SERVICE CHARTER

Amanda Agius | 1/3/87-10 | #6163444

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council resolves to:

1. adopt the Service Charter for Cairns Regional Council.

2. delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the Local Government Act 2009 to finalise all matters associated with the Service Charter.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Cairns Regional Council has always had a focus on improving its customer service culture and the services it offers to the community. The Service Charter was initially implemented in 2014 and provided direction and support to the Council and the community regarding access to services and outlining Council’s service standards for correspondence, communication and complaints handling. The recent review ensured the current service levels are at the level expected of Council and that Council remains committed to excellence in service delivery and continuous improvement.

The Service Charter was based on established service levels and used existing charters of various local governments as benchmarks. The updated Service Charter was benchmarked against other Council’s to ensure clear and concise expectations are set for both Council staff/Councillors and the community in a short and simple format.

COMMENT:

Council receives correspondence and contact from customers from a number of different sources. An overview of the different correspondence and interaction channels for the financial year 2018/19 are shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer Service Interaction</th>
<th>Average per month for 2018/19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counter Service (customers served)</td>
<td>2137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call centre (calls answered)</td>
<td>7202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Customer Requests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>3259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MyCairns</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile</td>
<td>481</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Given the different channels for accessing Council it is important that expectations are set for both Council staff/Councillors and the community regarding service levels.

Customers of Cairns Regional Council are entitled to be treated with professionalism and fairness and to be provided with the appropriate service and information they require. This charter is about affirming the courteous cooperation between our staff and the community through outlining

- the commitment of Council towards provision of quality services and effective communication;
- the responsibilities of members of the community in their dealings with the Council.

The charter acknowledges that whilst our customers also have the right to make complaints and have these addressed in a courteous and efficient manner, at the same time our staff and Councillors are entitled to be treated with respect.

**OPTIONS:**

1. That Council adopts the Service Charter.

2. That Council advises of changes to the Service Charter

**CONSIDERATIONS:**

Corporate and Operational Plans:

The Service Charter enables Council to deliver the strategic goal of *Serving the Community*.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Service Charter (#3796612v3)
Our commitment to you

Cairns Regional Council is committed to better understanding the needs and expectations of the community and will do so by:

- Continuing to deliver information on the services and activities of Council through a variety of means
- Establishing levels of service and regularly measuring the performance of Council against those levels of service
- Consulting with representatives of the community to create an ongoing dialogue between Council and the community
- Maintaining a centralised complaint handling system to respond to service failures and unsatisfied expectations
- Ensuring transparency in accordance with the Right to Information Act 2009 and maintain Council’s obligation to confidentiality and privacy under the Information Privacy Act 2009
- Continuing to encourage input from the community on Council’s activities through a variety of means

Help us help you

When communicating with Council, you can help us by doing the following:

- Focus dissatisfaction on the conduct or performance of Council rather than on personal criticism of Councillors and/or staff
- Behave appropriately, avoiding the use of abusive language and/or threatening behaviour
- Provide us with accurate information so we can respond to your enquiries
- Keep us informed of any changes to personal details
- Provide feedback and suggestions on service improvements

Council reserves the right to limit or cease communication between certain members of the public and Council. This applies where communications become abusive of persons or excessively demanding of resources. This is in the interests of responsible management of Council's limited resources and in order to fulfil Council's obligations as a responsible employer.

How to contact us

| Online         | www.cairns.qld.gov.au               |
| Email          | council@cairns.qld.gov.au           |
| Telephone      | 1300 69 22 47                      |
| Facebook       | Facebook.com/cairnsregionalcouncil  |

In person

- Spence Street Administration Centre
  - Open 8:00am – 5:00pm
  - 1191-145 Spence Street, Cairns
- Smithfield Library Council Office
  - Open 9:00am – noon
  - 76 Chestol Street, Smithfield
- Gordonvale Library Council Office
  - Open 9:00am – noon
  - 88 Norman Street Gordonvale
- Earlville Library Council Office
  - Open 10:00am – 5:00pm
  - Stockland Shopping Centre
- Babinda Library Council Office
  - Open 9:00am – 3:00pm
  - 24 Munro Street Babinda

In writing

Cairns Regional Council
Po Box 359 Cairns QLD 4870

TTY

133 677 (for the hearing or speech impaired)
Evaluating and improving our performance

We love hearing your comments, especially the positive ones! Please tell us when we get it right for our communities, so we can keep getting it right! If we did a great job, or you received excellent service, you can let us know by:

- Call us
- Complete and submit online form
- Write to Council
- Email Council with details of your compliment or feedback.

We will measure our performance by Customer Surveys, Customer Feedback and monitoring of our performance through various Council reporting systems. We will use these measures to improve our levels of service on our path to customer service excellence and continuous improvement.

Community Engagement

Council is committed to engaging the Community in our decision making processes. To find out more about how you can have Your Say, visit our Your Say website at:

https://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/council/have-say

Our complaint resolution process

At Cairns Regional Council, we aim to give you a great experience every time you contact us. However, we understand this doesn’t always happen. Your feedback on our processes, decisions, service and staff is really important to us.

We use feedback from you, positive or negative, to monitor and improve our service for the benefit of all of our customers.

Whilst we equip all staff across Council to be able to help you reach a resolution with your complaint the first time you call us, we recognise that some complaints can be more complex or involve multiple areas across council. For more information, please visit our website


Our Strategic Goals - Serving the Community

What we want to see in 2022 – An efficient organisation providing best practice service delivery through leadership, effective management of people, assets and finances.

Strategic Objectives

- Deliver best value to the Community
- Encourage an organisational culture of continuous improvement and business efficiencies
- Collaborate and build working partnerships between communities and government to plan and deliver better services
- Consider decision-making based on collaboration, transparent and accountable leadership
- Promote a safety culture of ‘everyone home safe & well today and everyday’

Our contact standards

Communication is a vital part of customer service. We aim to meet our communications standards as set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Written</th>
<th>Face-to-face</th>
<th>Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In most instances we will answer within 60 seconds but if we can’t we will attempt to get back to you in 1 business day. An after-hours service is available outside standard working hours.</td>
<td>We will acknowledge within 5 business days</td>
<td>We will acknowledge within 5 business days</td>
<td>Immediately during business hours</td>
<td>Available 24 hours 7 days a week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We understand it is important for us to set expectations upfront about the time our processes and services may take. We have collated the standard timeframes for all of the services we provide, from emptying bins, to cleaning streets, to completing permits and applications.