

# Customer Service Charter

## Our Aim

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to providing high quality services and delivering high standards of customer care.

### We promise to:

- Be open, honest and transparent
- Be polite, helpful and professional in all our responses
- Resolve your queries the first time you contact us, or keep you informed of progress when more time is required
- Listen to our customers, meet your expectations wherever possible and explain when we are unable to
- Respect confidentiality
- Focus on the improvement of our service delivery
- Treat all customers fairly
- Provide necessary translation correspondence, when required

### When you use our digital channels:

- We will provide 24/7 access to information through a number of digital channels, including our website and Citizen App, ensuring you can report, pay, book or enquire about our many services
- Wherever possible, we will enable you to resolve your enquiry fully online in a secure, user-friendly environment – allowing you to interact with us at a time and a place which is convenient to you

### When you email or write to us, we will:

- Respond within 5 working days for simple queries, and for complex enquiries we will let you know if it will take us longer and provide response timescales (we aim to take no more than 20 working days)
- Use plain language in all our correspondence so our proposed actions and expected timescales will be clear
- Advise you of our appeals procedures if you wish to dispute a decision (where applicable)

#### When you contact us by telephone, we will:

- Deal with your enquiry at first point of contact, wherever possible, and if we are unable then we will specify when we will get back to you
- Listen carefully to what you say
- Answer your call politely, and where a voicemail service is provided, we promise to call you back
- Take ownership of your enquiry and where we have to transfer your call to a colleague, we will ensure that full details of the enquiry are always passed on, so you don't have to repeat your enquiry

#### When you meet with us in person, we will:

- Deal with your enquiry at first point of contact, wherever possible, and if we can't then we will specify when we will get back to you
- Make sure that where possible, our offices are accessible to everyone and easy to find
- Make sure our reception areas are clean, tidy and safe
- Offer you somewhere private to talk to us, where applicable
- When meeting you away from an office, we will arrive promptly and will show you council identification

#### When you make a complaint, we will:

- Respond within 5 working days for simple, frontline complaints and within 20 working days for complex investigative complaints
- Ensure all complaints are handled professionally and politely, apologising when things have gone wrong
- Communicate openly around meeting your expectations
- Provide contact details for the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman in the event you are unhappy with how your complaint has been handled

#### How you can help us

So that we can deliver our promises to you, we need you to:

- Treat our staff courteously and with respect so we can deliver the best service to you
- Attend appointments on time, or provide 24 hours' notice if you need to cancel
- Inform us of any changes in your personal circumstances which may affect the services we provide to you
- Please be patient with us and avoid unnecessary repeat contact, whilst you are waiting for your response
- Understand that at certain times demand for our services can be high
- Tell us how we can improve our website information and digital channels

In line with our statutory equalities' duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help customers access and use our services. For further information on our charter please contact us at [www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk), call 03456 08 12 08 or visit your nearest Service Point.