




Shire of Halls Creek

Customer Service

Strategy

2015



Version	Date	Approval
1.0	21 August 2015	 Corporate Services Manager

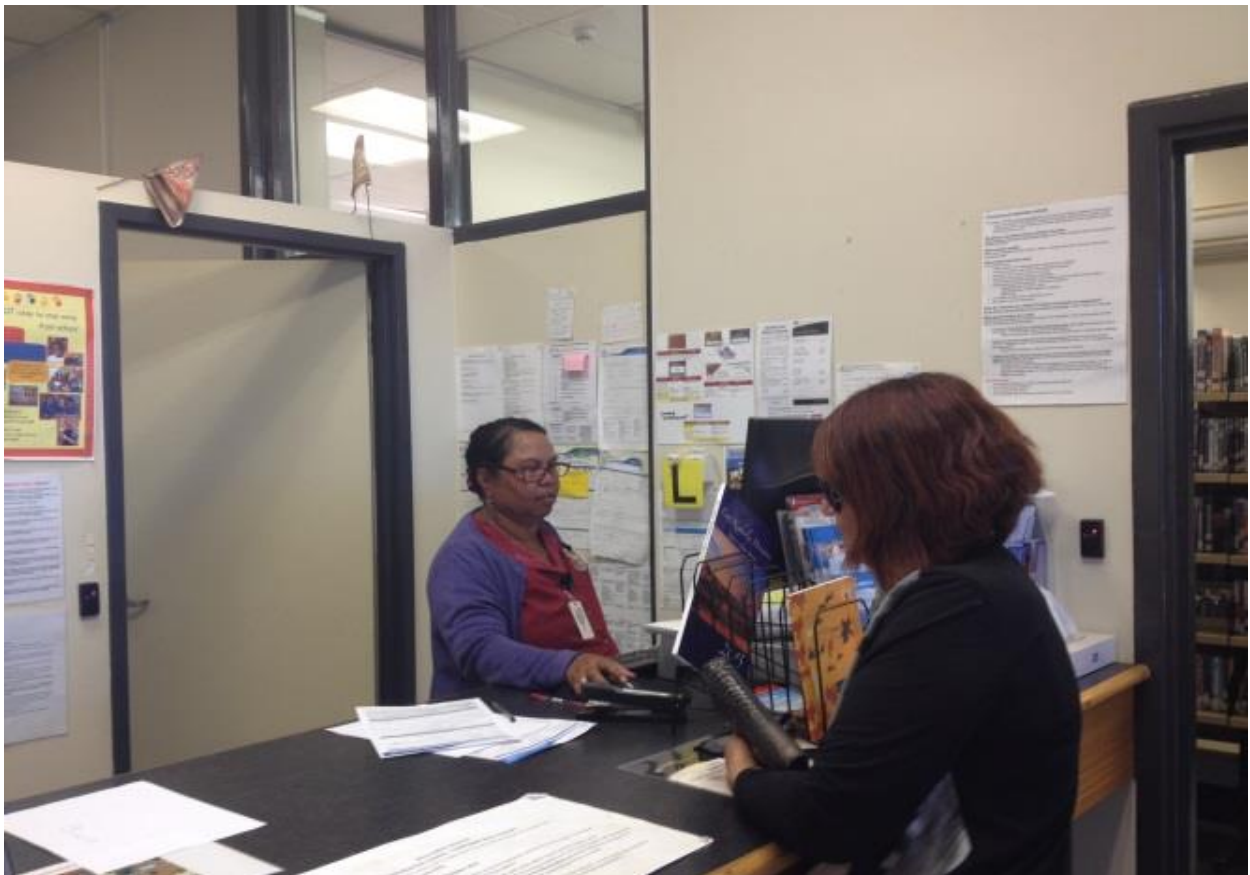


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Customer service vision

“A customer focussed Council which welcomes inquiries and seeks positive outcomes for all residents and customers.”



Customer service mission

“Listen to our customers to better understand their expectations and deliver services that respond to their needs.”



Alignment with the Strategic Community Plan 2015

The Shire of Halls Creek Strategic Community Plan 2015 includes the following objective for Civic Leadership, with five Governance outcomes:

Civic Leadership Objective	Desired Governance Outcomes
4. Working together to strengthen leadership and effective governance	4.1 A local government that is respected and accountable. 4.2 A customer focussed Council which welcomes inquiries and seeks positive outcomes for all residents and customers. 4.3 Genuine and culturally appropriate consultation with all residents on policies and projects affecting their communities. 4.4 Quality staff. 4.5 Improved regional partnerships and effective collaboration to enhance service delivery.

For Outcome 4.2 “A customer focussed Council which welcomes inquiries and seeks positive outcomes for all residents and customers” the following priorities have been identified:

- *Develop and implement a Customer Services Strategy to continue improving customer service*
- *Acknowledge and act on customer feedback to improve service levels*
- *Develop and provide clear information on Shire services for all residents*
- *Maintain and continue to improve the Shire website and general internet presence*
- *Review service level agreements regularly for all services provided by the Shire*

This strategy is to give effect to Civic Leadership Objective 4, Desired Governance Outcome 4.2 and the corresponding priorities.



Key principles of customer service

Assurance – being knowledgeable and courteous to gain trust and confidence

Responsiveness – being eager to help customers and provide prompt service

Responsibility – managing the relationship with the customer from the first point of contact to the completion of service or the hand over to a more appropriate service provider

Perceived value – understanding the customer's view of the value of our services

Choice – providing our customers with a range of relevant options

Reliability – always efficiently providing the promised service

Empathy – care for individual customer needs

Tangibles – ensuring the professional appearance of facilities, equipment and staff



Who are our customers?

Our main customer groups and the services we provide them with are set out the matrix attached as Appendix 1.



Factors influencing the way we deliver customer service

A number of factors unique to Halls Creek Shire should be considered in the way we deliver services to our customers. These include:

- the vast area of the Shire with large distances between Halls Creek town and its remote communities
- the remoteness of the Shire from towns and cities
- a limited rating base and ongoing dependence on funding from other agencies
- a largely aboriginal population (approximately 80%) with a high proportion of young people (approximately 50% are 25 years old or less)
- a population characterised by variable levels of education, literacy and access to technology
- a large proportion of our customers have limited experience in dealing with bureaucracy and are further hampered by a lack of access to information and identification documents commonly required
- a significant increase in the number of visitors in the dry season (April to October) placing additional demand on some resources, such as the Travel and Tourism Centre



Customer service innovations

- Website upgrade in 2014
- Travel and tourism centre international bookings
- Visiting and engaging with remote communities
- After hours gym access at the Aquatic and Recreation Centre
- New Art Centre opening April 2015



Future state

We will be a customer focussed Council that:

- provides a consistent and high quality service in a timely manner
- gives certainty of outcome to our customers
- is honest, open and transparent
- is accountable for its actions
- is accessible, responsive and easy to deal with
- listens to our community and advocates for their needs
- is culturally aware and understanding
- provides services that customers value
- empowers staff to off solutions
- effectively partners with relevant agencies and organisations for efficient service delivery
- strives for continuous improvement



Key actions (to achieve the future state)

The key actions identified by our staff, the Aboriginal Advisory Committee and Council to achieve the future state are:

Communication

1. Licensing – use pictures to explain different forms of ID required and multi-lingual guide to explain process
2. Road closure notices – more regular updates and explain why roads closed
3. Improve internal communication – between teams (understanding each other's jobs) and from management to staff
4. Protocol for Shire staff visiting remote communities

Training / Knowledge

5. Cultural training / induction for staff & develop cultural competence of key staff – use local people, yarns
6. Staff customer service training - to improve staff's ability to deal with different situations (such as grieving, upset & elderly customers)

Additional services / Processes

7. Identification document repository
8. Music when transferring calls internally
9. Accessibility of Shire President to customers ("Mayor in the Chair" or similar)
10. Process for review / escalation of customer service issue

Branding / Cultural identity

11. Process for new road names reflecting indigenous pioneers / culture with input from the Aboriginal Advisory Committee
12. Town and Shire building welcome signage – multilingual
13. Branding vehicles – investigate pros and cons of Shire vehicles carrying Shire logo



Service levels

14. Set & communicate maximum internal and external response times (emails, letters, phone calls, complaint handling, waste collection etc)
15. Define service levels for remote communities

Tangibles

16. Re-decorate front of house / reception area and improve comfort for customers (child play area and chairs)

Other

17. Investigate voicemail for Shire land lines
18. Investigate and implement text messaging as an additional communication channel (road closures, pool closures, emergency management)
19. Further web site development for on line transactions
20. Customer Service Charter
21. Library services review & implementation
22. Investigate banking / transactional health services
23. Community outcome monitoring / residents and non-resident's survey of customer service

Implementation plan

Most of the actions are of a project nature and they cannot all be implemented at the same time. The Customer Service Strategy Implementation Plan in Appendix 2 prioritises the actions on the basis of their importance to our customers and establishes project sponsors and project managers for the various actions. Other members of the project teams and specific timeframes for the completion of each project will be established through project plans.

Monitoring of progress will be reported to the Management Team on a bimonthly basis. To ensure its continuing relevance to the Shire, this strategy will be reviewed annually.

APPENDIX 1. Services Provided and Main Customer Groups

Customer Groups																
Service	Residents		Ratepayers	Visitors			Businesses			Aboriginal Corporations	Government Departments		NGOs / Art Centre's	Councillor's	Internal Customers	Traditional Land Owners
	Town	Non town		Tourists	Family	Sport events	Local	Mining	Pastoralists		Federal	State				
Governance														✓	✓	✓
Bylaws (fire prevention, animal control, emergency services)	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Aboriginal Environmental Health	✓	✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
General health admin & inspections	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Pest control	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Youth Service Diversionary Program	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Staff housing															✓	
Refuse collection & disposal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Integrated Planning & Town planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cemetery	✓	✓	✓													
Civic Halls	✓	✓	✓			✓										
Oval and other Sports Courts	✓	✓	✓			✓										

Appendix 2: Customer Service Strategy Implementation Plan

	Action	Priority	Project Sponsor	Project Manger	Project Team	Project Plan Date	Commence	Completion
	Communication							
1	Licensing - use pictures to explain forms of ID & multilingual guide	A	Lloyd Barton			31/07/2015		
2	Road closure notices review - more regular updates and explain why roads closed	A	Phil Burgess			28/08/2015		
3	Improve Internal Communication	A	Rodger Kerr-Newell	Heather Perkins		24/08/2015		
4	Protocol for Shire staff visiting remote communities							
	Training / Knowledge							
5	Cultural training / induction for staff and & develop cultural competence of key staff	C						
6	Staff customer service training	C						
	Additional Services / Processes							
7	Identification document repository	A	Margaret Glass			28/08/2015		
8	Music when transferring calls internally	A	NA	NA	Lloyd Barton to action			30/08/2015
10	Accessibility of Shire President to customers	A	Heather Perkins			28/08/2015		
11	Review / escalation process for customer service issues	C						
	Branding / Cultural Identity							
12	Road name process including input from Aboriginal Advisory Committee	A	Bronwyn Little			28/08/2015		
13	Town and Shire building welcome signage / multilingual	C						
14	Branding of vehicle investigation	C						
	Service Levels							
15	Set & communicate maximum internal and external response times	A	Teresa Foster			04/09/2015		
16	Define service levels for remote communities	C						
	Tangibles							
17	Redecorate front of house / reception area and improve customer comfort incorporating customer service improvement suggestion box	A	Phil Burgess			28/08/2015		
	Other							
	Investigate voicemail for Shire land lines	C						
	Investigate and implement text messaging as an additional communication channel	C						
	Further web site development for on-line transactions	C						
	Customer Service Charter	C						
	Library services review & implementation	B			Lloyd Barton to activate supporting software			✓
	Investigate banking / transactional health services	C						
	Note on priority:							
	A = Implementation within 6 months							
	B = Partial implementation within 6 months							
	C = Implementation outside 6 months							

