



## **Dr NKOSAZANA DLAMINI ZUMA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

### **CUSTOMER CARE STRATEGY**

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## DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

- **Act:** means the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000), as amended from time to time
- **Batho Pele Principles:** Batho Pele is an initiative to get public servants to be orientated to strive for excellence in service delivery and commit to continuous service delivery improvement. It is a simple transparent mechanism, which allows customers to hold public servants accountable for the type of service they deliver
- **Billing:** means proper formal notification of an account to persons liable for payment of amounts levied for assessments rates and other taxes by the Municipality. It also carries the charges of the fees for municipal services and indicates the net accumulated balance of the account
- **Council:** the municipal council of the Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma municipality
- **Council services:** services offered by the Municipality
- **Customer:** means any occupier of any premises to which the Municipality has agreed to supply or is actually supplying services. Or if there is no occupier, then the owner of the premises.
- **Customer Management:** means focusing on the customer's needs in a responsive and reciprocal relationship between persons liable for these payments and the Municipality.
- **Municipal account:** shall include levies or charges in respect of the following services and taxes:
  - Rates and taxes
  - Refuse removal
  - Interest/penalties
  - Miscellaneous and sundry charges
- **Municipal Manager:** means the person appointed by the municipal Council as the Municipal Manager of the municipality in terms of section 82 of the Local Government Structures Act 1998 (Act 117 of 1998) and includes any person
  - Acting in such a position
  - To whom the Municipal manager has delegated a power, function or duty in respect of such delegated power, function or duty
- **Municipal Services:** those services, rates and taxes reflected on the municipal account for which payment is required by the Municipality
- **Policy document:** means the approved Customer Care policy as approved by the NDZ Council on xxx and amended from time to time.

## AIM

The Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality aims to provide consistent service excellence whenever customers make contact with the Municipality. This aim incorporates the Municipality's commitment to ensuring the human rights principals set out in the South African Constitution, the eight Batho Pele principles aimed at transforming public service and "getting it right the first time"

Legislation applicable:

- Rights as stipulated in the Bill of Rights outlined in Chapter 2 of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.
- Objectives of local government as outlined in Chapter 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- Batho Pele principles

## BATHO PELE & THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MUNICIPAL STAFF MEMBERS

Batho Pele means "People First" and the eight principles set out in it are the foundation of national Government's approach to guide all interactions between Government institutions and its public. They encourage public servants to be service orientate:

• ACCESS:	Equitable access to integrated service delivery
• OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY	Creating a culture of collaboration
• CONSULTATION	Listening to the needs and problems of citizens
• REDRESS	Apologising when necessary and finding speedy solutions when possible
• COURTESY	Services offered with courtesy and consideration
• SERVICE STANDARDS	Anticipating needs and informing citizens of the level and quality of service they can expect.
• INFORMATION	Complete, accurate information about the Municipality and its services
• VALUE FOR MONEY	Delivering solutions economically and efficiently

This approach is strengthened by the values underpinned in Schedule 2 of the Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000; the Code of Conduct for municipal staff members.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Provide a framework for customer care

## CUSTOMERS' DEFINITION

Previously, the Municipality has referred to people it deals with as rate payers or consumers. This perception may have created a mind-set that only taxpayers are being services by the municipality. Since this is only partially true, the notion had to be broadened to include everyone who interacts with the Municipality and that they are in fact all customers who should be treated accordingly.

The Municipality aims to emphasise the message that its customers are all the people it deals with in the performing of its work. These include the people who live, work and socialise in the greater Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Municipal Area as well as everyone the Municipality does business with. In this sense there are external and internal customers. And the same standards must apply when working with colleagues (internal customers) as with people outside the organisation.

## CUSTOMER CARE DEFINITION AND IMPORTANCE

Customer Care in this context refers to the municipality's commitment to meet the customer's contact with the Municipality convenient and positive. The manner in which this is done is incorporated in the aim, values and Batho Pele principles communicated earlier in this document. It must also be noted though, that Customer care and Debt Collection are interrelated issues. Debt Collection is a part of customer care. Administrative integrity must be maintained at all costs. Policy and execution are legally separate and thus must be practically separate as well. The Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality Debt Collection and credit Control Policies refer. They should be read in conjunction with this Customer care Policy

In practise, good Customer Care includes:

- A customer must be able to contact the Municipality easily, reaching the correct department to handle its request or inquiry. A customer is entitles to an efficient effective and reasonable access to pay points and to a variety of reliable payment methods.

- A customer should have welcoming access to municipal buildings where adequate signage has been provided. Where practical, access for the disabled should be provided. Incorporation of private areas for customers to discuss personal or sensitive matters should be considered where relevant and suitable.
- A customer should be assisted in the language of preference in accordance with the municipal language policy.
- A municipal member of staff should identify him/herself by name when communicating with a customer, listen attentively and respond appropriately.
- Providing customers with relevant, accurate and up-to-date information, including an explanation for any discrepancies.
- Once a complaint, request or enquiry has been received, prompt action should be taken and a clear response should be given to the customer within the period as stated in the Customer Service charter
- In the case of on-going or long term problems, a customer should be kept informed of any anticipated delays and progress reported regularly on the way forward in addressing the complaints, requests or enquires.
- In case of dissatisfaction. A customer should be explained the procedure for lodging a complaint, including relevant contact details.
- Training municipal staff to enable better service increased awareness and understanding of the values presented in this policy.
- Actively and regularly seeking comments on service delivery with the purpose of ongoing development and improvements.
- Recognising staff who are exceptional in achieving services standards and who go beyond the call of duty for the customer.

Service standards are important to ensure:

- That all customers, whether they are residents or visitors, or do business with the Municipality, will receive uniform, consistent high standards of customer care in all departments within the municipality.
- That customer needs are addressed during the planning and delivery of all council services and incorporated in all relevant policies and procedures.
- That municipal staff are always reminded of their responsibility to put the Customer first and what this means in practical terms.
- That Council eliminate wastage by providing services “Right the First Time”.

## MEASURING SUCCESS

This customer Care policy is supported by the Customer Service charter (Annexure A in this document) which includes Service Standards that will define deliverable for each service delivery unit and will serve as the municipality’s promise of delivery to customers.

Performance will be measured via continuous monitoring, benchmarking against similar organisations, and being subject to regular performance audits.

Via its Customer Care Section, the Municipality will develop methods of receiving customer feedback to determine levels of Customer satisfaction in terms of standard of service received. Methods for this include:

- Regular customer satisfaction questionnaires and post-transaction telephonic follow-up
- A “mystery shopper” type programme in which members of the public are asked to do business in different departments to evaluate and score services objectively.
- Annual focus group sessions, performed by the Customer Relations department, to determine possible gaps that may exist between customer perceptions of municipal service delivery and what the Municipality thinks it’s achieving.
- Actively publicising and advertising in municipal buildings a Customer care SMS Help Line and email address where customers can report good or bad service or provide feedback and suggestions.
- Placing of “feedback” boxes in strategic places to facilitate Customer Care-related feedback.

These monitoring methods will assist the Municipality in developing programmes that address any shortcomings in the standards of service.

## SERVICE STANDARDS

Service standards are specific, service-orientated actions incorporated in the Customer Service Charter as a means to continually measure and improve service to its customers. At its core, the Standards aim to manage queries and complaints across all departments in a timeous, efficient and effective manner – incorporating the Customer Care principles above.

Service Standards are designed to:

- Be measurable, with set performance targets that can be reviewed.
- Stipulate the exact manner in which staff should behave in dealing with customers
- Incorporate training that would ensure that staff understand completely what is expected of them in terms of customer Care

Service Standards, and the way in which the Municipality will manage them, will be set out in the following:

*Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Municipality Customer Care Policy incorporating the customer Service charter, which includes the Service Standards.*



## PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

It is anticipated that the Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Municipality's new customer-orientated approach may have some practical challenges for the Municipality as an organisation and may require a re-evaluation of certain municipal processes to ensure service standards.

- Every section of the Municipality will have its own Service Standards, which will be supported by a set of performance measurement controls that, if complied to, will result in good service standards.
- Compliance with or adherence to the Customer care Service Standards must be reflected as a Key Performance Indicator on each responsible official's performance plan.
- Processes will be regularly evaluated in all departments to ensure best practices regarding Customer Care and placing the Customer first.
- A performance system will be implemented to recognise staff, sections and departments who are exceptional in achieving service standards and who go beyond the call of duty for the customer.
- Staff will be trained to record and communicate feedback from customers – no matter whether the feedback directly relates to the department where it was reported or not – so that problems can be dealt with speedily and without sending customers to and fro. Feedback may also be incorporated in procedures and processes related to Customer Care and service delivery. ‘

## CUSTOMER CARE COMMITMENT

The Customer Care Commitment is a statement, worded below, that will be use in different forms of communication to reaffirm the municipality's commitment to service excellence and Customer care.

The Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality Customer Care policy, incorporating the Customer Care Charter, demonstrates the municipality's commitment to render quality services to its customers.

The Municipality values comments and observations regarding Customer Care and encourages customers to provide feedback though the below mentioned channels to ensure ongoing service excellence.

- Customers can report comments, complaints, compliments and queries regarding municipal services at any service counter of the Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality
- Customers should request the municipal official to record the feedback on the electronic customer care system and ask for a reference number, which will be automatically generated when the comment ha bene recorded.
- Customers are requested to endure that their name, surname, contact details and the essence of the complaint are provided when giving feedback.

- Should a situation not be resolved through normal service changes, customers can report the matter to the municipality's Customer Relations Department on the contact details provided below a complaint can also be posted in the box marked Customer Relations provided in the reception areas of the Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma local Municipality in Creighton and Himeville.
- The Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local municipality would also like to recognise employees who go beyond the call of duty. Customers are asked to report exceptionally good service to the Customer Relations Department. Please ensure that the relevant staff member's name, surname and department are correctly mentioned in such instance.

## Annexure A

### Customer Service Charter

## **Dr NKOSAZANA DLAMINI ZUMA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

### **CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER**

#### **MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE MAYOR**

*This is an example – need to get NDZ Mayor to approve*

*The Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality customer care policy, incorporating this Customer Service Charter, sets out the Council's commitment towards Service Excellence.*

*Underlined by the eight Batho Pele principals that National Government prescribes as the core of service delivery for all levels of government. This document intends putting People First and has at its heart, Government's vision of "Creating a Better Life for All".*

*The Municipality considers anyone who lives, works and socialise in the greater municipal area as its customers. We want to ensure that you understand your rights and responsibilities, receive the services you are entitled to and have the opportunity for feedback. We believe that the Customer Care Policy and Service Charter is a progressive step towards achieving such goals.*

#### **MESSAGE FROM THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER**

*Our Municipality was established in August 2016 and with the start of a new financial year, we are establishing a Customer Care responsibility under the office of the CFO to address issues surrounding service delivery and related communications. It is anticipated that this section will report, once established, to the Office of the Municipal Manager thus ensuring a direct line of communication between the customer and myself.*

*In this Customer Service Charter; all departments within the Municipality have been assigned specific Service Standards according to the services it provides and will be measured accordingly.*

*I believe that this section, this document and its related processes signify a new approach to customer service within our Municipality. This will go far in affirming the values we believe in: transparency, accountability and service excellence.*

*This document also signifies a relationship in which the customer has responsibility to pay timeously for the services he expects to be delivered and reports issues and problems as soon as they occur. The municipality and its people remain in partnership which has a better chance of success when everyone is working together.*

## DR NKOSAZANA DLAMINI ZUMA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY AT A GLANCE

The Municipality was established after the Local Government elections of 2016 and followed a gazetted merger between the former Ingwe and Kwa Sani municipalities. The Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Local Municipality is located within the Harry Gwala District Municipality and is the second largest of the Local municipalities in the district. It is predominantly rural with 5 main towns, namely: Himeville, Underberg, Bulwer, Donnybrook and Creighton. The total population stands at 118480 and covers an area of approximately 3200sq kms. There are 15 wards with 29 Councillors (15 Ward and 14 PR).

### Governance

#### Municipal Manager

The Municipal Manager is the Accounting Officer of the Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality.

#### Community Services

This directorate is responsible for Disaster Management; Safety and Security; Solid Waste; Cemeteries; libraries; Arts and culture Heritage; Parks; Sports and Recreation and Youth and Gender programmes

#### Corporate Services

This directorate is responsible for Legal Services; Administration; Committee Services; Human Resources; Public participation; Property and Records Management.

Corporate Services is also the secretariat of Council and supports the legislative and executive functions of Council

## Budget & Treasury

This directorate covers Income, Expenditure, Budget Office, Information Technology and Customer Care

## Planning and Technical

Key areas are Town Planning and Building /control, integrated Development Planning (IDP), economic Development; infrastructure; integrated human settlements and environmental management

## Customers

Customers are all people it deals with in the performing of its work. These include people who live, work and socialise in the great Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality. The definition also includes those who do business with the Municipality.

## Service standards

Designed to measure Customer Care services, the Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma local Municipality has developed the following set of Service Standards for every department within the Municipality.

## General

### Telephone calls

- Municipal staff will answer telephone calls within 5 ringtones, where possible

## All departments

### Written and email enquiries

- Acknowledge receipt of letter or email within five (5) working days of receipt or immediately after enquiry has been recorded via SMS service
- Enquiry answered or feedback provided if problem not resolved within ten (10) working days of receipt or immediately after inquiry has been resolved, via SMS service.

### Telephonic enquiries

- Enquiry answered or feedback provided if problem not resolved, within ten (10) working days of phone call, or immediately after the inquiry has been recoded via SMS service

### Walk-in Enquiries

- Answered within Ten (10) working days or feedback provided if not resolved.

## Community Services

### Fire & Rescue

- Reaction time 15 to 20 mins within the town areas after receipt of a call

### Other emergencies (motor vehicle, crowd control etc.)

- Received immediate attention

### Grass mowing on Sports' Fields

- Done according to prescheduled programme (monthly?)

### Mowing of grass in public areas and open spaces

- Done according to prescheduled programme (monthly?)

### Refuse Collection

- Collected on week days (Mondays to Fridays) according to the scheduled programme for Commercial concerns in the town areas.
- Collection on weekends according to the scheduled programme for Commercial concerns in the town areas
- Collected weekly according to scheduled programme for residential areas
- Daily street cleaning according to the scheduled programme for Street cleaners

## Technical Services

### Pothole repairs

- Done according to scheduled programme (90 days)

### Road Maintenance

- Done according to the scheduled Maintenance Plan (180 days)

## Planning and Development

### Building Plans

- Acknowledgment of receipt within 4 hours of receipt
- Processing of plans smaller than 500m2 within 10 days of receipt
- Processing of plans larger than 500m2 within 20 days of receipt
- Inspection of complaints within 5 days of receipt
- Issuing of completion certificates within 10 days of receipt of request
- Rates clearance Inspection within 48 hours of receipt of request

## Applications for land use

- Acknowledgment of receipt and confirmation of completeness of application within 7 days of receipt
- Advertising, where necessary, within 14 days of acknowledgement of receipt
- Comment provided to applicant within 14 days after closing date stipulated in advertisement
- Decision or submission to Council within 30 days after receipt of response to comments
- Notification of decision within 14 days of delegated decision or issue of relevant council minutes
- Processing time no more than 90 days (excluding advertising time and time waiting for response to comments or additional input) from receipt of application.
- Inspection of complaints within 5 days of receipt

## Contact Details

### Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality

#### Creighton Offices

Telephone	:	039 833 1038
Street Address	:	Main Road; Creighton; 3263
Postal Address	:	Po Box 62; Creighton; 3263
Email:	:	<a href="mailto:mailbox@ndz.gov.za">mailbox@ndz.gov.za</a>
Website	:	<a href="http://www.ndz.gov.za">www.ndz.gov.za</a>

#### Himeville Offices

Telephone	:	033 702 3000
Street Address	:	32 Arbuckle Road; Himeville; 3256
Postal Address	:	Po Bo 43; Himeville; 3256

#### Cashiers

Himeville	:	033 702 3027
Bulwer (Bulwer library)	:	039 832 0181

Offices of the Municipal Manager; Chief Financial Officer; Corporate Services Manager; Community Services Manager and Technical Manager

Creighton	:	039 833 1038
Debtors	:	039 833 1038 Creighton and 033 702 3000 Himeville