

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Underpinning the District Council of Mount Remarkable Community Plan is Council being a 'can do' Council - doing 'remarkably well'.
- 1.2 This is captured in several strategies including providing a high standard of customer experience and service and collecting customer feedback about Council services.
- 1.3 These strategies frame our commitment to achieving customer service excellence, striving to deliver services in a professional, co-ordinated and timely manner.
- 1.4 We will respect our customers, colleagues and Council Members, and as an organisation will endeavour to anticipate, and where possible exceed our customers' needs and expectations.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The Chief Executive Officer is ultimately responsible for the customer experiences provided by the organisation, although delivering great customer experiences are the responsibility of all staff throughout the organisation.
- 2.2 The Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring their teams know, understand, are properly trained and deliver great customer experiences. This includes giving staff information on their customer experience performance.
- 2.3 All staff are empowered and responsible for implementing customer experience initiatives and pursuing the commitment and standards outlined in this policy.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Council** refers to the District Council of Mount Remarkable Council
- 3.2 **Business Day** means a day when the Council is normally open for business, i.e. Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1 I will treat everyone as my customer including my fellow staff members and Council Members and be mindful that I represent the District Council of Mount Remarkable.
- 4.2 I will maintain up to date knowledge of services and amenities relevant to my role.
- 4.3 In all my dealings with customers I will follow the Thirteen Steps to Customer Satisfaction as follows:

- 4.3.1 I will greet the customer promptly, respectfully and courteously, maintain eye contact and give them my full attention.
- 4.3.2 I will be non-judgemental and use a pace that is appropriate to the customer. I will treat all people as individuals, endeavouring to identify them by name and being positive, friendly, supportive and helpful.
- 4.3.3 I will ask, "How May I help you?" and ask open-ended questions and then summarise my understanding of the customer's needs to ensure that I have a full understanding before I take any action.
- 4.3.4 I will concentrate on what the customer is saying without interrupting. I will listen for non-verbal signs that may indicate how the customer is feeling and I will focus on solving the customer's issue.
- 4.3.5 If the request is routine, I will act promptly. If the request is more complex, I will involve the customer and agree on a course of action.
- 4.3.6 I will take responsibility for the agreed actions by committing to following-up actions and I will keep my customer informed on the progress of their request. I will also take opportunities to exceed the customer expectations.
- 4.3.7 I will ask open-ended questions to check for the customer's satisfaction and will demonstrate understanding and interest at all times. At the end of the transaction, I will thank the customer.
- 4.3.8 I will respect confidentiality and be discreet where appropriate.
- 4.3.9 I will always look for opportunities to provide better service to the community by welcoming feedback and suggestions for improvement and through innovation and research.
- 4.3.10 I will ensure people who have a disability are able to access our services.
- 4.3.11 I will provide access to the services of an interpreter if English is not your first language.
- 4.3.12 I will reply to all messages, including telephone messages and voicemail, as promptly as possible (within 24 hours).
- 4.3.13 I will acknowledge complaints as an opportunity to put things right or improve our services.

5. Customer Service Excellence

5.1 Face to Face

- 5.1.1 As soon as a customer enters your area, acknowledge the customer, smile (if appropriate), establish eye contact and ask if you can be of assistance.
- 5.1.2 It is important to try and establish your customer's name and to use it in your dealings with him or her.
- 5.1.3 Staff will be provided with and wear visibly an accredited identification badge. If a customer asks to view details of the identification badge, the staff member will show it to them.
- 5.1.4 Leave a calling card with your name and contact telephone number when you call at a customer's home or business.
- 5.1.5 Be punctual for meetings and appointments and, as well as listen carefully to questions or requirements, take notes if necessary.
- 5.1.6 Once you have established contact with a customer, take responsibility for the action taken. If referred to a third person, follow up to be sure satisfaction has been achieved, or if your service delivery promise cannot be met, contact your customer to apologise and explain.
- 5.1.7 Where possible Council will ensure coverage from 9.00am - 5.00pm.

5.2 Telephone Calls

- 5.2.1 Answer the telephone with a positive tone and greet your customer with the words "District Council of Mount Remarkable", and your name. The preferred greeting would also include "How can I help you?"
- 5.2.2 Hints on Telephone Customer Service;
 - Listen carefully to identify the customer's needs
 - Before transferring a call to another person, announce the customer and the nature of their request.
 - When accepting a call from another department introduce yourself, address the customer by name and summarise their request.
 - Ask for permission before placing a customer 'on hold'. "Do you mind if I place you on hold?" and wait for an answer from the customer.

- Return to 'on hold' customers after 2 minutes to advise the customer on the status of the call. Thank the customer for their patience or for waiting, do not say 'Thank you for holding'.
- If still 'on hold' after 4 minutes, take a message, asking for a convenient time for a return call. Ensure you obtain a business hours contact phone number from the customer.
- When closing the conversation, use a positive closing such as "Thank you" or "Thank you for calling", "Goodbye".
- Where appropriate you should offer further assistance by asking 'Is there anything else I can help you with today?'
- Where possible Council will ensure coverage from 9.00am - 5.00pm.
- The speaker function is generally not suitable for an open office environment. However, if there is a need for a 3 way conversation, please ensure the person on the other end is aware that they will be placed on speaker.

5.3 Email

- 5.3.1 Check your email at regular intervals.
- 5.3.2 Aim to reply to all emails within 10 business days. Any emails that you are unable to fully respond, is required to have an acknowledgment email within the 10 days and include an anticipated response time and the reasons for the delay. Ensure you respond by this date.
- 5.3.3 The "out of office" feature should be used when you are on leave. Include details of another person for the customer to contact in your absence.
- 5.3.4 Add all emails to Records that need to be kept for 'record keeping'. If you create the email it is your responsibility to record the email.

5.4 Letter

- 5.4.1 Aim to reply to all letters within 10 business days. Any letters that you are unable to fully respond, is required to have an acknowledgment letter within the 10 days and include an anticipated response time and the reasons for the delay. Ensure you respond by this date.
- 5.4.2 Prepare all brochures, publications and correspondence in plain English language.
- 5.4.3 Add all correspondence to Records that needs to be retained for record keeping purposes. If you create the correspondence it is your responsibility to Record the correspondence.
- 5.4.4 Download Records overdue reports regularly to monitor performance

and take action on overdue items.

- 5.4.5 If a complaint refer to the District Council of Mount Remarkable Complaint's Handling Policy and Complaint's Handling Procedure.
- 5.5 Request for Service
 - 5.5.1 Refer to the District Council of Mount Remarkable Request for Service Policy and Request for Service Procedure.
- 5.6 Corporate standards
 - 5.6.1 All staff are responsible for ensuring all correspondence is prepared and presented in a comprehensive and respectful manner.

6. Document administration and control

Policy title:	04.24
Policy number:	Customer First Policy
Policy type:	Council / Governance
Responsible officer:	Director Community & Corporate
First issued / adopted:	8 October 2013, reference 241-2013
Review period:	Reviewed within 12 months following the conclusion of a periodic election, inline with legislative changes or by resolution of Council.
Last reviewed:	17 August 2021, reference [211-2021] 27 February 2023 [028-2023]
Next review date:	By November 2027
Version:	Version 6
Date revoked:	n/a
Applicable legislation:	Local Government Act 1999
Related documents:	Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure Request for Service Policy and Procedure
Public consultation required / undertaken:	No
Availability	<p>This Policy is available for inspection at the Council office and any person may obtain a copy of this Policy upon payment of the fee fixed by Council in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges adopted each financial year. It is also available on Council's website mtr.sa.gov.au.</p> <p>Any grievance in relation to this policy or its application should be forwarded in writing to the Chief Executive Officer of the Council.</p>
File reference:	W:\4. Policy Manuals\Current Policy Manual