

Our customer service commitment - working with and respecting each other

Our commitment to our customers

North East Lincolnshire Council (the Council) is committed to delivering high quality customer service and maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction, we will do this by:

- Making sure everyone has easy and equal access to our services;
- Treating everyone fairly and equally with respect and dignity;
- Actively listening and using feedback to meet your needs and improve our services and products;
- Responding to your enquiries efficiently and professionally;
- Using language that is clear and easy to understand;
- Respecting your right to privacy and confidentiality;
- Supporting you at your most vulnerable times and staying alert to safeguarding matters.

How you, our customers, can help us

We are committed to providing excellent customer service, you can help us to deliver the best possible service by:

- Treating us with courtesy and respect;
- Using our digital services where you can;
- Signing up for Direct Debit, making payments online or using our automated payment line;
- Ensuring you have the relevant information to hand when contacting us;
- Giving us reasonable time to respond to your enquiries;
- Not sending multiple correspondence to many officers;
- Informing us of any changes to your personal circumstances that may help us to help you;
- Letting us know if you wish to cancel or rearrange any appointments.

We welcome your feedback - let us know how we are getting on

We aim to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction across all service areas and continually use your feedback to improve our services.

If we exceed your expectations or you are unhappy with something we do, or the service we've provided, you can raise these through our feedback process, [details of which can be found here](#).



Unreasonable or persistent behaviour, or excessive levels of contact

We try our best to deliver excellent services and welcome feedback. Sometimes, in a very small minority of cases, the behaviour of individuals may be unreasonable or excessively persistent. This can make it very difficult for us to deal with their concerns and can have an impact on our ability to do our work and to provide a service to others.

We will not tolerate unreasonable or unacceptable behaviour. This includes, but is not limited to, physical or verbal abuse, in person, by telephone, online or through any written contact.

Some examples of unreasonable or excessive demands are:

- Insisting on a response or action within an unreasonable timeframe;
- Insisting on speaking to a particular member of staff when we've explained they're not available;
- Insisting on speaking to a particular member of staff who we've explained isn't the appropriate person for your issue;
- Insisting on who can and cannot deal with your issue;
- Making the same request to multiple members of staff without good reason;
- Repeated phone calls including to our helpline, emails, letters or visits to our offices when we've already given a response, or we've set expectations about when to expect a response;
- Unreasonable and persistent use of our service complaint process;
- Contacting officers via their private and non-work related media.

For more information on how you can interact with us on social media in the proper way, and what to expect from our staff when engaging with us on social media platforms, check out our social media guidance on our website.

Aggressive or abusive behaviour

We deal with emotive matters that are important to you, and we understand that you may be unhappy when you contact us, or you may not agree with the outcome we reach. However it's unacceptable for our staff to experience aggressive, abusive or intimidating behaviour whilst at work.

We operate a Zero Tolerance approach and will not accept or tolerate any behaviour that we consider to be violent, insulting or threatening, such as:

- Offensive language;
- Any form of discrimination;
- Inflammatory statements;
- Threats of physical violence;
- Any form of intimidation;
- Contacting employees via their private accounts and networks (including social media and emails);

Zero tolerance means that we will not accept or tolerate any violence or aggression towards our staff in person, verbally, in writing or online. Any such act or behaviour will result in appropriate action or sanctions.

Actions we might take

Where we find your behaviour or demands to be unreasonable, we will consider whether we need to take more formal action. We'll aim to keep the impact of this to the minimum necessary to solve the problem.

The actions we'll consider may include – but may not be limited to – the following:

- Explaining why we think your behaviour is unreasonable and what action we might take if it continues;
- Taking no further action / stop communicating about a particular complaint, issue or question that we feel we've already responded to or answered;
- Stop communicating with you by a particular method i.e. telephone, email, face to face;
- Stop communicating with you directly, and communicate through a representative only;
- In circumstances we consider to be exceptional, we will notify other relevant public authorities and partners;
- In the cases of threats of violence we will contact the Police;
- In the cases of inappropriate contact with officers via their private social media you will be blocked and where appropriate this will be reported.

