



# COUNCIL POLICY

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## Request for Service

<b>Policy Number:</b>	PO075		
<b>Strategic Plan Objective</b>	5.3 Meet all legislative and compliance responsibilities with Council's internal controls		
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Chief Executive Officer	<b>Record Number:</b>	16/14054[v5]
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Governance Officer	<b>Minute Reference:</b>	085/2020 (13/05/2020)
<b>Date Adopted:</b>	13/05/2020	<b>Next Review Date:</b>	May 2022

### 1. POLICY OBJECTIVES

Section 270 (a) of the Local Government Act 1999 (the Act) requires Council to maintain policies, practices and procedures for dealing with “any reasonable request for the provision of a service by the Council or for an improvement of a service provided by the Council”.

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 Yorke Peninsula Council (Council) and give direction on management of requests;
- Establish a standardised process for assessing and processing requests;
- Use requests to directly inform service improvements.

### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Elected Members, Council employees or representatives who may be involved in receiving or processing a request for service in the course of their duties.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

Definitions are provided in Attachment 1.

### 4. POLICY STATEMENT

Council 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 to be provided are a regular occurrence.

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

#### 4.1. The Principles

This policy is based on five principles which inform the way Council approaches requests for service. They are:

- Fairness: treating customers impartially, maintaining confidentiality and ensuring transparency at all stages of the process;

- Accessibility: information about Council's services and contact options will be readily available;
- Responsiveness: providing sufficient resources and suitably trained staff;
- Efficiency: customer requests will be dealt with as quickly as practical while adhering to this policy;
- Liaison: between different areas of Council where the customer request overlaps functional responsibilities.

**4.2. What is a Request for Service?**

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

Council also receives complaints and feedback across all areas of operations and clarification has been provided below for the purpose of this policy.

A Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a service which has, or should have, been received. Refer to the "Definitions" table for a further explanation.

Where Council has failed to meet the normal standards for a service, the Council's Complaints Policy PO147 and the associated processes apply. Where ambiguity exists, Council will deal with the 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 without necessarily requiring corrective action or a formal review. Feedback may however influence future service reviews and delivery methods.

**4.3. Reasonable Request for Service**

In assessing requests for service consideration will be given to:

- Alignment with Council's Strategic Plan, Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plans and Annual Business Plans;
- Public safety and emergencies;
- Using Council resources efficiently including maintaining appropriate levels of staffing and Council's Enterprise Agreements;
- An assessment of risk;
- Relevant Council policies and statutory responsibilities;
- Guidelines and conditions of externally funded programs;
- Impact of service delivery approaches on local businesses.

**4.4. How to Make a Request for Service**

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

- Completion of the appropriate form on Council's website;
- In person at one of Council's offices;
- Letter;
- Email;
- Fax;
- Telephone;
- Petition to Council.

All requests will be captured in Council's records management system in accordance with the Council's Records Management Policy PO063.

Council records are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1991 and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed under provisions of that legislation.

**4.5. Processing a Request for Service**

Council welcomes requests for service as a way of continually improving its services and programs whilst meeting the needs of its customers.

The circumstances for individual requests will vary greatly.

Requests that are determined to be a Request for Service will be processed as per Council's Customer Service Requests Procedure PR006, with outcomes managed within available resources as soon as reasonably practicable and/or within already established timeframes

The process for managing a Request for Service will be explained to the person(s) making the request for service at the outset. In the majority of cases requests will be processed as soon as reasonably possible.

Where further evaluation is required, 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.

On some occasions, requests may be best suited to scheduling to coincide with work in a particular area or season.

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.

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 PO147 or Council's Internal Review of a Council decision Policy PO037.

**4.6. Rejected Requests**

All requests that Council are unable to meet within the bounds of Council's service provision will be recorded and may be reconsidered at a future date, such as in conjunction with the preparation of future Council plans.

**5. COMPLAINTS**

Complaints about this policy can be made in writing to Council's Governance Officer. Complaints will be managed in accordance with Council's Complaints Policy PO147.

**6. REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every four years, after a 2 year review in 2022, and as necessary in consideration of any changes to legislation and relevant standards, codes and guidelines and audit findings or stakeholder feedback.

**7. TRAINING**

Council is committed to supporting Elected Members and employees in complying with this policy

This policy will be provided to Elected Members and all employees who have responsibilities under this policy.

Training needs will be reviewed annually, during individual performance reviews or when deemed necessary in consideration of any changes to legislation and relevant guidelines.

**8. RELATED COUNCIL POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS**

PO037 Internal Review of a Council Decision Policy

PO057 Community Engagement Policy

PO063 Records Management Policy

PO091 Risk Management Policy

## **PO075 – Request for Service Policy**

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PO128 Asset Management  
PO147 Complaints Policy  
PO162 Tree Management Policy  
PR120 Records Management Procedure  
PR006 Customer Service Requests Procedure  
PR060 Customer Service Procedure  
Customer Service Charter

### **9. REFERENCES AND LEGISLATION**

Local Government Act 1999  
Freedom of Information Act 1991  
Local Government Association of SA Model Requests for Services Policy

### **10. COUNCIL DELEGATION**

<b>Details of Delegation:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Delegate:</b>	

### **11. VERSION HISTORY**

<b>Archived Policy Name</b>	<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Date Adopted</b>	<b>Last Reviewed</b>
PO075 Service Provision Policy	PO075	07/04/2003	08/06/2010
PO075 Request for Service Policy	PO075	10/09/2014	11/10/2017
PO075 Request for Service Policy	PO075	13/05/2020	13/05/2020

## **Definitions**

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

Community	The people who; live, work, conduct business activities or use the facilities in public places.
Complaint	Means an expression of dissatisfaction with a service delivered by the Council, or its representatives that has failed to reach the standard stated, implied or documented. This includes complaints about a request for service that has been, or should have been delivered. Complaints may originate from the community, elected members, contractors or staff.
Employee	Means a person employed directly by the Council in a full time, part time or casual capacity.
Representatives	Persons providing services to, or on behalf of, the Council.
Request for Service	Means an application to have Council or its representatives take some form of action to provide a Council service.