

# Customer First - Communication and Information Policy



[www.torbay.gov.uk](http://www.torbay.gov.uk)



# *Customer First*

Torbay Council's Customer Services Department is called Customer First. When contacting Torbay Council, it is likely that our customers will speak to one of our Customer Service Advisors who answer calls in our telephone contact centre and deal with enquiries face to face in one of three connections offices based in Torquay, Paignton and Brixham. For many customers this will be the first point of contact with Torbay Council.

We are committed to ensuring our customers are fully involved in shaping the services we provide on their behalf.

To ensure we are providing the best service and value we will undertake benchmarking with similar organisations and other local authorities in Devon sharing best practice where possible.

Customer First is also committed to providing information on our performance to all of our customers both internal and external.

The information we will communicate includes;

- our Customer Care Standards
- our performance
- public consultation information
- survey results
- benchmarking and adopted best practice.

This policy also outlines how and where everyone can access this information.

# *Customer Care Standards*

## **Customer contact, we aim to**

- resolve your query at first point of contact
- treat you fairly and with respect
- ensure our employees are trained to help or give advice, or put you in touch with the right person to answer your query.

## **When answering your telephone calls, letters and email we will;**

- respond to your call within six rings and greet you politely and clearly giving a name and service area.
- avoid the use of answer phones during stated office hours
- reply to your letters and faxes and emails within ten working days
- use plain language and avoid unnecessary jargon.

A full copy of our Customer Care Standards is available from our Connections offices, and in the Connections Information folders available from Connections offices or any Torbay Library.

Alternatively you can view or download the Customer Care Standards on line at [www.torbay.gov.uk/customer-care.pdf](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/customer-care.pdf)

# *Our Performance*

## **We will publish our performance to all customers.**

Performance information will include:

- the amount of 'in person' visitors seen
- the amount of telephone calls received
- the percentage of all queries resolved at first point of contact
- any changes in performance with explanation (e.g. in March - Council Tax bills are distributed, creating the busiest month of the year for Customer First.)

All of the above information is available from any Connections office, and is published in the Connections Information folders available from Connections or any Torbay Library.

In addition to the information provided in the Connections Information folder we will also annually publish our performance information in our residents' magazine Torbay View which is distributed free to households throughout Torbay.

Performance data will also be displayed on the LCD screens in Connections Torquay.

# *Public Consultation and Surveys*

To ensure we are providing the service our customers want in the way they want it, Customer First is committed to a rolling programme of customer consultation and feedback which includes:

- customer forums held every six months - exploring what customers would like to see improved and discuss ideas for the future
- customer journey mapping – which means following the process that our customers go through to see how we can improve the service we provide
- customer surveys - covering customer satisfaction and opening times
- mystery shopping undertaken by real customers.

The results of the public consultation we have undertaken and the changes we have made as a result of it are available within the Connections Information folders available from Connections or any Torbay Library. Alternatively the results will also be displayed on the LCD screens within Torquay Connections.

We will also publish this information in our annual update in Torbay View magazine which is distributed free to all households within Torbay.

Survey results may also be viewed on line at

**[www.torbay.gov.uk/customerservices](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/customerservices)**

If you would like to take part in any of our customer forums please telephone 01803 207201 and our advisors will be happy to take your details.

This document can be made available in a range of languages, on tape, in Braille, large print and in other formats. For further information please contact 01803 207221.

