has been used to identify the needs of our customers and have assisted in the development of our Customer Service Plan. We thank those who took the opportunity to participate and now offer this plan outlining our intentions.

Latrobe City is committed to providing excellent customer service and the development of this Plan will guide the way we interact with our customers ensuring we become an organisation of excellence.

**Who are our customers?**

Latrobe City recognises and values both internal and external customers.

These include, but are not limited to, the following:

**External**

- |           |            |                              |             |
|-----------|------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| Residents | Ratepayers | Not-for-Profit Organisations | Contractors |
| Visitors  | Businesses | Government Agencies          |             |

**Internal**

- |       |             |             |
|-------|-------------|-------------|
| Staff | Councillors | Consultants |
|-------|-------------|-------------|



# Our Commitment

**We will:**

- Welcome our customers.
- Provide a respectful, friendly and courteous environment.
- Actively listen to our customers.
- Be open, accountable and responsive.
- Strive to exceed our Customer Service Standards at all times.
- Recruit customer-focused, skilled and competent professionals to deliver our services and continually provide opportunities for them to develop and learn.
- Actively seek feedback from our customers and measure our success by that feedback.
- Treat all customer contact in a confidential manner and respect privacy.



# Our Customer Service Mission

## What do we want to achieve?

- A strong relationship and partnership with our customers based on trust, honesty and mutual respect.
- An environment and culture where our people are passionate about providing excellence in customer service.
- A consistently high standard of customer service to all our customers.
- Valuable feedback from customers for use in improving our services and standards.

## To achieve this we need to:

- Develop, promote and evaluate a Customer Service Plan.
- Foster a 'can-do' attitude amongst staff.
- Continually support opportunities for co-operation and teamwork across all functions of the organisation.
- Continually reinforce and develop the skills of our people in listening, communication and personal interaction.
- Provide quality systems to support customer service processes.
- Monitor our performance standards of customer service across the organisation.
- Create and/or utilise opportunities to raise community perceptions of the role of Latrobe City Council – who we are and what we do.
- Allocate time to the development of relationships with our customers.

## How will we measure success?

- Customer service standards monitored and reviewed at least annually.
- Increased ratings from Customer Service component in the Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey.
- Increased ratings from internal customer service surveys and feedback processes.
- Continued investment in training and development opportunities supporting customer service.



# Our Customer Service Standards

## Face to face: We will

- Greet customers with a smile.
- Wear an ID badge, in a prominent position above the waist, visible at all times when on duty.
- Ensure all customers are treated in a courteous, respectful and professional manner.
- Acknowledge all customers within five (5) minutes of arrival.
- Be conscious of potential audiences when discussing confidential information and offer a more private location if required.
- Deliver information that is current and in plain language.
- Provide an avenue for feedback at all service points.

## Telephone: We will

- Handle all calls within five (5) rings.
- Respond with “good morning/afternoon or welcome to, (work area), (name)”.
- Use group pickup or diversion on our phones when we are away from our desks or on leave.
- Never ignore a ringing phone.
- Respond to customer phone calls within two (2) working days.
- Introduce the caller and provide relevant details when transferring calls.
- Take responsibility for every call we receive, regardless of the subject matter.
- Make sure our work area is staffed, or ensure someone is contactable, at all times during normal business hours.

# Customer Service Standards

## **Correspondence, including email: We will**

- Provide a written response within 10 working days.
- Provide acknowledgement and regular updates of a request where it cannot be completed within 10 working days.
- Use clear, simple and concise language, avoiding jargon.
- Record all verbal/phone responses as file notes in relevant files and/or programs, ie Dataworks, Pathway.
- Ensure all electronic responses are stored in relevant programs, ie Dataworks, Pathway.
- Use standard organisational templates.
- Meet Council's style and correspondence guidelines.
- Ensure correspondence is made available in alternative formats, when requested.
- Include an appropriate contact name, address, telephone number and email address for Latrobe City.

## **Online: We will**

- Provide a comprehensive online service where customers can access information when needed.
- Ensure information is current, accurate, timely and relevant.
- Ensure our website is accessible, user-friendly and complies with our organisational style guide.
- Meet international guidelines for accessibility.
- Use clear, simple and concise language, avoiding jargon.
- Offer payment options.
- Offer feedback options.
- Include a contact address, telephone number and email address for Latrobe City.



### **Meetings (internal and external): We will**

- 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 professionally represent Council.
- Wear an ID badge, in a prominent position above the waist, visible at all times when on duty.
- If responsible for minutes, ensure these are distributed within 10 working days of the meeting.
- Take responsibility for all Council rooms and resources reserved.
- Be flexible in scheduling venues and times of meetings, where possible.

### **Complaint Resolution: We will**

- Treat customer complaints seriously, confidentially and in a professional manner.
- Provide information on how, when, where and to whom to make a complaint.
- Explain the complaint resolution process.
- Offer assistance in lodging a complaint, where needed.
- Forward written complaints to Corporate Information for registering.
- Record verbal complaints in our customer service tracking system.
- Respond to all formal complaints, in writing, within 10 working days.

# Our Actions



## We will:

- Establish an internal customer service working group with clear roles and responsibilities by 31 December, 2007.
- Display service standards at service centres and on our website by 31 December, 2007.
- Reinforce and promote Customer Service Standards to staff at team meetings and on the intranet by 31 December, 2007.
- Develop staff checklists to assist in meeting standards by 1 July, 2008.
- Implement a mandatory, annual organisational-wide customer service training program by 1 July, 2008.
- Incorporate Customer Service Standards into Council's employee performance management system by 1 July, 2008.
- Conduct a feasibility study on options for recording contact statistics by 1 July, 2008.
- Monitor and review Customer Service Standards annually from 1 July, 2008.
- Use the International Customer Service Standards Guidelines to self audit our compliance by 1 July, 2008.
- Survey customers annually, measuring our compliance to standards and report results to the organisation by 1 August, 2008.

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