



Request for Service Procedure

Procedure No. ADMPR 02

Version No:	1.0
Responsible Officer/s	Deputy CEO
Issued:	6 Aug 2012
Next Review:	Mar 2019

1. Purpose and Scope

Council is committed to the provision of quality service to customers and aims to provide services fairly and efficiently. It also monitors requests to identify ways in which it can proactively improve its services.

Section 270 of the *Local Government Act 1999* requires Council to maintain a procedure about “any reasonable request for the provision of a service by the Council or for the improvement of a service provided by the Council.”

This procedure commences at the point that a request for service is received and covers processes for

- distinguishing between requests, complaints and feedback to Council
- deciding how to respond to the request
- using requests to directly inform service improvements

The aim of this procedure is to ensure requests for service are addressed in a fair, consistent and structured process which is transparent to all customers. This procedure does not apply to matters that do not fall within Council’s jurisdiction. These types of issues will be referred to appropriate external processes.

2. Responsibility

This procedure applies to all Council staff who may be involved in receiving or processing a request for service in the course of their work.

Officers will act reasonably and transparently, demonstrate good customer service, undertake their responsibilities in a proficient manner and use their judgement where necessary to ensure an outcome in line with Council’s Request for Service Policy.

3. Definitions

Business Day means a day when Council is normally open for business, ie. Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

4. General Notes

Council receives requests for service, complaints and feedback across all areas of operations. Clarification may be necessary to make the distinction for the purposes of this procedure.

Council defines a **Request for Service** as:

“an application to have Council or its representative take some form of action to provide or improve a Council service”.

Complaints about the activities of third parties [e.g. barking dogs or food premises] are to be treated as Requests for Service in the first instance where this is a reasonable interpretation.

However if the complaint is about the way in which Council has dealt with a matter concerning the activities of a third party, this will be dealt with as a complaint. (See Complaint Handling Policy).



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Feedback can take the form of comments, both positive and negative, about services provided by Council without necessarily forming the basis of a complaint or a request for service. Council welcomes feedback of all types as an important way of continually monitoring its service standards.

5. Records Management

All requests for service including, notes, telephone calls, photographs and correspondence in Council's Records Management System are retained in accordance with the State Records Act General Disposal Schedule 20.

6. Procedure

Council welcomes requests for service as a way of improving its services and programs as well as fulfilling the needs of its customers.

6.1 Assisting with the lodgement of requests for service

No one should be excluded from lodging a request for service because of any difficulties they may have representing themselves. All staff are expected to offer assistance where appropriate and provide it on request, including assistance in documenting the request in writing when circumstances warrant.

6.2 Receiving requests for service

A person can make a request in a number of ways:

- Completing the appropriate form on Council's website
- Telephone
- SMS
- Fax
- Email
- Letter
- Petition
- Councils Facebook Account
- Visit to a Council customer service office

6.2.1 Recording requests for service

Record details of the request in Council's Customer Request System, including.

- Date and time of call
- Taken by
- Customer's Name
- Customer's address
- Customer's contact phone numbers and email address
- Comprehensive information about the nature of the request
- Who assigned to
- Does the customer wish to be advised when the work is completed

If the request is a verbal report of a minor nature, and it is appropriate for front line staff to resolve in the first instance, the request shall not be logged into the Complaint/Request Register.

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6.3 Deciding how to respond to requests for service

Each request must be assessed to determine if the request is within Council's jurisdiction, its nature, how it should be dealt with, when it should be dealt with, and who should be involved.

The majority of requests can be normally be scheduled and actioned promptly. Some will require direction from a Manager, the Chief Executive Officer or a decision of Council.

The response to a Request for Service will consider:-

- The content of Council's Strategic Management Plans, Annual Business Plans, Annual Works Program and Annual Budget. Does the request fit within the directions and programs which Council has agreed to, and budgeted for?
- Relevant Council policies and codes. Does the request fit within other agreed positions documented by Council?
- An assessment of risk. Does the request relate to a matter which may impact on a public risk or Council risk?
- Statutory responsibilities. Is the request about a matter which Council has a statutory obligation to act upon?
- Using Council resources efficiently and effectively.

Where possible, Council should advise customers what action will be taken in response to requests at the time of lodging.

More complex requests should be forwarded to the relevant Manager for determination of how to respond.

Where requests are for major work or new services they will be considered by Council in the preparation of the next Annual Business Plan.

6.3.1 Rejected requests for service

Where a request cannot be accommodated

- The customer will be informed that the request has been rejected and the reasons for that decision.
- A request, depending on its nature, may be reconsidered at a future date such as the preparation of a future Annual Business Plan and Budget.

6.4 Acknowledging requests for service and progress

Under the policy, Council aims to respond to customer requests as soon as possible, and will endeavour in most circumstances to respond within five business days of receipt, advising of Council's intentions in regard to the request. Customers shall note that this timeframe is for response to the request for service and should an action be required, this will be determined taking into account available resources.



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Where work is delayed customers should be informed of progress, the reasons for any delays and the anticipated timeframe.

If the customer has asked to be advised when the work is completed, this task is the responsibility of the employee who finalises the request.

6.5 Reporting and Service Improvement

At least monthly the management Team will review the Complaint/Request Register to ensure requests for service and complaints are being addressed and resolved.

Council recognises that requests are a source of information to improve service provision, procedures and responses to requests and shall annually analyse and report on requests received and actions taken.

7. Availability of Procedure

This Procedure will be available for inspection at the following locations during ordinary business hours:-

- Principal Office, 324 Commercial Street West, Mount Gambier, 5290
- Port MacDonnell Community Complex, 5 Charles Street, Port MacDonnell, 5291
- Council's website: www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au.

A copy of this procedure may be purchased upon payment of a fee in accordance with Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

8. Review

This Procedure shall be reviewed by the District Council of Grant at minimum every four (4) years, (or on significant change to legislation or other matters which could affect this procedure).

Action	Date	Minute Reference
Adopted	6 August 2012	12178.2
Reviewed	23 May 2016	Management Team



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What is a Request/Complaint

A Request for Service is an application to have Council or its representative take some form of action to provide or improve a Council service.

Examples include:-

- a request for information about Council services, policies or procedures
- a request for service or action to be taken in relation to a service or product provided by Council, such as a report of damaged or faulty infrastructure or hazards,
- advice of potholes or fallen branches
- a suggestion for a proposed service or product improvement, such as more mobile garbage bin areas
- a follow up or further request for service that has not been completed by Council but is still within the timeframe advised to the customer, such as the customer was told their rubbish bin would be collected within three days and the customer contacted Council again within one day
- Complaints about the activities of third parties (eg. barking dogs or food premises)

Note: a request about the same matter may be received from more than one person. This is still defined as a Request for Service.

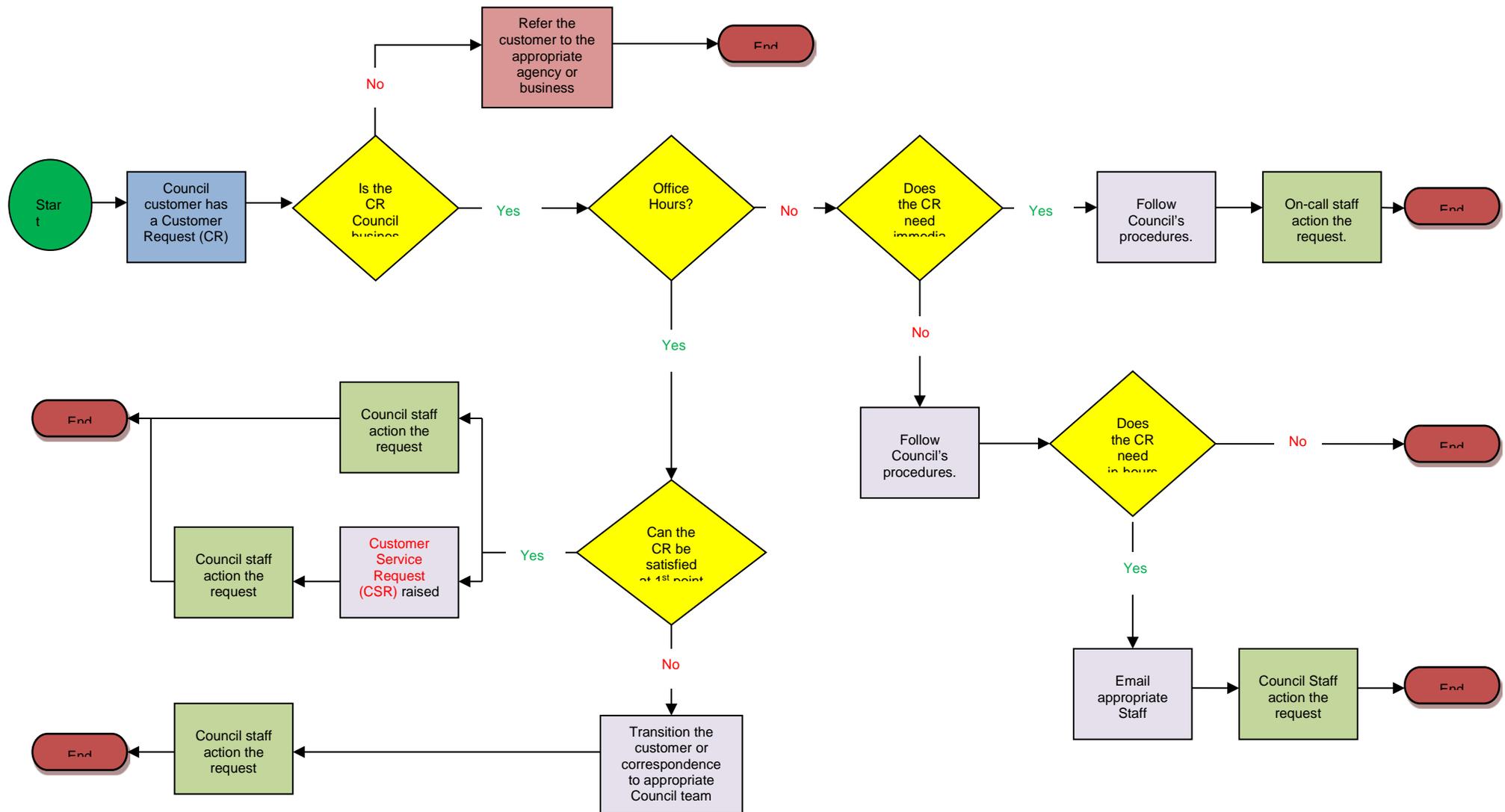
A Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a service which has, or should have been received.

Examples include:-

- the manner in which Council has dealt with a matter concerning the activities of a third party (eg. barking dogs or food premises)
- a Request for Service not being completed by Council even though it was promised.

If there is uncertainty, the matter will be dealt with as a Request for Service in the first instance

Customer Request - process flow chart



Notes:

1. This flow chart shows how external customer requests (CR) are actioned through the central control points of mail, generic e-mail, SMS and central phone no.
2. It does not demonstrate how customer requests are processed when the customer contacts selected officers by direct telephone, mobile phone and/or e-mail.
3. Written correspondence includes faxes, e-mails, SMS and web originated contact with Council.