



Greater Hume Shire

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CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

Greater Hume Shire Council Customer Service Standard is an expression of the Council's commitment to improving the service and communication with its customers. Our Customer Service Standard sets out the standards customers can expect from us every time they interact with us, whether it is by phone, via mail, email or in person.


The following Standards represent an internal working document whereby specific targets and measures are defined so that Council can measure and refine key customer service outputs and ensure that the commitments provided in Council's Guarantee of Service Statement are achieved and honoured.

Customer Service Standards

Customer Service Centres / Offices		Comments
Telephone contacts	Council will aim to answer 90% of incoming calls within 3 rings. Calls directed to appropriate staff member.	
	Advise all callers of the name of the person answering the call, or making the call where it is outgoing from Council.	
	Speak clearly, deal with customer calmly, courteously and patiently, even when the caller is angry, aggressive or distressed.	
	Will not put calls on hold for longer than one minute at a time and if the information sought takes longer to obtain then we will call back within an agreed period.	
	Respond to telephone messages and voicemail messages within one (1) business day, or if this is not possible give clear advice to the caller about when the caller can expect a response.	
	Ensure all messages include details of the caller's name, contact number and message as well as details of who took the message and when.	
	Record all significant calls in the form of a written file note in Council's official recordkeeping systems.	
	Staff shall use and follow voicemail set up procedures.	
	Private calls shall be kept to a minimum – incoming calls will take priority in all instances.	
Rude or Abusive Telephone Calls	Warn the caller that if the behaviour continues, the conversation will be terminated. Terminate the conversation if the rude, abusive or aggressive behaviour continues after the warning has been given – advise supervisor and make a diary note of the event.	

Customer Service Centres / Offices		Comments
Face to Face Customer Service at Counter	All visitors to be greeted with a "Good Morning/Afternoon – how may I help you" and smile.	
	Council reception area to be staffed at all times during business hours.	
	Acknowledge customers and attend to them immediately. Council will aim to ensure a maximum waiting time of 3 minutes before attending to a customer.	
	Customers visiting any of Councils offices will take priority over telephone customers – calls to be placed on hold no longer than 60 seconds.	
	All staff will be identifiable (name badges) as employees of Greater Hume Shire Council, with a neat, tidy and professional appearance.	
	Customer Service staff will be attired in Council Corporate Uniform to represent Council's corporate image.	

Requests for Information		Comments
Access to Information Request	Provide documents for inspection unless exempt under legislation such as Local Government Act & Privacy Act within 21 days.	Where required correct application form to be completed.
Freedom of Information (FOI) Request	Provide documents for inspection unless exempt under the Act within 21 days. Where consultation with a third party is required an additional 2 weeks is added to the timeframe.	Completed application form & fee received. Additional information maybe required.
Local Government Act (S.12) Information Request	Provides access to Public documents listed in s.12 (1) of the Local Government Act. Same day provision of information.	Request can be made in person by phone or written request. No form required.


Written Correspondence		Comments
Correspondence formats	Council's correspondence template to be used is Tahoma 11. Paragraph alignment must be justified.	Templates have been distributed to Directors.
	Signing officers' details to be in the following format: Name - normal font Position - in bold GREATER HUME SHIRE COUNCIL - in uppercase (no underscore).	
	Ensure that all outward correspondence includes the name and contact details of the officer dealing with the matter and Council's file reference.	
	Addressee details should not be abbreviated eg Street, Road, Avenue must be used, not St, Rd, Ave	
	All correspondence must be signed by officers with written Delegated Authority.	
	All outgoing correspondence must be addressed in typed print. Handwritten envelopes are NOT acceptable.	
Reply to written correspondence	Written correspondence must be replied to within 5 working days of receipt. Complex matters may take longer to finalise or may need to be referred to Council meeting. Under these circumstances an interim response prior to completion maybe required.	
Email Signature format	<p>All email signatures to be in the following format: (Font: Tahoma Size 11)</p> <p>Burt Beetle Finance Officer Greater Hume Shire Council PO Box 99 HOLBROOK NSW 2644 Phone: 0260 360 100 Facsimile: 0260 362 683 Email: bbeetle@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au</p>  <p>Size 3.18 x 5.28cm There is to be NO formatting of Email backgrounds under any circumstances ie stationery.</p>	All email signatures currently in use to be updated.

Email Out of Office	<p>Outlook Office Assistant is to be activated when staff are out of the office for periods longer than one day. An alternative contact name and email should be provided in the message.</p> <p><i>"I will be out of the office from Monday 12 December 2009 and returning Monday 19 December 2009. I will endeavour to respond to your email as quickly as possible upon my return. Urgent matters should be directed to Fred Beetle, Executive Assistant at fbeetle@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au."</i></p>	
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Written Correspondence		Comments
Internal Audit	Council will undertake a random internal audit of all outgoing correspondence on a 6 monthly basis.	Identify timeliness, accuracy and general suitability of response to Council correspondence

Customer Action Request		Comments
Recording Information	All customer details are to be provided including name, address and telephone contact.	
	Location of request needs to be specific.	
	Error rates in Customer Action Request data are less than 2%.	
Response to Request	Within 5 working days.	
Completion of Request	Action to be completed within 30 days – if the request/complaint has a budget implication, complainant to be advised of process.	
	Customers to be notified in writing within 5 working days of completion of request.	

Governance		Comments
Production and distribution of Council Meeting Agenda	Agenda to be completed and distributed at least 4 days prior to Council Meeting.	Copy to be distributed to all Customer Service Centres.
Publication of Council Newsletter	Council newsletter to be produced 4 times per year.	Copy to be distributed to all Customer Service Centres

Council Logo		Comments
Correct Logo	The adopted logo for Greater Hume Shire Council and the manner in which it is to be used per the GHS Style Guide below:	All documentation to be reviewed and updated with new logo and correct font and size.
	 GHS Style Guide.pdf	

Human Resources		Comments
Job Applications	All applications for positions with Council must be treated as confidential. Receipt of applications is to be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt of the application.	
Unsuccessful Job Application Confirmation	All unsuccessful applicants will be notified within 5 working days of appointment of successful applicant.	
Publication of Staff Newsletter	Staff newsletter to be produced 4 times per year.	
Preparation of Performance Appraisals	Staff Appraisals are to be completed by 30 June each year.	

Finance and Rates		Comments
Payment of creditor accounts	All creditor accounts to be paid within 30 days or in accordance with the creditors' trading terms, whichever is the lesser.	
Application for Outstanding Rates Notice (603 Certificate)	Sec 603 Certificates to be issued within 5 working days of receipt of application and payment of fee.	Completed application form & fee received. Additional information maybe required.
Respond to rates enquiries	All enquiries to be responded to within 5 working days.	Additional information may be required from external agencies.

Development Assessment		Comments
Access to Assessment Officers	Assessment Officers available via appointment between the hours of 8.30am & 4.00pm Monday to Friday.	
Assistance for lodging Development Applications	Approvals Coordinator available at any time between the hours of 8.30am & 4.00pm Monday to Friday subject to other demands.	
Complying Development Certificate	Certificate issued within 7 days from receipt of completed application form and payment of application fee.	Completed application form & fee must be received. Additional information maybe required.

Development Assessment		Comments
Assessment & determination of Development Application	Acknowledgement letter to be sent within 3 working days outlining the application process. Undertake assessment according to documented procedures & determine application as per Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 for all applications & certificates. A further letter may be sent if more information is requested. Council will determine all applications within 40 days, if no objections received or referrals required. Average processing time is 30 working days.	Completed application form & fee must be received. Additional information maybe required.
Construction Certificate	Construction Certificate may be issued concurrently with development consent if all documentation supplied. Where a Construction Certificate is issued as a separate application, the Certificate will be issued within 7 working days from receipt of required documents.	Completed application form & fee must be received. Additional information maybe required.
Outstanding Notice & Order Certificates	Certificate issued within 5 working days from receipt of completed application form and payment of application fee..	Correct fees to be paid.
Zoning Certificate (s149)	Planning certificates issued within 7 working days of payment of fee.	Correct fees to be paid.
Council Planning Publications	Council will supply the publication within 5 days upon request & payment of fee.	Correct fees to be paid.

Compliance Activities		Comments
Registration of Animals	Animal details entered onto Companion Animal Website within 5 working days of receipt of registration forms.	

Waste & Recycling		Comments
Domestic waste & recycle bins	New/replacement bin to be provided within 5 working days of ordering.	Correct fees to be paid.

<u>POLICY DOCUMENT CONTROL</u>		
Customer Service Standard	First Adopted	19 Nov 2008 Min 1697