

Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

REPORT TO: Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 19th December 2022

LOCATION: Council Chamber, Penmorfa

TITLE: Customer Charter

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To review and recommend the revised Customer Charter

REASON SCRUTINY HAVE REQUESTED THE INFORMATION: To review and update existing Customer Charter

The Charter outlines the different methods of communicating with the Council, Phone, Electronic (Web, Email), letters and Face to Face. The charter gives the customer indication of when they should expect a reply and ensure that the customer is communicated with in the language and method of their preference.

The Charter gives the customer the assurance that the Council will deal with all equally, in a fair and polite way and keep the citizen informed about its services and events. The Charter welcomes both positive and negative comments about its services and how it can improve.

The revised charter is now in line with the Complaints policy for the number of days to respond to any enquiry.

WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS:

RECOMMENDATION (S):

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If not, please state why NO- update of existing charter with limited impact to the public

Summary:

Long term:

Integration:

Collaboration:

Involvement:

Prevention:

To consult with the Scrutiny members to determine if the targets and goals set in the charter are acceptable and revise accordingly.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION (S):

To agree on a final version that can be recommended for Cabinet approval

Contact Name:	Arwyn Morris
Designation:	Corporate Lead Officer Customer Contact
Date of Report:	19 th December 2022
Acronyms:	

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Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

Customer Charter

Ceredigion County Council provides a wide range of services and aims to deliver services that are appropriate to Customer needs in a convenient and polite way.

Responding to Telephones

- It is our expectation that service users will contact the council via the corporate contact centre and when doing so you can expect your call to be answered promptly
- Simple enquiries and requests for service will be dealt with immediately. We may need to transfer you to a specialist, or take a message on your behalf, if your enquiry is complex or needs further information.
- All calls will be answered bilingually, with Welsh and English-speaking Officers available at all times. Each conversation will continue in the caller's preferred language

Please note all calls to the Corporate Contact Centre are recorded for monitoring and training purposes only.

Responding to Letters, E-mails and Requests for Service via the Web and Social Media

- When you write to the Council, we will acknowledge receiving the request within 2 working days of receipt of the letter (digital correspondence will be auto-acknowledge) and reply in the language and medium of the original correspondence as soon as possible but within a maximum of 14 days of receipt of your request.
- Where a fuller, more complex reply is needed then we will send a letter/email giving indication of when we will provide a full response. We encourage all enquiries to be submitted via the web form available on the council's website <http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/resident/contact/>, service users will receive a bilingual auto response via email to acknowledge receipt of the enquiry. Our libraries provide free Wi-Fi access to the internet. and public access computers should a service user need additional support to digital services
- To improve efficiency the Council promotes communication, when possible, via its digital services. This will ensure that the information we have is accurate and up to date
- Where possible any requests received through the Council's Corporate Social Media pages will be redirected to the Corporate Contact Centre who will take the necessary action to address the enquiry. The Council's Social Media pages are used for information purposes only and NOT for responding to service requests.

Responding to Personal Visits (Face-to-Face)

- In person visits will only be available at designated buildings and every effort will be made to assist service users with their enquiries
- For complex/specialised enquiries, you may be asked to make an appointment. We will give as much notice as possible if an appointment has to be altered or cancelled.
- We will deal with your enquiry in Welsh or English according to your language preference.
- Opening Hours, details of out-of-hours emergency provision and relevant telephone numbers are published on the Council's Website www.ceredigion.gov.uk/resident/contact/
- When we visit you, official identification will be shown before entering your premises, and appointments will be arranged in advance.
- When you visit Council buildings you can expect a welcoming environment. We will be polite and courteous and will ensure that we treat everyone equally.

Responding to Enquiries

- As a Council we will provide services through the most efficient access channel for the customer-
- We recognise that quick, simple and straightforward transactions are easily completed online or via the Corporate Contact Centre and therefore we are committed to making this possible for all of the services.
- We recognise that for more in depth and complex issues you may need to have an appointment with the most appropriate officer. Every effort will be made to accommodate this request in a timely manner

Standards of Communication

- All correspondence in relation to an enquiry will be written in plain language, and in the language of the original enquiry.
- The Council has adopted the principle to use a standard font Arial, minimum type size 12 in all correspondence
- However, the Council has a legal and moral responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to provide any of its documents, leaflets, electronic resources etc. in an alternative format if requested by a service user. Examples of alternative formats are providing a document in large print, braille, audio, easy read or Children and Young People's version.
- The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 makes Welsh an official language in Wales; this means Welsh language must not be treated any less favourably than the English language, and that persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of Welsh language if they choose to do so. In accordance with the legislation the Welsh Language Commissioner has set a range of Welsh Language Standards that the Authority must meet in order to provide quality Welsh language services; ensuring that Welsh speakers have access to their services in their language of preference.
- When you contact the Council, we promise to listen. If it takes longer than expected to resolve the matter, we will keep you informed, explaining the reasons why.

Information and Openness

- We try our best to keep you informed about our services, important events and changes which may affect you. This is done mainly via the Council's website www.ceredigion.gov.uk and its social media. All published documents will be bi-lingual, in line with the Authority's Welsh Language Standards.

Equal Opportunities

- Ceredigion County Council's Equality policy recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals. The policy identifies how the Council will work actively to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out its activities. Equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and are kept under review.
- In accordance with the Welsh Language Standards, Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, Ceredigion County Council has adopted the principle that it will treat the Welsh and English languages on the basis of equality. Welsh and English are the Council's official languages, and they have the same status and validity in the Council's administration and work.

The Authority welcomes positive or negative comments on its services

- If you are unhappy with a service you have received from the Council or want to tell us about something we have done well, we want to know. The Council has a very clear and consistent complaints and compliments policy, available on the Council's website www.ceredigion.gov.uk/your-council/comments-compliments-and-complaints/
- All Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures and further advice is available from the Complaints and FOI service

Contact Us

The Customer Service Centres (located at Aberystwyth, Aberaeron, Lampeter, and Cardigan) are open Monday to Friday.

Contact Centre telephone numbers

General Enquiries 01545 570881

Email Enquiries clic@ceredigion.gov.uk

Visit us at www.ceredigion.gov.uk where you will find a wide range of our services available online.