



Customer Service Framework & Charter

Richmond Valley Council

Table of Contents

Customer Service Framework – Critical Factors 3
Purpose 4
The Customer Service Framework..... 5
Action Plan 6
Charter..... 8

Customer Service Framework – Critical Factors

Critical factors for the organisation to be customer centric and focussed are as follow:



Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the steps for the development and implementation of a customer service framework and charter ensuring the ongoing delivery of a quality customer service orientated organisation. There is a variety of reasons to strengthen customer service within Council. These include –

Community

- Meeting growth and changing public expectations
- Providing greater return on investment to the ratepayer
- Addressing customer complaints
- Making Council's services more accessible to the public
- Ensuring the number of communication channels with the public is adequate and meets future needs

Organisation

- Building an internal understanding of the organisation and its values
- Understanding and responding to the organisations customers and their expectations
- Reducing the number of customer complaints
- Develop an organisational culture that values, reinforces, and continuously improves customer service
- Standardisation of customer service protocols throughout the organisation
- Providing adequate training to provide staff with the correct tools to identify and provide effective customer service

The Customer Service Framework

The customer service framework has seven elements. These are explained below:

Leadership

A key component in any customer service framework is the leadership and commitment by the General Manager and Executive Team.

- Required to play an active leadership role
- Drive the implementation and resource of the plan
- Show commitment to the framework
- Promote innovation and determine priorities of innovation
- Review the progress of the framework
- Ensure all teams participate actively in implementing the plan

These actions will relay a clear message to the organisation that we need to work together to provide clear direction to achieve improved customer service outcomes.

The Customer Service Team

- Take a leadership role
- Take ownership and be involved in the process
- Participate positively and be advocates of the framework
- Review and improve contact centre

All Staff

- Staff development training across the organisation
- Induction training for new employees

Customer Service Policies

- Complaint Handling
- Customer Service Standards
- Customer Service Charter

Organisation-wide Teamwork

- Identify areas of improvement via review of business workflows and customer service protocols

Service Level Agreements

- Development and implementation of council wide customer service level agreements that are focussed on accountability, performance improvements and best practice.

Audit, Review & Reward

- Audit and review the action plan, reward staff for exceptional customer service, make improvement to the framework as needed.

Action Plan

The action plan for implementation of the framework has identified 5 distinct phases. These are outlined and explained below:



Customer Service Framework & Charter

Phase One – Review & Improve Contact Centre

- Undertake a review of the contact centre role within council, processes undertaken and identify areas for improvement
- Review current reporting and ensure it is customer centric and the data is relevant to highlight areas that require improvement
- Undertake benchmarking of the contact centre

Phase Two - Customer service level agreements

- Development of organisation wide customer service level agreements for each section within council. The agreements will establish customer service focused standards and levels for both internal and external customers across the organisation.

Phase Three – Review business processes and customer service adherence to identify areas of improvement

- Review business processes and determine areas of improvement required to assist with staff providing customer focussed standards for both internal and external customers.

Phase Four – Staff training across the organisation

- Create a customer service excellence culture, it is the way the organisation does business
- Create customer standards to create our own communication style
- Ensure staff are aware of the different styles of communications to avoid conflict with customers
- Take ownership of behaviours and attitudes in complaint handling
- Encourage internal networking and how to use each other as a resource to solve customer enquiries/complaints
- Customer Service Training received at induction of new staff
 - All staff to spend allocated time in the customer service team to be advised of the overview of the functions of the administration and counter areas and overview of the functions of councils corporate system and how it assists customer service

Customer Service Framework & Charter

Phase Five – Customer services audit, review & reward

- Mystery shoppers and after service surveys- measure the quality of service by phone and counter
- Benchmarking programme – measure the effectiveness of customer service within the organisation compared to similar organisations
- CRM Reporting – measure the level of service provided to the community

The improvements to customer service will require an ongoing commitment. The action plan will be completed by the end of 2017. There will be a financial requirement to cover all staff customer service training. A budget submission will be made for the Council to consider funding this item in the 2017/18 budget process.

Customer Service Charter

Service Standards

In support of the customer service framework we will achieve these service standards by providing our customers with

Access to timely and efficient services by:

- Outlining our policies and procedures
- Preventing unnecessary return visits to council
- Publishing information on our website
- Referring you to other service providers if your query is not answerable by council

Friendly, professional service by:

- Treating you with respect
- Displaying empathy and understanding
- Eliminating acronyms and jargon
- Offering solutions
- Valuing your personal information by maintaining your confidentiality
- Listening to your feedback on our service

Customer Service Framework & Charter

A fair decision making process by:

- Complying with relevant legislation
- Ensuring staff have appropriate knowledge
- Displaying transparent decision making processes
- Making decisions once we have all the information we require in a timely fashion
- Notifying you of the outcome and reasons for the decision
- Notifying you of your options for an appeal

Service Standards

In Person

- Our administration offices at Casino is open at 8:30 and closes at 5:00 Monday to Friday, our office at Evans Head is open 9:00 and closes at 5:00 Monday to Friday, 9:30 to 12:00 Saturday

Telephone

- In the call centre we will answer 80% of calls within 20 seconds.
- Our average wait time will be less than 15 seconds
- Less than 5% of callers will hang up before we answer
- 80% calls resolved without further contact with the customer
- We identify ourselves as “Richmond Valley Council”
- If you call a staff member direct they will return your call within one business day.

Correspondence

- General enquiries to customer service will be answered within five business days
- Enquiries referred to other departments will be answered within 14 business days
- If your correspondence cannot meet the above standards then an acknowledgment sent advising of the reasons and an anticipated time frame.
- If correspondence is forwarded via email an auto response is sent

Customer Service Framework & Charter

Reporting

Reporting on our Charter standards will be done on a quarterly basis to council with areas for improvement identified and necessary strategies implemented.