

	<b>Function:</b> GOVERNANCE	<b>Adopted:</b> 4 <sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2013
	<b>Policy Number:</b> ADM006	<b>Resolution No.:</b> C260:13
	<b>Version Number:</b> 1	<b>Last Review:</b> 4 <sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2017
	<b>Frequency of Review:</b> Biennially	<b>Resolution No.:</b> C227:1017
		<b>Next Review:</b> OCTOBER 2019
<b>REQUESTS FOR SERVICES POLICY</b>		

## **Policy Statement**

Local Government delivers an extensive range of services and infrastructure to communities, and discharges obligations under many pieces of legislation. Providing services to the community is a key component of Council's operations and requests for work to be undertaken or a service provided are a daily occurrence.

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.

This policy aims to:

- provide guidance on what may constitute a reasonable request for a service or an improvement to a service
- distinguish between requests, complaints and feedback to Council and give direction on management of requests
- establish a standardised process for assessing and processing requests including the collation of information which can be used to directly inform service improvements

## **1. Introduction**

This policy is based on five principles, which will be fundamental in the way Council approaches requests for service. They are:

- **Fairness:** treating customers fairly requires impartiality, confidentiality and transparency at all stages of the process
- **Accessibility:** to be accessible there must be broad public awareness about Council's policy and a range of contact options
- **Responsiveness:** this will be achieved by providing sufficient resources, well trained staff and review and improvement of the systems
- **Efficiency:** customer requests will be dealt with as quickly as practical while adhering to this policy
- **Integration** of different areas of Council where the customer request overlaps functional responsibilities

In processing requests for service emphasis will be placed on:

- Public safety and emergencies
- Fulfilling Council's strategic and business plans
- Using Council resources effectively
- Guidelines and conditions of externally funded programs (eg. Community Visitors Scheme)

---

*lifestyle location of choice*

## 2. Applicable Legislation

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

## 3. Integration with Corporate Objectives

Governance Objective – Leadership

To provide leadership and ensure community resources are managed effectively.

Communications and public relations – to promote a positive Council image and ensure effective communication and consultation with the community

## 4. Definitions

**Council** refers to the Copper Coast Council

**Employee** includes a person employed directly by the Council in a full time, part time or casual capacity (whether that position is permanent or contractual) and persons providing services to, or on behalf of, the Council even though they may be employed by another party

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

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.

A **Complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction with a service which has, or should have, been received. Council’s Complaints Policy defines a complaint as:

*“An expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service delivered by the Council or its representatives that has failed to reach the standard stated, implied or expected. This includes complaints about a service that has been, or should have been delivered.”*

Where Council has failed to meet the normal standards for a service which has been, or should have been, delivered the Complaints Policy and the associated procedures apply. Where ambiguity exists, Council will deal with a matter as a request for service, rather than a complaint, in the first instance.

**Feedback** can take the form of comments, both positive and negative, about services provided by Council without necessarily requiring a corrective action, change of services or formal review of a decision. Feedback may, however, influence future service reviews and delivery methods.

---

*Lifestyle location of choice*

## 5. **Application**

Requests for service will be assessed in the context of the services and work provided for in the Council's annual business plan and budget and according to the conditions of externally funded programs.

### **Reasonable Request for Service**

In determining how to respond to a request for service Council will consider:

- An assessment of risk
- Statutory responsibilities
- The content of Council's Strategic Management Plans, Annual Business Plans, annual works program and Annual Budget
- Relevant Council policies and codes
- Established service standards and response times for regular Council activities.

### **Processing a Request for Service**

In Council's experience, most requests fit within well established guidelines which will be explained to an applicant at the outset. Council aims to manage requests efficiently and effectively. Employees are provided with a level of authority to advise applicants of the likely timeframe to complete the action required. Where further evaluation is necessary before committing Council to undertake the work the applicant will be informed accordingly. If a request cannot be fulfilled in a reasonable timeframe the applicant will be advised, including an explanation of why this decision was taken.

Where an applicant is not satisfied with the Council's decision, it is open to the applicant to lodge a complaint against the decision under Council's Complaints Policy.

### **Timeframes for Response**

The circumstances of individual requests for service will vary greatly. In the majority of cases requests will be processed promptly and the applicant advised verbally or by return post/email. It is our intention to provide a response to all maintenance requests

Routine requests are often subject to service response standards. For example, uncollected rubbish bins will be collected within 48 hours and the assessment of public safety concerns will occur, where practicable, on the same day as the request is received. Other requests may be best suited to scheduling to coincide with work in a particular suburb or season. Examples of this include tree pruning on Council streets and attention to minor drainage problems. Requests for major works or new services will be referred to Council for consideration as part of the next annual cycle of review and public consultation.

Council staff will respond within ten (10) business days advising of Council's intentions in regard to the request. It is also our intention to provide a written acknowledgement to all maintenance requests providing the requestor with a Customer Service Request number for future reference.

### **Recording Requests for Service**

A person can make application for a service in a number of ways:

- Completion of the appropriate form on Council's website
- MyLocal smart phone app
- Telephone

---

*lifestyle location of choice*

- Fax
- Email
- Letter
- Petition to Council
- Visit a Council customer service office

All requests will be recorded in Council's records management system in such a way that the information can also be analysed for service improvement opportunities.

### **Rejected Requests**

All rejected requests will be recorded and may be reconsidered at a future date, such as in conjunction with the preparation of an Annual Business Plan and associated budget. Council will receive a report on the number and nature of requests, including the percentage of rejected requests, at least twice a year.

## **6. Delegation**

Enquiries in relation to this Policy should be directed to the Director of Corporate & Community Services.

## **7. Adoption and Review**

This Policy will be reviewed as required, with the review being undertaken by the Corporate Services Department and a report provided to Council for consideration and adoption.

## **8. Availability of Policy**

This Policy will be available for inspection without charge at the Council's Principal Office during normal business hours, and on Council's website.

A copy of this Policy may be obtained on payment of a nominated fee from Councils' principal office or may be down loaded from Councils' website.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Mayor

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Executive Officer

*lifestyle location of choice*

Date

---

*Lifestyle location of choice*