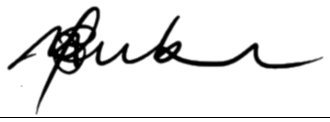
District Council of Elliston
Policy

Governance

E080 Customer Service

Signature	
Policy Issued & Effective from	17 April 2026
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Person responsible for maintaining	Chief Executive Officer

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District Council of Elliston Policy

E080 Customer Service

1. Introduction

The objective of this Policy is to establish a comprehensive, consistent and accountable framework for the delivery of customer service across all functions of the District Council of Elliston (**Council**).

In particular, this Policy seeks to:

- Define Council's commitment to delivering high-quality, accessible and equitable services to all customers
- Establish clear expectations, service standards and performance measures for customer interactions
- Promote a culture of professionalism, responsiveness, transparency and continuous improvement
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislative obligations, including the *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)*
- Support the effective management of customer requests, feedback and complaints as part of an integrated service delivery framework

This Policy recognises that local government delivers a broad range of services and infrastructure to the community and that customer interactions are a fundamental component of Council operations .

2. Policy Statement

The Council is committed to delivering consistent, high-quality and customer-focused services that meet the needs and expectations of its community. Council acknowledges that:

- Customers are central to all Council activities and decision-making processes
- Effective customer service contributes to community trust, confidence and satisfaction
- Service delivery must be undertaken in a manner that is equitable, transparent, accountable and responsive
- Feedback, including complaints, provides valuable insights that support continuous organisational improvement

Accordingly, Council will develop, implement and maintain systems, processes and practices that ensure customer service is delivered in a professional, efficient and respectful manner at all times.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All Council Members
- All employees (permanent, temporary and casual)
- Contractors, consultants and volunteers engaged by Council
- Any person acting on behalf of Council

The Policy applies to all forms of customer interaction, including but not limited to:

- Face-to-face contact
- Telephone communication
- Written correspondence (including email and letters)
- Digital and online services
- Social media interactions

4. Definitions

Customer Any individual, group or organisation that interacts with Council, including residents, ratepayers, businesses, visitors and stakeholders.

Customer Service The provision of assistance, information, support or services to customers across all areas of Council operations.

Request for Service A request for Council to undertake work, provide a service, or improve an existing service.

Complaint An expression of dissatisfaction with a Council service, decision, action or conduct.

Feedback Comments, suggestions or observations regarding Council services or performance.

5. Guiding Principles

Council's approach to customer service is underpinned by the following principles:

5.1 Accessibility

Council will ensure that services are readily accessible through a variety of communication channels and that information about services is clear and easy to obtain.

5.2 Equity and Fairness

Council will provide services in a manner that is fair, impartial and free from discrimination, ensuring all customers are treated consistently and with respect.

5.3 Responsiveness

Council will respond to customer enquiries, requests and concerns in a timely and efficient manner, recognising the importance of prompt service delivery.

5.4 Transparency and Accountability

Council will communicate openly and honestly, providing clear explanations of decisions, processes and outcomes, and taking responsibility for its actions.

5.5 Continuous Improvement

Council will actively seek feedback and use data, trends and customer insights to improve service delivery, systems and processes.

These principles reflect common local government policy frameworks that emphasise fairness, efficiency, responsiveness and transparency in service delivery .

6. Service Delivery Standards

6.1 General Standards

Council employees will, in all customer interactions:

- Act in a courteous, respectful and professional manner
- Demonstrate empathy, patience and understanding
- Provide accurate, clear and timely information
- Take ownership of enquiries and ensure appropriate follow-up
- Maintain confidentiality and protect personal information
- Ensure that customers are kept informed of progress and outcomes

Council will support employees through appropriate training, systems and procedures to maintain consistently high service standards, in line with best practice across the local government sector .

6.2 Response Timeframes

Council will endeavour to meet the following service standards:

- Telephone calls will be returned within two (2) business days
- Written correspondence will be acknowledged within two (2) business days
- Routine enquiries will be responded to within ten (10) business days
- Complex matters will be managed with regular updates provided to the customer

Where timeframes cannot be met, customers will be advised of delays and provided with revised expectations.

7. Community Engagement and Accessibility

7.1 Open Door Sessions

Council will conduct monthly open door sessions in Elliston, providing an informal and accessible forum for community members to engage directly with Council Members and/or staff.

These sessions are intended to:

- Enhance accessibility and transparency
- Encourage community participation
- Facilitate early identification and resolution of issues

7.2 Regional Outreach

To ensure equitable access to Council services across the district, Council will undertake quarterly outreach visits to:

- Lock
- Port Kenny / Venus Bay

These visits will provide opportunities for:

- Direct engagement with residents
- Access to Council services and information
- Discussion of local priorities and concerns

7.3 Council Meeting Locations

Council will hold Ordinary Meetings in the following locations:

- Elliston – ten (10) meetings per year
- Port Kenny – one (1) meeting per year
- Lock – one (1) meeting per year

This approach supports geographic equity, accessibility and community representation.

8. Communication and Information

Council will ensure that:

- Information is communicated in a clear, concise and accessible manner
- Multiple communication channels are utilised, including digital platforms

- Customers are kept informed of the status of their enquiries or requests
- Accurate records of customer interactions are maintained

Council recognises that effective communication is fundamental to building trust and maintaining strong relationships with the community.

9. Requests for Service, Complaints and Feedback

Council will maintain systems and processes for the effective management of:

- Requests for service
- Complaints
- Customer feedback

These processes will:

- Be accessible and easy to use
- Ensure matters are recorded, tracked and managed appropriately
- Support timely resolution and continuous improvement

Complaints will be managed in accordance with Council's Customer Complaints Policy, recognising that complaints provide an important opportunity to improve services and practices .

10. Digital Services and Innovation

Council is committed to enhancing customer service through the use of technology and innovation. Council will:

- Expand and improve online service delivery options
- Implement and maintain effective customer request management systems
- Utilise digital tools to improve communication and responsiveness
- Continuously review and enhance systems to improve efficiency and accessibility

11. Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Council will establish and maintain mechanisms to:

- Monitor compliance with service standards
- Measure customer satisfaction and service performance
- Identify trends and areas for improvement
- Report on performance internally and, where appropriate, publicly

Service standards and performance measures will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they remain relevant and effective.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

12.1 The Council will:

- Provide strategic direction and oversight
- Ensure policies align with community expectations and legislative requirements

12.2 The Chief Executive Officer will:

- Ensure implementation and compliance with this Policy
- Allocate appropriate resources to support service delivery

12.3 Employees will:

- Deliver services in accordance with this Policy
- Maintain high standards of professionalism and conduct
- Contribute to continuous improvement initiatives

13. Customer Responsibilities

Customers are expected to:

- Treat Council Members and employees with courtesy and respect
- Provide accurate and complete information
- Engage constructively in the resolution of enquiries or issues
- Respect Council processes and decisions

14. Legislative Context

This Policy is developed in accordance with:

- *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)*
- Section 270 – Requirements for handling requests, complaints and reviews

15. Related Documents

- Customer Service Charter

DOCUMENT HISTORY				
Version	**Changes since last version**	**Approved by**	**Record No**	**Issue Date**
1	Original			April 2026