

Roads & Transportation
CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY

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Roads & Transportation

CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY

1. Background

This strategy is based on the principles of the Council's Customer Service Strategy and focuses on how we provide our Roads & Transportation services. The Strategy covers the range of our services and provides information on the tools that we use to monitor, improve, review and report on our service delivery.

The overriding aim of this strategy is to set in place the mechanisms that will enable Roads & Transportation not only to provide an excellent standard of customer service but to continually improve our customer focussed performance.

The strategy ensures that the customer becomes the focus of everything we do and shows how customer service is embedded into our processes, programmes, performance management, personnel development, business plans, policies and strategies.

The service will continue to take an active and lead role in service delivery assessment processes. By embracing the Clackmannanshire Improvement Model, which is based on the PSIF process, we are able to benchmark our progress against other internal services and with other public and private sector organisations. We carry out regular and rigorous self assessment of our business delivery and as part of this process are taking part in the externally assessed Customer Service Excellence (CSE) scheme.

Internally, we refine our business processes by regularly reviewing our policies, strategies, programmes and our business plan. Consequently, this strategy is regularly reviewed to reflect our improving awareness of our customers and to include corporate and technological advances and to show that we are learning from our experiences. These reviews are largely focussed on ensuring our commitment to growing in excellence through the delivery of high quality customer services to local citizens and businesses.

The strategy seeks to underpin the Council's Core Values

- Commitment; Trust & Partnership
- Openness & Accountability
- Respect & dignity
- Equity, Fairness & Inclusion

To meet these Core Values and to provide an excellent customer experience we address the following main issues:

- involving people in our long term plans
- telling people what we are doing
- managing customer expectation
- ensuring that we can reach all of our customers
- taking heed of our customers comments
- asking people if we have done what we said we would
- measuring our levels of customer satisfaction, and
- reviewing our process to learn from our and our customers' experiences

The terms customer and stakeholder are used to represent anyone who has an interest in what Roads & Transportation does including the many and diverse faces of the general public, elected members, staff, colleagues, clients and partners in public, professional, private and voluntary sectors. Our staff understand that there are both internal and external customers and stakeholders and are committed to providing everyone with the best possible standards of service.

Leaders need to have an understanding of and be able to actively manage conflicting stakeholder needs. Those who demonstrate these competencies show an understanding of the broad environment in which we operate.

2. Corporate Customer Charter

The Council's Customer Service Strategy, outlines the general policies and actions aimed at meeting peoples' expectations for high quality services and incorporates the corporate Customer Charter.

The corporate Customer Charter sets out our commitment to delivering a high standard of customer service to local citizens and businesses. We aim to deliver a consistent service, no matter where and when you choose to contact the council. Roads & Transportation will aim to match, and where possible, exceed the service levels described in the Council's Customer Charter.

This Charter outlines the standards we aim to provide and how you can contact us to give us feedback, particularly if anything goes wrong. It also explains how you can help us to serve you better.

Our vision is to deliver an excellent customer experience and the highest possible standards for everyone who contacts us. We believe that excellent service can best be achieved by:

- treating you with fairness and respect when you deal with the Council,
- developing trust through open, honest and simple communication,
- listening to your views and taking action to improve, and

- making our services easy to access, efficient, effective and designed to meet your needs.

This Charter has been developed in consultation with customers and our staff. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure we are meeting (and hopefully exceeding) your expectations whenever you interact with the Council.

You can expect the following levels of service;

When you contact us:

- We will provide a friendly and welcoming service.
- We will try to answer your enquiries the first time you contact us. If your enquiry cannot be dealt with at this time, we will put you in touch with someone who can help.
- We will deal promptly and efficiently with your phone calls, letters, e-mails and visits to our local offices. We aim to provide 24 hour, 7 day access to our website (www.clacksweb.org.uk) to encourage more people to access information and service directly.
- We will provide you with clear information about our services, how to contact us and what level of service you can expect from us.
- We will give you details of which section of the Council is dealing with your enquiry so that you know who to get back to (if necessary), and how/when to contact them.
- No matter what your enquiry, our staff will deal with it impartially and with discretion.
- We will make sure our staff are fully trained so that they have the right skills and knowledge to meet your needs, as our customer.
- If you have reason to complain about any aspect of service, we will deal with your complaints within an agreed timescale.

When you call one of our published helpline numbers, we will:

- Ensure your call is answered within 45 seconds during normal working hours (Customer Contact Centre is open 8.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday).
- Aim to resolve your enquiries without having to pass you to someone else or you having to repeat yourself.
- Tell you the name of the person you are speaking to. If the call has to be transferred, we will pass on your name and details of your enquiry to avoid you repeating yourself.
- If the person you wish to speak to is not available, we will suggest a time when they can be contacted or arrange to have your call returned, normally within one working day.

When you write to us, we will:

- Ensure that you receive a response within 10 working days.
- Inform you if for any reason a full reply will take longer, giving you timescales when you can expect a response.
- Tell you in our letters who is dealing with your enquiry and provide contact details.
- Respond to you in clear plain English avoiding the use of jargon.
- Provide a reply in an alternative format if you require a reasonable adjustment, for example larger print.

When we visit you at your home, we will:

- Confirm that the caller is an officer of the Council by showing you a clear identification card.
- Contact you by telephone if there is a delay in attending a pre-arranged appointment.

When you visit one of our main local offices (Community Access Points and Reception Points), we will:

- Deal with your initial enquiry as quickly as possible, normally within 5 minutes.
- Respect your privacy. We will arrange a private interview for you, if you require one.
- Make an appointment to see a member of staff when specialist advice and services are needed.
- Ensure the most commonly requested information is available at all main offices.

When you e-mail us, we will:

- Acknowledge email enquiries within 24 hours (during normal working week).
- Respond to all communications within 10 working days.

3. Corporate Complaints

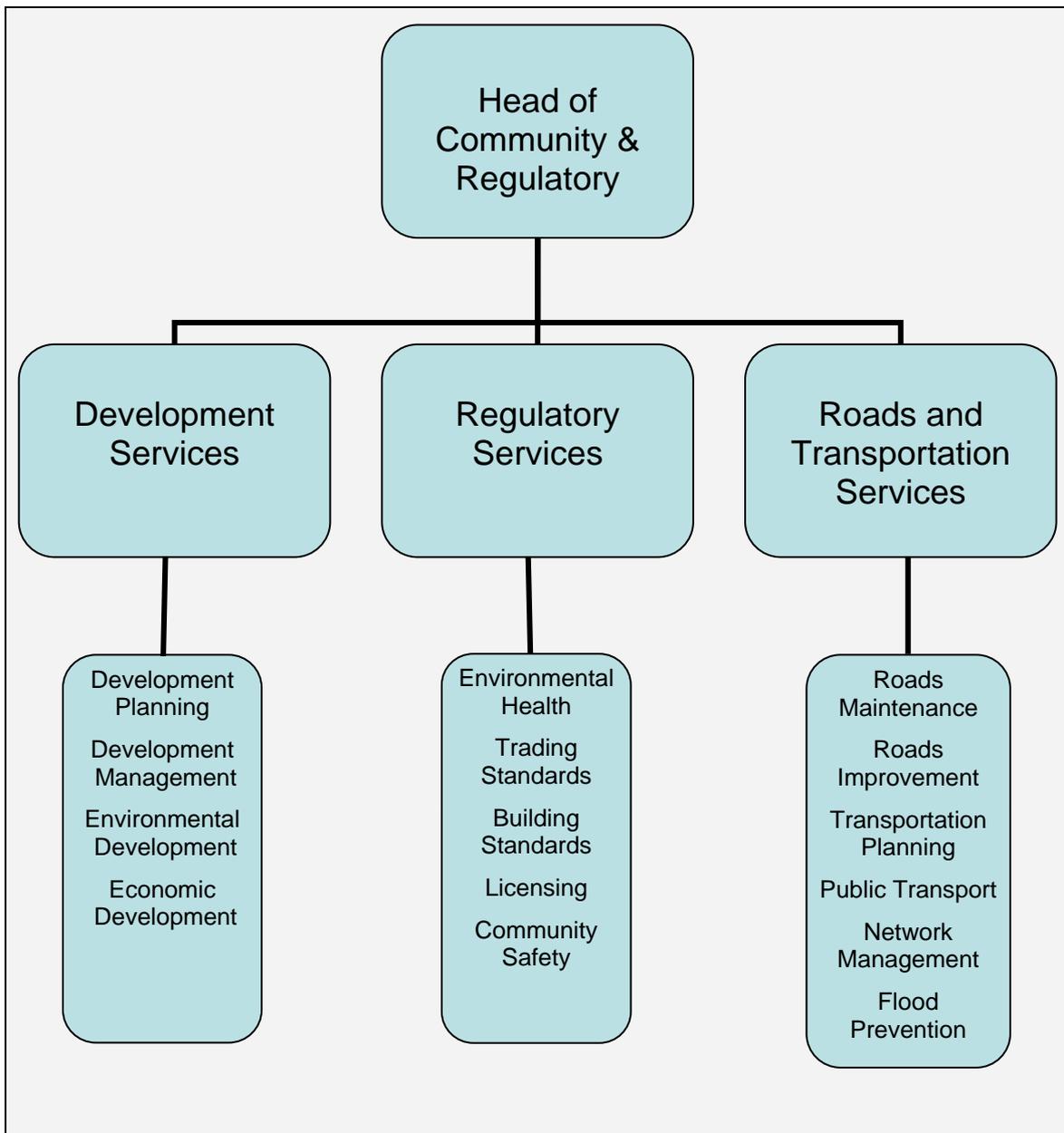
We value your feedback and want to hear from you. If you have a complaint about any aspect of service, we want to know so that we can investigate the circumstances and provide you with a clear explanation of the Council's position. If something has gone wrong we will do our best to put it right and to help prevent a similar situation arising in future. We also respect your right to be unhappy with a decision which has been correctly made which cannot be changed, for example due to the Council's policy on the issue.

We will send a full response to all formal complaints within 10 working days, unless the issue is complex and needs to be investigated further. In these cases, we will let you know when you can expect a full reply. We particularly welcome your ideas on how we can improve our services.

Full details of our complaints procedure can be found on our website www.clacksweb.org.uk.

4. Roads & Transportation Services Areas

Roads & Transportation Services is part of Community & Regulatory Services and sits beside Development Services and Regulatory Services. The main functions of each service area are shown below.



Roads & Transportation delivers numerous services in a wide range of functions. We have a diverse customer profile therefore we identify each customer group and find appropriate and mutually convenient means of making contact. The service Organisational Model (Appendix A) shows the relationships between our service provision and our customers.

In providing a Roads & Transportation service our customer base reaches virtually everybody who lives in, works in or makes visits to Clackmannanshire. Our customers include residents, schoolchildren, business operators and shop keepers, developers, visitors, cyclists and pedestrians, disadvantaged groups and Community Councils.

We are the Council's first point of contact for information relating to the following service areas.

4.1 Asset Management

We gather, assess and provide data on the roads and transport related infrastructure that the Council owns and manages. We can provide information on our effectiveness in maintaining and building our roads and infrastructure and in particular provide information on the condition and fitness for purpose of the roads and transportation network within Clackmannanshire. Much of this information is published as performance and statistical indicators and is shared with other local and national authorities and agencies.

4.2 Bridges

We maintain and manage our bridges, culverts and other structures. It is important that we ensure that these structures are kept in an appropriate condition to accept the traffic levels and vehicle types that use our roads. We keep records of weight and height limits and temporary restrictions. All bridge restrictions are updated regularly and available on Clacksweb under Bridge and Road Restrictions.

4.3 Development Control

We can provide information and advice on road related issues for new development ranging from house extensions or new driveway accesses to large residential or industrial sites. We produce and regularly update our own Development Roads - Guidelines and Specification and can offer advice on applying 'Designing Streets' and providing sustainable urban drainage. Roads and Transportation is an integral part of the Planning process and we will endeavour to turn round applications and requests for information within the timescales that meet our Planning standards.

4.4 Blue Badge Scheme (Scotland)

The scheme provides a national arrangement throughout the UK of on-street parking concessions for severely disabled people who experience the greatest barriers to their mobility when seeking to access community based facilities. The scheme is open to eligible disabled people irrespective of whether they are travelling as a driver or a passenger.

Details of the scheme are posted on Clacksweb and updated regularly. We also issue information booklets. Important changes to the scheme are advertised by the Council in CAPs, in the press and in writing to badge holders in appropriate cases for example, prior to the expiry date of their current badge. Information is sent to relevant groups and organisations to ensure that hard to reach customers are kept aware. Dealing with the Council may be a stressful event in some people's lives therefore our staff are prepared to be patient and understanding. Roads & Transportation staff are experienced and sensitive to peoples needs and available to assist with further information or to help to fill out application forms. We are happy to involve community and social workers and carers to help us make contact with people who are difficult to reach.

We have recently redesigned the application forms to make them more user friendly and our new application forms have been adopted by numerous councils as best practice. Whilst most applicants appear to be comfortable making application on paper, we have established the facility to apply on-line.

Particular issues such as transsexual and transgender applicants will be regarded in the gender that they identify. Terminally ill applicants will have their applications fast tracked in order to make the final weeks of their life easier. We will make arrangements for people who are unable to access photo-booths (for example, wheelchair users).

4.5 National Entitlement Cards (NEC)

Older and disabled people are able to travel free by bus anywhere in Scotland on local buses and long distance scheduled coaches throughout the day, including the morning rush hour. The scheme is also open to young people aged 16 - 18 years and runs in conjunction with YoungScot Clackmannanshire.

Entry to the scheme is by application on the National Entitlement Card, which is intended to allow members of the public to use an increasing number of public services through a single card.

Application can be made through Clacksweb, with a range of application forms available to suit the particular characteristic of the applicant. We arrange appointments with all applicants to have their photographs taken and will also arrange to visit groups, organisations and schools to take photographs where this is preferable to the customer.

To promote the scheme and ensure that young people are aware of their eligibility and how to apply, we hold open days at the Council offices and our staff make pre-arranged visits to local schools.

4.6 Weather and other Roads related Emergencies

Roads & Transportation operate a 24 hour emergency service in co-operation with the other emergency services: police, ambulance and fire services. Our main operations concern flooding, snow and ice clearance and removal of debris from the carriageway (for example blown over trees, discarded loads, road accident damage and road-kill). We operate a 24 hour emergency phone-line which is co-ordinated by Central Scotland Police and have stand by staff available for call-out.

4.7 Flooding

Flooding to properties can be unexpected and happen quickly, it can cause people to be upset and distressed. Roads and Transportation will try to assist people under these circumstances. These events often occur out of normal business hours therefore we operate an emergency response system. Clackswab has details of emergency call-out numbers. Roads & Transportation will collaborate with our internal Emergency Planning services and with the other emergency services to provide the optimum level of response.

We also operate a flood warning system in co-operation with the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and we encourage residents in potentially vulnerable areas to sign up to this facility.

We will arrange public meetings in potentially vulnerable areas to update residents on the issues, to remind them of their own responsibilities and to offer help and assistance. We also involve the Scottish Flood Forum in these meetings.

We are currently developing our Flooding Communications Strategy that is aimed at informing our customers of their responsibilities, our own role and the roles of other organisations prior to, during and after flooding events. We also aim to disseminate all of the information that is coming through the Flood Risk Management Plans process, currently underway in response to the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. This work is being carried out in part independently but also in collaboration with our partners in the Forth Local Plan District. Among the partners are, Scottish Water, SEPA, Stirling Council, Perth & Kinross Council, Falkirk Council and Fife Council.

4.8 Winter Maintenance

Winter weather generally hits all of our infrastructure at the same time and we do not have the resources to deal with everything straight away. For this

reason we have to prioritise our action. Our winter service priorities are clearly specified in our Winter Maintenance Policy which is available on Clacksweb.

We have to prioritise roads and footways so that the most important routes are treated first. Sometimes, long periods of bad weather mean that we have to concentrate on keeping main routes open: this keeps our fleet constantly in use and means we do not treat less-used routes. See our online Footpath Gritting Map and online Road Gritting Priorities Map. Our policy and further advice is available on Clacksweb. We also try to deal with all calls through our call centre and will endeavour to return all calls although when staff are actively involved in emergency operations there may be a delay in responding.

4.9 Parking

There are many issues that affect our customers relating to parking. Although many of the issues relate to enforcement of parking offences on the public road, which is the responsibility of Central Scotland Police, we try to offer advice on how to best resolve these issues. It is the Council who makes the Orders to provide yellow line parking restrictions and parking bays including on-street restrictions on waiting time. We ensure that we carry out sufficient consultation prior to changing any parking Order.

Many of the enquiries we receive relate to neighbourhood disputes and these are handled carefully, taking into consideration all parties and their views. These issues often seem to be minor but to the complainants these can be very stressful episodes and are often the culmination of months or years of bad feeling locally.

The provision of disabled parking bays on residential streets is another aspect of parking which generally involves a significant degree of customer contact. Often the ability to park their vehicle outside their house makes the difference between the person being effectively housebound or not. To avoid malicious or inconsiderate objections slowing down the process we mark out the disabled parking bays on-street as soon as we have confirmed the applicant's eligibility. Should an appeal against the Order be successful the parking bay can be removed retrospectively.

To provide information for users of our public car parks we provide large, easily accessible signboards to advertise the regulations of use. We are currently updating and simplifying our Regulations of Use for all off-street parking places, this will be ready early in 2014 and should remove any ambiguities. The signboards will be amended accordingly.

4.10 Permits & Application Forms

Roads & Transportation issue numerous application forms for service requests. These are aimed at streamlining the process for our customer by highlighting only the information required allowing us to minimise the delay in

responding to requests. We carried out a review of all of our application forms in 2010 to make them useable for on-line application, to remove any unnecessary information and to simplify the process. All Roads & Transportation application forms can be found on Clacksweb under Transport & Streets / Roads Forms. Forms can be completed on-line, downloaded and posted or delivered to our offices or we can send out application forms out in paper form.

We have developed a number of performance indicators to monitor our performance in meeting our targets for turning around the various types of applications. These targets are included in the list of application forms below:

- **Construction Consent Application**
Under Section 21 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, any person, other than a Roads Authority, who wishes to construct a new road or an extension of an existing road must before commencing construction obtain the consent of the local Roads Authority.
- **Disabled Persons Blue Badge**
Use this form to apply for a Blue Badge - a Disabled Persons Parking Badge.
- **Organisations Blue Badge**
Use this form to apply for an Organisations Blue Badge.
- **Application for National Entitlement Card (NEC) (60 years and over)**
Use this to apply for an NEC for people aged 60 years and over
- **Application for National Entitlement Card (NEC) (Disabled)**
Use this to apply for an NEC for people with disabilities
- **Application for National Entitlement Card (NEC) (Young People)**
Use this to apply for an NEC for people aged 16 to 18 years
- **Footway Crossing**
Application for Footway Crossing.
- **Minor Roadworks Consent Application, Guidance Notes and Fee Guidance**
Under Section 56 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, any person, other than a Roads Authority or body covered by the New Roads & Street Works Act 1991, must, before commencing works on a Public Road, obtain the consent of the road's authority.
- **Parking space for use by Disabled Person**
Application form and guidance notes for a parking space for use by a disabled person.
- **Residents' Parking Permit Application**
Use this form to apply for a residents' parking permit in Controlled Parking Zones in Alloa.
- **Road Adoption**
Use this form to apply for the addition of a road to the list of public roads.
- **Road Occupation Permit**
Under Section 58 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, it is an offence to

deposit building materials on and/or erect staging or scaffolding on or over part of any road, without the permission of the Roads Authority.

- **Road Works Temporary Traffic Signals Application**
Notification of Intention to Adopt Traffic Control of Roadworks by Means of Portable Traffic Light Signals
- **Roads and Transportation Closure or Temporary Restriction Application**
Roads and Transportation Closure Form
- **Section 109 NRSWA Consent Application**
UIP application under S109 of NRSWA
- **Section 109 NRSWA Guidance Notes**
Guidance for applying under S109 of the NRSWA including fees
- **Transport Assessment Scoping Form**
Transport Assessment Scoping Form

4.11 Public Transport

Public Transport plays an important part in the Council's future transportation strategies. The Public Transport Unit, jointly operated with Stirling Council, carries out the following tasks:-

- Undertakes the assessment of need for subsidised public transport and additional support services and the letting of contracts for such services.
- The monitoring of all public transport services.
- The provision of appropriate public transport infrastructure including:-
 - bus shelters;
 - bus service information;
 - rail service information.

Although we provide paper timetables for the Council supported bus routes we also supply paper timetables on behalf of commercial operators. All timetables are available on-line through Clacksweb and we provide links to other information providers. Timetable information is posted at all bus stops. We update all timetables as soon as they change. Our Public Transport team, Business Support team and Traffic and Transportation team will endeavour to assist with direct enquires on bus timetabling.

4.12 Roads Design

Roads design is largely driven by the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges however there is still a lot of scope for amending new road proposals. Early consultation is carried out through the Local Transport Strategy through a variety of consultation media. During the design period particular effort is made to keep Community Councils, landowners and all other affected parties informed of our progress.

Major road works often result in delays to traffic during the construction period. Details of impending delays, closures and diversions are discussed in

advance with local people, businesses, public transport operators and any other affected parties. Notices and signs displaying relevant information are located at strategic sites to inform road users.

4.13 Roads Maintenance

Roads maintenance generates a great deal of customer interaction. This is mainly service requests for pothole and other minor fault repairs. We have set up a system whereby the Call Centre takes the call and logs it onto our Roads Management System (RMS). These are appraised by our officers and appropriate action initiated, if a response is required this is completed within 10 working days.

4.14 Roads & Transportation Planning

The process for the planning of the roads & transportation network largely revolves around the production of the Local Transport Strategy (LTS) and its supporting strategies. This is a 4 to 5 year cycle wherein the production of the 5 year plan is followed by the commencement of the consultation and evidence gathering exercise for the next LTS. This consultation is wide ranging and of necessity inclusive as decisions made now will affect everyone's future in some way. To keep people aware and at the same time to gather information and seek public opinion, we organise road shows in each settlement area, hold stakeholder meetings, carry out paper based and web based questionnaires, hold face to face surveys, provide information in the press, meet with elected members, other Council services and other Councils, attend community Council and resident group meetings and meet with disabled and accessibility groups.

4.15 Road Safety

Road safety can be an emotive issue particularly in the aftermath of a road accident. Our Road safety Plan details our policy on dealing with road safety and outlines our approach to identifying and treating problem areas. The Road Safety Plan is updated every 5 years and the assessment, analysis and consultation process is carried out alongside the LTS process (para. 4.14). Road Safety work is carried out in collaboration with the Police, the Safety Camera Partnership, NHS, the Fire Service and neighbouring Councils.

4.16 Street Lighting

Street lighting generates a great deal of customer interaction particularly in the winter months when lighting faults are more obvious. We have set up a system whereby the Call Centre takes the call and logs it onto our Lighting Management System (LMS). These are appraised by our street lighting engineer and appropriate action initiated, if a response is required this is completed within 10 working days.

4.17 Traffic Management

Traffic management covers a number of issues including speed limits, 20 mph zones, Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), temporary restrictions, traffic signs and road markings and providing pedestrian crossings. It also includes the provision of facilities for the disabled.

The removal of barriers to movement on the road and transport network is an increasingly important part of our work. One of the difficulties is identifying what constitutes barriers to people, different disabilities and impairments each have their own particular obstacles and the understanding of the range of issues is fundamental to our service provision. To this end we learn from national guidance, local access groups and individuals, experience and shared learning.

We are addressing these issues through the Roads & Transportation Equality Scheme which includes information on the diverse groups, opportunities for consultation and design information to accommodate most people needs.

5. Keeping People Informed: Consultation

Our customers want to feel that they are part of our decision making process and at the forefront of our policies and actions. The most comprehensive method of disseminating information on our policies and strategies is the Council's website; Clacksweb. We endeavour to place all relevant information about our service delivery on the website and regularly update this information. The website provides a facility for customer feedback, customer surveys and providing answers to frequently asked questions. However, web access is not ideal in all cases, not everyone has the ability nor inclination to use websites, therefore we utilise a number of alternative ways of delivering information. These methods of delivering and seeking information are highlighted in subsequent sections of this strategy.

Roads & Transportation has process maps covering most of our procedures and functions. Included in each process map is the need for consultation and review. The consultation stage in each process map leads the user to a specific process map covering the consultation process which has the flexibility to cover most situations. Our methods of consultation are regularly reviewed and amended as part of our drive for continuous improvement.

Consultation has no impact if we do not act on the feedback that we receive. It is important that we not only act on feedback but that we also update our customers on our actions and confirm their part in shaping our decisions.

For specific projects or proposals, we shall generally operate a 4 week consultation period. We shall endeavour to provide a confirmation of receipt and a summary of the initial outcome of the consultation within 10 days of the consultation period ending.

Prior to carrying out consultation we will post the relevant information on Citizen Space (see below) to provide early notice that a consultation is due.

The Council has its own Consultation management system called Citizen Space which enables the public to easily search and read about the purpose of each consultation and find out who was being consulted. This system holds consultation information from April 2013. Citizen Space is available on Connect at <http://www.clacksweb.org.uk/council/clackmannanshireconsults/>

Prior to embarking on consultation we refer to the Council's Consultation Toolkit: Getting it Right; A Guide to Consulting. This is available on Connect <http://www.clacksweb.org.uk/document/4195.pdf>.

Transport Scotland and Scottish Government carry out a significant level of consultation at national level. Much of this information is relevant to Clackmannanshire Council and we can build upon it at local level. Transport Scotland produces its national transport strategy, road safety plan and a good practice guide on providing accessibility for disabled people. Through these consultations we can gauge the opinion and stances of national pressure groups for example, groups representing deaf or blind people or groups representing people with physical disabilities. The Scottish Transport Statistics is published annually and provides information on the travel preferences and needs of a wide range of groups including socio economic and personal and leisure travel. By using this information we are able to pro-actively approach our customers and show that we are up to speed with current trends and influences.

6. Customer Expectation

The management of customer expectation is a fundamental aspect in successfully delivering our services. However, the management of customer expectation must not be seen as a way of providing a lesser standard of customer service delivery.

Through the customer charter we can provide timeframes for responses and through our policies, procedures and consultation we can explain what it is we are responsible for, what we can do and what standards we will achieve. While engaging with our customers we are clear in explaining what processes we are going through to achieve our objectives, what it is we intend to do, when we intend to do it. Once we have set these parameters we will strive to meet or exceed them.

7. Identifying our Customers

The Organisational Model (appendix A) illustrates our key customer groups but within each group we have a range of customers with specific needs. We have identified groups in a theoretical exercise and put in the arrangements

required to reach them should these groups become apparent. It may be that we will not encounter all of the identified groups or individuals and as time passes we will encounter new groups and individuals that had not arisen under our initial analysis. Therefore this is a continually evolving process and as we are able to embrace more people we can alter our practices to suit their specific needs.

Our main challenges include identifying our customer groups and ensuring that we are able to communicate with the appropriate people at the right time to enable us to provide efficient, targeted services with minimal inconvenience and maximum impact. Our customers are both individuals and members of disparate groups. Among the groups that we deal with are; Community Councils, Resident Associations, Disability and Access Groups, Voluntary Sector, Traders Groups, Elected Members, other Services and other Local Authorities, private sector consultants and contractors, business community, single issue pressure groups, public transport operators and public utilities.

Our customer base is large and varied, they often have different and sometimes conflicting needs and opinions. We strive to tease out these issues and make judgements on the way forward and what weight to give to each viewpoint. Care is required to fully explain the reasons for decisions particularly when they are at odds with particular groups or individuals.

8. Hard to reach Customer Groups and Individuals

We will endeavour to identify hard to reach groups and individuals. We will have to work with other services in the Council to identify the best means of reaching these people. In many cases we will not know that they exist. Through time we will identify more groups and individuals and we need to update our records and share this information with other services.

We have varying levels of success in identifying and dealing with hard to reach groups. The following list covers those groups that we have already identified; disabled, age related (older, young people), religion or belief related, gender, race or nationality, culture or ethnic background, language related, learning difficulties or other social issues.

Disabilities and impairments come in a wide variety of forms. They may be physical which are often immediately apparent, however they may come in the form of sensory or mental impairments which are much less obvious. Early identification of an individual's needs can greatly affect their esteem and confidence in using our infrastructure and services. The Council supports and assists in the delivery of the SEStran Thistle Assistance Card. This is a simple, credit card sized, card that carries a simple message in symbols and words that allows a disabled person to quickly and discreetly alert a bus or taxi driver to their particular disability and travel needs. Discretion is often important as some people are sensitive regarding their disability or impairment and our officers are trained to respect this.

Local authorities have a general duty under the Equality Act 2011 that covers;

- eliminating unlawful disability discrimination;
- eliminating unlawful disability harassment;
- promoting equality of opportunity;
- taking steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons;
- the need to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- the need to encourage participation by disabled persons in public life.

Promoting inclusive travel environments is one of the key aims in meeting the above. Just as important however is our need to engage with disabled people and to find out their issues first hand. One of our officers has been designated as an Access Champion who will take on any issues relating to access to any of the services that we provide. In order to take a balanced view the Access Champion will also take account of other users' needs such as children and older people.

Issues arise when someone dies, for example they may be in receipt of NEC or Blue Badge entitlements or have a dedicated disabled parking space outside their house. In order to minimise distress at such a time, the Council will endeavour to inform all services straight away once a death notice has been received. This allows us to carry out the necessary procedures with minimal recourse to the bereaved persons.

Often our consultation utilises maps or technical drawings. Not everyone can understand maps, drawings and technical information. We try to supplement drawings with photographs and examples from other locations. We offer to discuss issues over the phone, will visit groups or individuals on site or will arrange meetings in the Council offices or other nearby locations.

9. Involving people in our Long Term Plans and Policies

We also carry out wider consultation, initially to gauge opinion, then to discuss the draft proposals and finally to confirm the final document. This is generally carried out through a selection or all of the media opportunities that have been covered elsewhere in this strategy. For example, all of our draft policies and strategies are placed on the website via Citizen Space, prior to finalisation.

10. Listening to our Customers: Comments & Feedback

We evaluate our success by actively seeking customer feedback over the full range of our service provision and to analyse and assess our service delivery with a view to continually improving. We confirm to people that we are listening, show them changes we have made to policies, proposals and designs as a result of public participation and comment.

We send out customer feedback cards and take feedback through the website, letters, e-mails and phone calls whenever we have completed a works project or scheme. We are looking for feedback on both our performance and appropriateness of the project and on our consultation and availability to the public throughout the works. The responses are analysed and discussed at team meetings with a view to continually improving our standard of work and service delivery.

11. Customer Satisfaction

The Customer Satisfaction Measurement Tool is a new national standard for local government and its partners to evaluate the performance of the services they deliver. It is intended to establish a common framework across Scotland as a uniform tool which everyone can use and adhere to. The Customer Satisfaction Measurement Survey is available to customers on Clacksweb. Responses are reviewed at regular intervals which allows us to monitor how we are performing throughout the year and identify any dips or peaks in our performance. The results of the Customer Satisfaction Measurement Survey are published on Clacksweb.

Another important tool for us is Customer Journey Mapping. By placing ourselves into our customers' shoes we can try to follow the various routes to a service that are open to our customers. Roads and Transportation provides a wide range of services with varying customer paths, often a range of ways to access the same service or information. Customer Journey Mapping allows us to replicate our customers' journeys and to identify potential hold-ups, frustrations and also to identify quicker routes. For example, does our customer always need to speak to a particular officer, can the information be made available on-line or at the first point of contact? Customer journey mapping is best carried out using people from outside our service or even from outside the Council.

It is intended to allow us to share our customers' experiences, the context in which we play a part and get a deeper insight into customer needs, perception and motivation. When we understand this we can develop improvements aimed at providing a better service.

12. Reviewing our Customer Service Processes

Our strategies, policies and processes are continually reviewed and improved through positive action. Our CIM review programme provides review intervals for; Process Maps, Performance Indicators, Customer Strategy, PRD process, Business Plan R & T Action Plan, Business Continuity & Risk Register. Further, it includes review intervals for the Local Transport Strategy, Road Safety Plan, Roads Equality Scheme, Travel Plan, Winter Maintenance Policy, Asset Management Plan, Street Lighting Policy and Procedures and Road Safety Inspection Standards and Procedures.

13. How do we Embed Customer Service into our Culture?

The Council is committed to continuous improvement and providing excellent service to the people of Clackmannanshire. We ensure that our working culture actively encourages high individual and team performance and excellent customer care and quality. It is essential that every member of staff knows and understands how they contribute to the service's performance and customer service and clearly understands what is expected of them.

Customer Service is embedded in our recruitment process, with post specific customer care competencies to the forefront of the job profiles and job overviews. This is built on throughout the employee's career path and through the Performance, Review and Development process (PRD). A fundamental element of the PRD process is the Council's Competency Framework with its Core Competencies and in particular its Behavioural Competencies. The Competency Framework supports the Council's ambition to continually improve the services we provide to our customers and stakeholders.

Whilst the Competency Framework is initially delivered through the PRD process it underpins our approach to running our business and delivering our service. Fundamental to the Framework is the drive for Excellence in Customer Service whereby we expect all of our staff to respond professionally and innovatively to meet or exceed the needs of our stakeholders or customers. At all levels in our organisation our staff will endeavour to display the following customer oriented behaviours.

Staff behaviours

- Always puts customer first
- Consciously aims to please customers and seeks to exceed their expectations
- Takes ownership of customers problems and ensures a satisfactory resolution
- Ensures customers are informed and updated on progress
- Agrees clear quality standards and reviews achievements against those
- Goes 'the extra mile' to get things done
- Acts with integrity as Council representative at all times

Team Leaders, Managers and Specialists are expected to display the following behaviours;

- Takes the needs of all stakeholders into account, including partners.
- Seeks ways of improving Council services to the Community.
- Builds partnerships with stakeholders / customers
- Invests time in understanding customer / stakeholder perspective
- Demonstrates and promotes empathy with customers
- Monitors the quality of service and actively tries to improve it
- Uses customer feedback to review service provided

Staff should expect the following behaviours from their Senior Management

- Works to align the Council with the needs of the Community and the external stakeholders
- Develops and implements strategies and processes which improve service to and relationships with stakeholders
- Seeks / applies expert knowledge from elsewhere to improve service to customers.
- Ensures own actions and decisions support and balance conflicting stakeholder needs.
- Continuously looks for the benefits that can be achieved cross-organisation, nationally and in collaboration with external partners

Behaviours to Avoid

- Does not consider the needs of stakeholders /customers.
- Will chose the easy option even when it is not the best option for the customer/ stakeholder
- Shows no concern when things go wrong
- Responds defensively or aggressively to customer / stakeholder feedback / complaints.
- Focuses on activities that do not add value to internal or external stakeholders / customers
- Is unhelpful, impatient and disrespectful when dealing with others

Compromises standards

The behavioural competencies are also an integral part of group activities like team and project group meetings. Through the PRD process specific training in customer service is identified and included in personal training plans. All staff will be expected to undertake customer service specific training every year.

Our Business Plan and the Roads and Transportation Action Plan reflect the importance that we put on customer care. All of our Process Maps are currently being updated to include the customer service initiatives described in this policy, they also include performance indicator monitoring and reporting. By embedding Customer Care into our processes we can guarantee that all of our staff understand that the Customer is the focus of everything we do and it is through our levels of customer satisfaction that we can best determine our success in delivering the many services that we provide.

Appendix A: Organisational Model