



TASMAN COUNCIL CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER

Tasman Council is committed to providing quality customer service to our community. We continue to strive to develop and maintain high standards of customer service at all times so that everyone using Council's services and facilities will receive friendly, efficient and outstanding service.

Our Customer Service Charter complies with the requirements of Section 339F of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and sets out the service standard that all customers can expect from Tasman Council. It also supplies guidance to customers if they feel Council's customer service has not been adequate. This Charter provides Council Officers and Contractors with clear standards to adhere to, recognising that a strong customer focus is integral to Council.

1. Council's Commitment

Council is committed to engaging with our community and delivering customer focused services that;

- Treat all customers, fairly, courteously and with respect;
- Assist all customers as promptly, completely, and accurately as possible;
- Communicate clearly, and in plain language;
- Ensure information, resources and services are accessible to all;
- Set in place protocols within our roles, to maximise productivity and efficiency;
- Are delivered by skilled, motivated and courteous officers;
- Work with each customer to solve problems and refer them to an appropriate organisation if we are unable to meet their request; and
- Are in accordance to all legislative privacy requirements.

2. How to Access Council Services

Council Office

Address: 1713 Main Road, Nubeena, TAS 7184

Telephone: (03) 6250 9200

Email: tasman@tasman.tas.gov.au

Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm

Website: www.tasman.tas.gov.au

After Hours Emergencies Only – (03) 6292 4202

Services Available (but not limited to) – Council Office

- Planning, Building and Plumbing Applications and Enquiries
- Rates Payments and Enquiries
- Dog Registrations
- Payment of other Council Accounts
- Hiring of Council Halls and Recreation Grounds
- Road and Drainage Enquiries
- Cemeteries Enquiries
- General Municipality Enquiries
- Public Request Applications
- Right to Information Applications

3. Our Customer Service Standards

Customers can expect the following response times for their issues or enquiries;

Action	Our Standard
Respond to: Matters of serious public health and safety nature; Urgent matters involving existing Council policy; and Urgent matters of a standard or administrative nature.	Immediately or up to twenty four (24) hours depending on the nature of the issue. <i>Note: An urgent matter means a particular issue or concern affecting the safety of life or property.</i>
Resolve a complaint or respond to an enquiry (either by phone, email or written)	Provide a response within ten (10) business days. If complex investigations are required, the response we provide you with may be delayed. However, Council will keep you as up to date as possible throughout the process.
Respond to: Non-urgent matters involving existing Council policy; Non-urgent matters of a standard or administrative nature; and Matters arising from Council meetings.	Within ten (10) business days

Action	Our Standard
Respond to other requests, applications, duties, etc with timeframes listed in legislation ie: <i>Local Government Act 1993, Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Tasman, Food Act 2003, Building Act 2016, Dog Control Act 2000, etc.</i>	Any other requests or timeframes for service that is specific by legislation will be adhered to and where timeframes are not listed responses will be within ten (10) days.

Privacy

As a customer of Tasman Council, you can expect your privacy respected and your personal information protected under the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* and the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

4. Customer Service Request System

A Customer Service Request can be, but is not limited to, one of the following:

A request for information for an explanation of a policy or procedure;

- Report of damage of faulty infrastructure;
- Report of noise, dogs, nuisances, unauthorised building works or similar issues that fall into the regulatory aspect of our service;
- A request for Council to provide new infrastructure; and
- A general request for information.

Requests can be logged via Council’s website www.tasman.tas.gov.au, over the phone, in person or sent via mail to 1713 Main Road, Nubeena TAS 7184 or emailed tasman@tasman.tas.gov.au.

All requests are logged into the Councils “Customer Request System”, assigned a priority and allocated to the appropriate Council Officer or Contractor for action.

5. Complaints

What is a Formal Complaint?

A formal complaint is a written expression of dissatisfaction with a decision (outside of a structured process), level or quality of service, or behaviour of a Council Officer or Contractor, which will be investigated and acted upon (**Annexure 1**).

A structured process is where legislation (Act, Regulation or Rule) specifically makes provision for an appeal, internal or external review of a decision.

Any Council Officer or Contractor having difficulty in determining a complaint, as from a customer service request, should seek advice of the Corporate Services Manager.

Type of Complaint

A formal complaint must be lodged with Council in writing. To assist Council in dealing with the complaint; a customer should include as much information as possible, such as date/s, time/s and location of events. The customer should also state what they hope to achieve as an outcome of the complaint.

Whilst most complaints can usually be resolved quickly by the relevant Council Officer or Contractor, there are times when a detailed investigation is required. If this process is delayed for any reason, we will keep you informed of the progress of your complaint.

If a customer is not satisfied with the outcome, they may request a review of the complaint by the Council's General Manager. A request for a review of the complaint to the General Manager, must be made in writing. The General Manager will inform the customer of the finding on completion of an investigation.

The relevant Council Officer, Contractor or the General Manager may enter into informal discussions or mediation about a complaint with a view to resolve the issue. Upon resolution of the complaint, the Council will write to the complainant confirming that the matter is resolved.

Vexatious Complaints

All complaints received by Council will be treated with the utmost seriousness, however if a complaint is found to be malicious, frivolous or vexatious, as determined by the General Manager, then no further action will be taken on the complaint. The customer will be informed of this decision in writing by the General Manager.

Anonymous Complaints

The Council may accept anonymous complaints, but will generally only act on them where the matter to considered to be serious and there is sufficient information in the complaint to enable an investigation to be undertaken.

The complainant will not be notified of the outcome of an anonymous complaint.

If a Customer is not Satisfied with the Resolution of the Complaint?

Although Council is confident that the majority of complaints received can be resolved, we understand that we may not be able to satisfy every customer on every occasion.

If a complaint remains unresolved or a customer is dissatisfied with our process in dealing with a complaint, other avenues remain for the customer to explore which include:

- The Ombudsman; or
- The Director of Local Government.

Customers are entitled to refer a complaint directly to these bodies at any time, however we encourage everyone to allow us to investigate the complaint first.

The Ombudsman

The Ombudsman is an officer responsible to Parliament for investigating complaints made about administrative actions (or inactions) of Tasmanian Government Departments, most Statutory Authorities and Local Government.

Customers can make complaints by phone or in person at the Office of Ombudsman Tasmania, or they can use the online complaint form available for completion or download at www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au.

The Ombudsman will not usually accept a complaint if the issue dates back further than two years.

Contact details

Enquiries: Monday to Friday 9am to 4.45pm (excluding public holidays)
Phone: 1800 001 170 (free call from landlines nationally)
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.tas.gov.au
Address: NAB Business Banking Centre, Level 6/86 Collins St, Hobart
Postal Address: GPO Box 960, Hobart TAS 7001

Director of Local Government

Complaints regarding Council, Councillors, or the General Manager failing to comply with the requirements under Section 339E of the *Local Government Act 1993* (or any other) can be submitted to the Director of Local Government.

A complaint of this type must be in writing. It must identify the complainant, the person against whom the complaint is made, and the grounds upon which the complaint is based upon.

Contact details

Division: Local Government Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet
Phone: (03) 6232 7022
Email: localgovernment@dpac.tas.gov.au
Address: Level 5/15 Murray St, Hobart
Postal Address: GPO Box 123, Hobart TAS 7001

Expectations of the Customer

Council requires that customers assist Council Officers and Contractors in our service delivery by:

- Treating staff with courtesy and respect;
- Respecting the rights of other customers;
- Supplying staff with accurate and complete information;

- Working with staff to resolve problems and issues;
- Providing Council with feedback; and
- Respecting our community.

Abusive Customers

No Council Officer or Contractor is required to tolerate threatening, abusive or insulting conduct from customers. In cases where a customer behaves in such a way the Council Officer or Contractor may immediately terminate dealing with them. If face to face, the Officer or Contractor may walk away or request that the customer leave. If on the telephone, the Council Officer or Contractor may terminate the call. If in an email, the address may be blocked, and/or no response provided.

If a Council Officer or Contractor feels threatened by the language or behaviour of a customer or if the person fails to leave the premises when asked to do so, the Police may be called.

The General Manager may decide to restrict or cease responses to any person who is abusive in his or her dealings with Council or who refuses to accept that Council has done all that it can to assist. A decision of this nature will be communicated to the person in writing.

Reporting of Complaints

In accordance with Section 339F of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the General Manager will provide a report to the Council annually on the number and nature of complaints received.

The Council is to review the Charter within twelve (12) months of an election as per Section 339F(4) of the Act.

This Customer Service Charter was adopted by the Tasman Council, resolution number 15/03.2022/C on 23 March 2022.



Kim Hossack
General Manager

Policy Approved – July 2011
Policy reviewed – June 2019
Policy reviewed – March 2022
Policy to be reviewed – March 2026

Disclaimer

That this policy be read in conjunction with any or all other Council and/or Management Policies.

Annexure 1

Tasman Council Complaints Form

This form is to be used specifically for complaints about the level or quality of service provided by Tasman Council, or behaviour of a Council employee or contractor.

This form is **not to be used** for a request for service or maintenance (repairs for road infrastructure or nuisance dogs).

Person Making the Complains Details

Date	
Name	
Address	
Email	
Phone	

Details of Complaint

(Please include all relevant dates and events, including additional pages if required. Attach any supporting documents if relevant).

Action Sought

Signature _____ Date _____

Return Completed Form to Council

In person:

Tasman Council
1713 Main Road
Nubeena Tas 7184

Mail:

Tasman Council
Corporate Services Manager
1713 Main Road
Nubeena Tas 7184

Email:

tasman@tasman.tas.gov.au

Office Use Only

Date Complaint received: _____

Officer to respond to complaint _____

