# Request for Service Procedure

**Keywords:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Number:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic Plan:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicable Legislation:</td>
<td>Local Government Act 1999, Section 270</td>
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| Relevant Policies:  | Complaint Policy  
|                    | Request for Service Policy |
| Related Procedures: |       |
| Delegations:       |       |
|                    | Complaint Handling Procedure |
KINGSTON DISTRICT COUNCIL
REQUEST FOR SERVICE PROCEDURE

Local Government Act 1999 Section 270

1 Purpose and Scope
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.

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

This procedure commences at the point that a request for service is received and covers processes for:
- distinguishing between requests, complaints and feedback to Council.
- deciding how to respond to the request.
- using requests to directly inform service improvements.

The aim of this procedure, is to ensure requests for service are addressed in a fair, consistent and structured process which is transparent to all customers. This procedure does not apply to matters that do not fall within Council’s jurisdiction. These types of issues will be referred to appropriate external processes.

1.1 Responsibility
This procedure applies to all Council staff who may be involved in receiving or processing a request for service in the course of their work.

Officers will act reasonably and transparently, demonstrate good customer service, undertake their responsibilities in a proficient manner and use their judgement where necessary to ensure an outcome in line with Council’s Request for Service Policy.

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

1.3 General Notes
Council receives requests for service, complaints and feedback across all areas of operations. Clarification may be necessary to make the distinction for the purposes of this procedure.

Council defines a Request for Service as:

“an application to have Council or its representative take some form of action to provide a Council service”.

Complaints about the activities of third parties (e.g. barking dogs or food premises) are to be treated as Requests for Service in the first instance where this is a reasonable interpretation.

However, if the request is about the way in which Council has dealt with a matter concerning the activities of a third party, this will be dealt with as a complaint. (See G018 - Complaint Policy)
Feedback can take the form of comments, both positive and negative, about services provided by Council without necessarily forming the basis of a complaint or a request for service. Council welcomes feedback of all types as an important way of continually monitoring its service standards.

2 Records Management
All requests for service including notes, telephone calls, photographs and correspondence in Council’s Records Management System are retained in accordance with the State Records Act General Disposal Schedule 20.

3 Procedure
Council welcomes requests for service as a way of improving its services and programs as well as fulfilling the needs of its customers.

3.1 Assisting with the lodgement requests for service
No one should be excluded from lodging a request for service because of any difficulties they may have representing themselves. All staff are expected to offer assistance where appropriate and provide it on request, including assistance in documenting the request in writing when circumstances warrant.

3.2 Receiving requests for service
A person can make a request in a number of ways:
- Completion the appropriate form on Council’s website.
- Telephone.
- Fax.
- Email.
- Letter.
- Petition.
- In person at the Council Office.

3.2.1 Recording requests for service
A request for service will be processed through Council’s Records Management System and will be logged into the Complaint/Request Register. The request for service shall then be managed in accordance with this procedure.

If the request is a verbal report of a minor nature, and it is appropriate for front line staff to resolve in the first instance, the request shall not be logged into the Complaint/Request Register.

3.3 Deciding how to respond to requests for service
Each request must be assessed to determine if the request is within Council’s jurisdiction, its nature, how it should be dealt with, when it should be dealt with, and who should be involved.

The majority of requests can normally be scheduled and actioned promptly. Some will require direction from a Manager, the Chief Executive Officer or a decision of Council.

The response to Requests for Services will consider:
- The content of Council’s Strategic Management Plans, Annual Business Plans, annual works program and Annual Budget. Does the request fit within the directions and programs which Council has agreed to, and budgeted for?
- Relevant Council policies. Does the request fit within other agreed positions documented by Council?
- An assessment of risk. Does the request relate to a matter which may impact on a public risk or Council risk?
- Statutory responsibilities. Is the request about a matter which Council has a statutory obligation to act upon?
- Using Council resources efficiently and effectively.

Where possible, Council should advise customers what action will be taken in response to requests at the time of lodging.

Where requests are for major work or new services they will be considered by Council in the preparation of the next Annual Business Plan.

### 3.3.1 Rejected requests for service
Where a request cannot be accommodated:

- The customer will be informed that the request has been rejected and the reasons for that decision.
- A request, depending on its nature, may be reconsidered at a future date such as the preparation of a future annual business plan and budget.

### 3.4 Acknowledging requests for service and progress
Under the policy, Council aims to respond to customer requests as soon as possible, and will endeavour in most circumstances to respond within (5) business days, advising of Council’s intentions in regard to the request. Customers shall note that this timeframe is for response to the complaint and should an action be required this will be determined taking account of available resources.

Where work is delayed customers should be informed of progress, the reasons for any delays and the anticipated completion timeframe.

When responding to requests for services that do not require urgent attention, the action shall be carried out when time and resources allow and the customer shall be informed of an estimated timeframe.

If the customer has asked to be advised when the work is completed, this task is the responsibility of the employee who finalises the request.

### 4 Reporting and Service Improvement
At least monthly the Management Team will review the Complaint/Request Register to ensure complaints are being addressed and resolved.

Council recognises that requests are a source of information to improve service provision, procedures and responses to requests and shall annually analyse and report on requests received and actions taken.

### 5 Availability of the Policy
This Policy will be available for inspection at the Council's Offices during ordinary business hours and via the Council's website [www.kingstondc.sa.gov.au](http://www.kingstondc.sa.gov.au). Copies will also be provided to the public upon request, and upon payment of a fee in accordance with the Council's Fees and Charges Policy.

### 6 Council Endorsement
This Policy was adopted by resolution of the Council on 23 March 2012, (resolution number 7792).
7 Review & Evaluation
The effectiveness of this Policy will be reviewed at least once in the term of Council. The Chief Executive Officer will report to Council on the outcome of the evaluation, and make recommendations for amendments, alteration or substitution of a new Policy, if relevant.