



COUNTY GALWAY
LOCAL AUTHORITIES

CUSTOMER SERVICE ACTION PLAN 2005 – 2009

Our Strategy for
Enhanced Customer Service

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Foreword from Cllr. Pat Hynes, Mayor of the County of Galway



As Mayor of the County of Galway I am very pleased to welcome the publication of a new Customer Service Action Plan for 2005 to 2009. The Plan presents an overall strategy for enhanced customer service and is relevant across all aspects of our dealings with you. We provide many important services throughout the county and this Plan outlines the standard of service you can expect from County Galway Local Authorities. It is crucially important that our citizens and customers feel valued and are treated fairly, impartially and equally. We have established a set of standards that we must all strive to achieve. If we fail to achieve these standards we want you to let us know.

The Plan states that customer service is delivering on what is promised while good customer service is delivering more than is promised. Our Corporate Plan also places a high level of importance on customer care and as Mayor I am committed to ensuring that the actions included in this plan are implemented.

On behalf of the elected representatives of Galway County Local Authorities I wish to state the commitment of the members to ensuring that the Plan is appropriately monitored and delivered over the next five years and wish to commend the Manger and his staff in the preparation of the Plan.

Cllr. Pat Hynes
Mayor of the County of Galway

Foreword from Mr. Pat Gallagher County Manager, Galway County Council

I am pleased to present the revised Customer Action Plan for County Galway Local Authorities for the period 2005 – 2009. The Plan outlines how we intend to develop a better relationship with you through the implementation of a series of improved customer service practices and initiatives. We have clearly set out the standards of service and response times we want to achieve and how you can let us know if you feel we are not reaching these standards.

Over the past number of years we have introduced a number of new initiatives to enhance our service standards. We must now build on our successes and continue to focus on the needs of our customers. We also recognise that we have to put in place a number of initiatives to ensure that you can better access our services, give your views on how we are performing and provide you with information so that you know what is happening in your community.

I wish to acknowledge the active participation and involvement of staff, elected members and the Management Team in the preparation of this plan. The objectives outlined can only be achieved with the full co-operation of staff and I am confident that we will respond to the challenges and opportunities to enhance our services to you and to meet your needs in a more focussed manner.

Pat Gallagher
County Manager



About County Galway Local Authorities

County Galway Local Authorities are among the largest public service providers in the county with a responsibility and an obligation to provide a quality service to all our customers. We want to improve our quality of life and the environment in which we all live. We also want to improve the economic and social infrastructure throughout the county and ensure that all citizens can participate in the democratic process. We provide a range of services throughout County Galway but also provide library services, fire, motor tax, veterinary and higher education grant services for people in Galway City. Town Councils operate in Ballinasloe, Tuam and Loughrea to support the local democratic process and also provide a number of functions including housing, planning, amenity services and local representation.

If we are to achieve our collective goals we must provide services that are meaningful, appropriate and responsive to your needs. Our Corporate Plan 2005 – 2009 places a high level of importance on customer care and quality service delivery. This Customer Care Plan sets out our standards for customer service. It also tells you what to do if you believe we have failed to deliver these standards and you are not happy with the level of service you are receiving from us.

What we do:

We provide a forum for the democratic representation of the local community and provide the community with civic leadership. We operate within a local democratic system with 30 County Councillors elected every five years. In addition, we have responsibility for the provision of a range of services together with regulatory and enforcement functions. Responsibilities include the planning, design and construction of important infrastructural facilities. We are custodians of the environment and seek to promote the sustainable development of the county while enhancing its physical, economic, social, arts, heritage and cultural identity.

Some of our services and responses are easy to see, while others are less noticeable and may have longer term impacts. Although our outputs are more often recognised as physical 'things' such as roads, houses and libraries we also have a role in developing communities and in facilitating local economic and cultural development. We provide over 100 different services and functions, many of which are provided free of charge. Our services are delivered by Units of the Council working under a Director of Services with our County Manager having overall executive responsibility. Our functional Units are:

- Planning & Sustainable Development
- Roads & Transportation
- Environment, Water & Emergency Services
- Community, Enterprise & Economic Development
- Housing
- Corporate & Cultural Affairs
- Finance

Our headquarters are located at: **Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway**



Tel: 091 – 509000 Fax: 091 – 509010
Web: www.galway.ie or www.gaillimh.ie

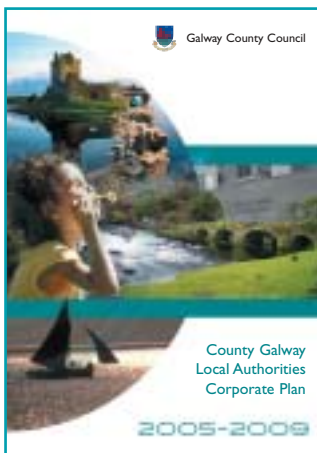
**Áras an Chontae opens to the public
Monday to Friday from 9.00 am – 4.00 pm.**

Our Motor Tax Office opens from
Monday to Friday from 9.00 am – 3.30 pm. (including through lunch)

Fire Brigade HQ 091 – 585555 (office hours)
Planning Direct Dial: 091-509308

24 Hour Fire & Rescue Emergency Number: 999 or 112

Our Corporate Plan 2005 – 2009 states that ‘an effective local authority must focus on the quality of its service delivery and recognition of the needs of its customers’. Quality Service Delivery and Customer Care is one of the core objectives contained in the Plan. We believe in working with our citizens to build community spirit, to enhance the look and feel of your area and to support our diverse, vibrant and innovative communities. We are also striving to place social inclusion at the heart of service delivery.



Our Mission is ‘to deliver inclusive local authority services for County Galway through effective civic leadership and democratic representation’

This mission will be achieved through progress in achieving six broad aims:

Achieving Balanced and Sustainable Development

Further develop the county in a balanced manner through the provision of essential infrastructure and progressive planning that meets the needs of industry and communities.

Preserving and Enhancing the Environment

Manage the natural heritage and environment of the county to meet the needs of local communities in the present, while ensuring that future generations can sustain a living in harmony with their environment.

Developing Sustainable Communities

Strengthen local communities through the provision of community assets and resources through engagement and proactive support.

Maximising Social Inclusion and Local Governance

Improve the quality of life for all citizens of the county through a more responsive and inclusive service that recognises and supports communities to play an active part in society.

Supporting Cultural Development

Develop a county where the Irish language and culture are cherished and where cultural diversity is celebrated and participation in the arts is encouraged.

Maximising Organisational Efficiency and Effectiveness

Maximise the effectiveness of the local authority to plan and deliver its services based on efficiency and accountability and on meeting the needs of its staff and customers.

Our Values	Our Challenges
Inclusiveness	Delivery of services in partnership with the community and interest groups
Transparency and Accountability	Decision-making processes that are open
Value for Money	Efficiency and effectiveness in allocating resources
Responsiveness	Proactively respond to the needs of the citizen
Community Leadership and Public Confidence	Provide leadership and support the democratic process
Accessibility	Ensure services are accessible and appropriate

SERVING THE CUSTOMER

Our commitment to customer service includes further developing a customer-orientated ethos and culture and the co-ordination of service delivery across the various functional areas of the Council to ensure a seamless service. We will also enhance our customer consultation and complaints procedures, ensure pro-active information dissemination to citizens, increase use of information and communications technology to improve customer service and develop quality initiatives and service standards.

Customer service is delivering on what is promised. Good customer service is delivering more than is promised. We are conscious of your different needs and initiatives must be developed having regard to those needs. A basic requirement of customer service is to make it easy, convenient and pleasant for you to do business and interact with us. This means making it easy to find us, to find information, to contact the right person, get the appropriate service and receive sufficient feedback and support. A local authority could see it's role as service provider and view their communities as customers. We believe that you are more than just a recipient of services. We believe that you care about your community and have an interest in what is going on.

Our Progress and Achievements

Since our previous Customer Action Plan was introduced in 2001, we have developed a number of specific initiatives designed to assist you in accessing our services and in providing a better service for you. These initiatives have assisted us in responding to your needs, and include:

- lunchtime opening introduced in Áras an Chontae
- motor tax services introduced in Ballinasloe and in An Cheathrú Rua and on-line motor tax renewal system developed
- public image survey completed
- electronic payment systems introduced and movement to full accruals accounting
- further development of internet, intranet and extranet facilities and area office networking
- application forms for services reviewed and made available on-line
- on-line feedback system, customer contact centre, direct dial number, customer information packs, service enquiry form and complaints procedure introduced within the Planning Unit
- customer comment form introduced by the Roads & Transportation Unit
- risk management and performance management systems introduced
- library catalogue available on-line and internet access provided throughout the branch library network
- complaints procedure developed by the Fire Service
- housing rent collection points established to facilitate payments
- procedures established to provide user friendly information on the status of various capital water schemes through the Intranet
- complaints and incidents database developed in the Environment section

Who are our customers?

Our customers are likely to interact and engage with some of our services, our staff, our facilities and our public representatives. We have extensive dealings on a daily basis with you throughout our office network and with community representatives and leaders. We also work closely with various government departments, state agencies, local development groups and sectoral representative groups. Our customers are all those who engage and interact with us. Our customer is you.

What you can expect from us

You are entitled to clarity of service provision, transparency in our decision-making, efficiency and effectiveness in our operations, access to our services and facilities and a responsive service to local circumstances. You deserve quality service standards to be in place and to be upheld. We will assist you to get involved in your local community. We will also endeavour to provide you and your community with the necessary economic, social, environmental and cultural infrastructure to make your area a better place to live.

We will develop a strong partnership approach with you and are committed to improving the quality of service we provide. We are committed to implementing standards of best practice which means that we aim to deal with you properly, fairly and impartially. We realise that we provide many important functions that impact on your quality of life and sense of community. We accept that responsibility and will ensure that services are provided within an agreed set of principles and that customer service commitments are met. If the standard of service falls below an acceptable level we want to be made aware of this so that it can be improved.

When providing a service by Telephone we will:

- ensure staff are available to take your call during normal opening hours
- be helpful and provide you with clear, accurate and concise information
- always provide you with a contact number for follow up
- respond to your call with courtesy and respect
- direct you to the most appropriate person to deal with your query with minimum delay
- take details and call you back if we cannot deal with your query immediately
- direct you to a member of staff who can deal with your query in Irish
- strive to return your call within 24 hours
- provide recorded service information for call waiting customers

In written or e-mail correspondence with you we will:

- use clear and simple language and keep technical terms to a minimum
- acknowledge all correspondence (letter, fax, e-mail) within 5 working days and endeavour to reply within 15 working days or less
- ensure that in response to correspondence the writer's name, contact number, e-mail address and file reference number are identified
- make arrangements to ensure that correspondence does not go unanswered when individuals are absent
- notify you by 'out of office' e-mail response if a staff member is absent for more than 3 working days and provide you with an alternative contact number if your query is urgent

If you visit one of our offices we will:

- meet you punctually if you have made an appointment
- respect your privacy and provide private meeting facilities if necessary
- deal with you in a polite, courteous and fair manner
- deal with your enquiry and provide relevant information as quickly as possible
- keep our offices clean and safe and keep queuing times for services to a minimum
- accommodate access to our services

If you visit one of our Libraries we will:

- respect our readers' needs and make everybody feel welcome
- treat every reader with dignity and respect and offer a generous amount of attention
- provide additional support if it is your first time in the library
- help you to access material in different formats to suit your requirements
- make each of our libraries a special place for children and make all our services open and accessible to all

If you apply for one of our services we will:

- ensure application forms are printed in a user-friendly manner and are widely available
- explain precisely and in plain language what is required to avail of a service
- request only relevant information from you
- ensure that personal data acquired by us is used only for the purpose for which it was sought
- provide you with accurate and precise information on how to complete an application form
- acknowledge your application within agreed timescales
- inform you of the outcome of your application in writing and where appropriate, the reasons why your application was unsuccessful

If you require a service through Irish we will:

- ensure that all brochures, information leaflets, application forms and policy documents are available in Irish to comply with the provisions of An Scéim Teanga 2005-2008
- ensure that correspondence received is acknowledged in the language of the original letter. When further correspondence is required it will continue in the same language.
- ensure that any new interactive IT services will be fully bilingual
- introduce automatic phone answering systems that will be fully bilingual and will direct callers electronically (through touch tone options) to where Irish services are available
- ensure that each public counter will publicise clearly what services are available in Irish from that counter and the extent of those services. Where there is no sign to this effect at a counter it will be assumed that all services are fully bilingual.

The majority of these customer service initiatives are currently in place and apply throughout our office network while the remaining initiatives will be implemented over the lifetime of this Plan. Precise customer care details for service provision through Irish are provided in An Scéim Teanga 2005-2008. New service commitments will be introduced on a phased basis including improvements to our telephone systems and processes.

Access to our offices will be improved in accordance with relevant disability legislation and in conjunction with the expansion of services in our Regional Offices. Our new complaints handling procedure will be implemented immediately.

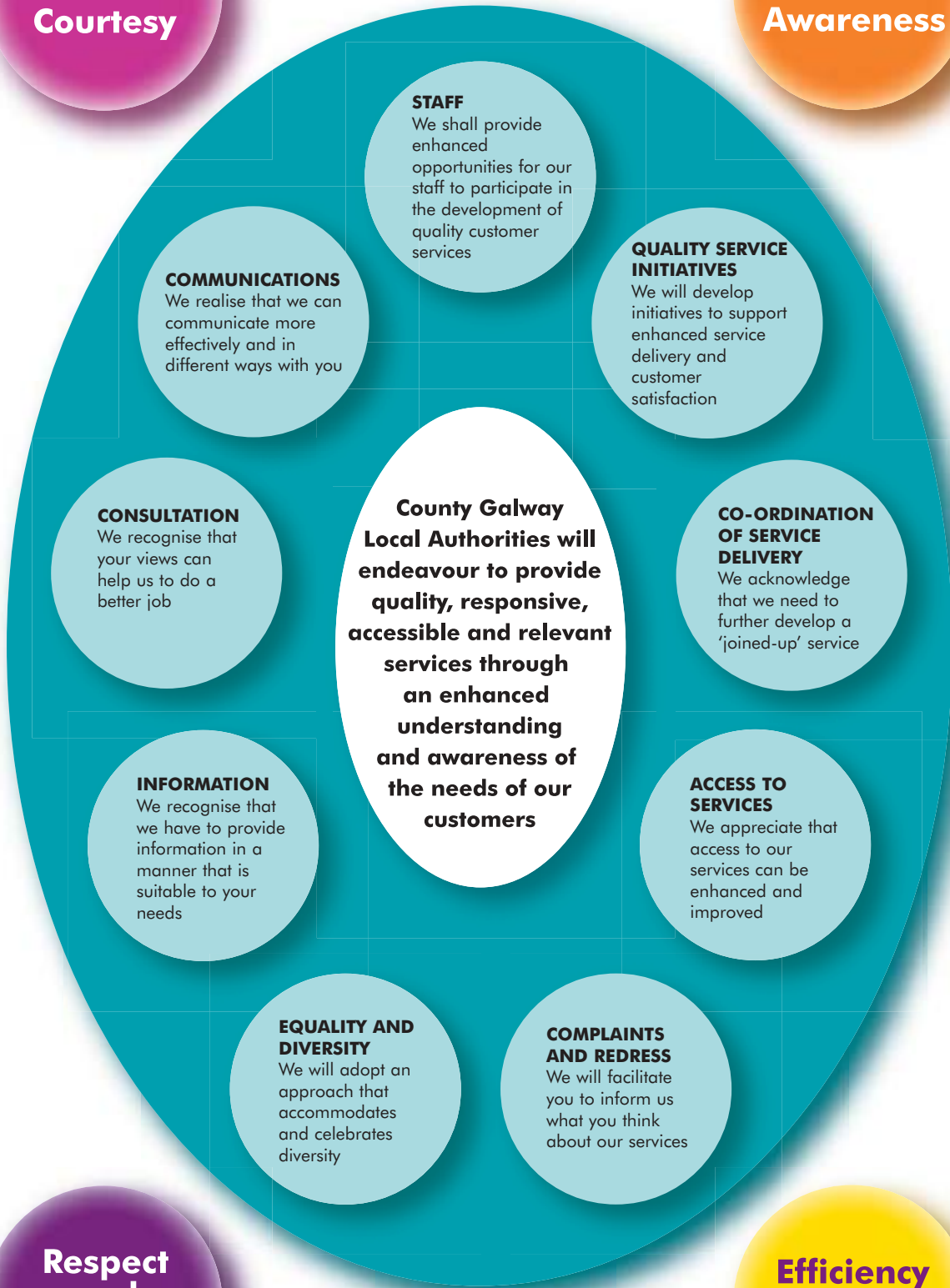
What we expect from You

Your involvement in the planning and delivery of services is crucial. There are a number of ways in which you can shape and influence the delivery of services through attendance at public consultation meetings and through representative structures including our elected representatives, Forám Pobal (Community Forum) and Strategic Policy Committees of the Council. We want to work in partnership with you to identify gaps in service delivery and to evaluate and assess the impact of services.

We expect you to respect the environment, to engage in recycling and keep our streets and villages clean, to conserve water, to control pets, to appreciate our public parks, beaches and walkways, to respect speed limits, and be careful near road and footpath works. We ask you to appreciate the facilities provided in our branch libraries, at our leisure and recreation centres and to take home your litter from our scenic areas, to respect the rules at playgrounds and to co-operate with our staff. We also ask you to follow our codes of conduct while visiting any of our offices and facilities as our staff are entitled to expect courtesy from you in your dealings with them.

**Choice
and
Courtesy**

**Access
and
Awareness**



**Respect
and
Responsiveness**

**Efficiency
and
Equality**

OUR OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Consultation

We recognise that your views can help us to do a better job

In our different roles, we are sometimes service provider, regulator, client, promoter or independent adjudicator and must meet our responsibilities to you across this diverse range. Consultation is a two-way process in which we can exchange information, engage in dialogue and deepen mutual understanding of each others' position. We will provide a structured and inclusive approach to consulting with you to ensure that as many people as possible can influence the development of our county.

Our objectives include to:

- fulfil legislative consultation requirements and timeframes
- be conscious of how, where and with whom we consult
- ensure your needs are considered in choice of time, location and use of plain language
- comply with the Irish Language Scheme An Scéim Teanga 2005-2008
- consult with relevant stakeholders in the preparation of important policy documents
- facilitate the involvement of young people in local decision making

Our Actions:

- advertise and promote consultation events in a timely manner and continue to provide adequate time to consider the outcome of consultation before making a final decision
- maximise the learning from integrated area planning consultation processes
- strengthen input to policy formation through the Strategic Policy Committee structure
- consult with disability groups in preparing and implementing our Action Plan in compliance with the National Disability Strategy
- develop the role of ICT in expanding consultation processes

Co-ordination of Service Delivery

We acknowledge that we need to further develop a 'joined-up' service

Increased internal and external co-ordination of service delivery will enhance value for money and customer responsiveness. This will require us to collaborate, coordinate, cooperate, network and deliver services in partnership with our customers and citizens. We will strive to develop a seamless service from all our office locations.

Our Objectives include to:

- foster a co-ordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services
- ensure that customer care issues are reflected in our work at all times
- review the operation of our services and programmes to promote integrated delivery
- expand opportunities for internal and external co-ordination and co-operation

Our Actions:

- utilise County Development Board structures to promote external service integration
- enhance internal systems and structures to promote cross functional activity
- utilise the intranet to promote enhanced information sharing between offices
- establish multi-disciplinary planning and implementation teams for larger projects

Information

We recognise that we have to provide information in a manner that is suitable to your needs

Provision of clear, accurate and timely information ensures that our message is received and understood. Information must be available at points of service delivery and through accessible formats. We must exploit the potential offered by Information Communications Technology and ensure that concise and relevant information is provided. We will ensure that information is provided in a manner and format that is easy to understand.

Our Objectives include to:

- provide information on our services in all office locations and on our internet site
- provide information using plain language and in different formats to suit your needs
- uphold our requirements under Freedom of Information legislation
- maximise Information Communications Technology potential
- issue user friendly and jargon-free information leaflets and guidelines
- ensure information is clear, timely and accurate

Our Actions:

- further develop customer information packs and guidelines on services and ensure availability in all office locations and on galway.ie
- significant local authority plans, policies and strategies to be available in various formats
- detail our activities and achievements in our Annual Report
- all application forms for our services will be available on our website
- provide recorded service information for call waiting customers
- provide published information on our services at the various public counters in Áras an Chontae

Communications

We realise that we can communicate more effectively and in different ways with you

Communication is important to our work in delivering effective and value for money services. We need to be able to communicate effectively with you by both listening and informing. We will ensure that we become effective communicators so that you can gain a better understanding of our services and policies. We will use appropriate channels of communication to ensure that we engage with all members of society, in particular, with those who have difficulty accessing information.

Our Objectives include to:

- adopt standards of best practice in our dealings with you through written, spoken and interactive communication
- promote our activities through media sources to let you know what is happening
- develop our website to better communicate our message
- improve communications with marginalised groups and individuals
- consider how our systems can contribute to enhanced communications

Our Actions:

- progress correspondence tracking and management systems
- enhance public relations through effective promotion of our activity through media sources
- enhance our corporate image through the positive promotion of activities through local government and trade press
- publish and circulate an annual newsletter to update you on service delivery, new initiatives, development plans and customer service activities

Access to Services

We appreciate that access to our services can be enhanced and improved

To provide an effective service we must ensure that you can access our services in a manner that suits your needs. This means accommodating your specific requirements, language, or accessibility needs. We will strive to increase the accessibility of our full range of services and facilities.

Our Objectives include to:

- make it as easy as possible to access our services and facilities
- introduce more accessible ways for making payments to us
- develop access standards and ensure that on-line information is fully accessible
- enhance services accessible from our website and implement e-government initiatives
- provide quality, accessible accommodation for staff and members of the public
- further develop services available throughout the county and access to services in Irish

Our Actions:

- Introduce the Bill Pay system for housing rental payments
- seek to introduce optical scanning services in the branch library network
- develop an A-Z listing of services including forms, frequently asked questions, departmental contacts and a customer comment /complaints facility on galway.ie
- introduce appropriate software on our internet site to enable better access for those with visual impairments
- develop the range of services provided on galway.ie
- ensure that all public facilities and venues that we use are accessible and continue to improve access to our office network
- develop regional offices in each electoral area with a broader range of services provided
- continue expansion of financial management systems including e-procurement, e-receipts and e-business
- further develop access to services in Irish in compliance with the Irish Language Scheme An Scéim Teanga 2005-2008



Equality and Diversity

We will adopt an approach that accommodates and celebrates diversity

Equality and diversity shall continue to be an important dimension of quality customer service, employee partnership and participation, internal and external communication strategies and decision-making. We now operate in a multi-cultural society and we must facilitate an understanding of our functions and services amongst all our customers. We will ensure that our policies and procedures send a clear equality message by strengthening the principle of diversity and by promoting a culture and ethos that acknowledges and celebrates diversity in the workplace and in our dealings with you.

Our Objectives include to:

- empower our staff to meet the needs of a more diverse population
- promote equality of opportunity
- support actions undertaken in the implementation of diversity management policies
- ensure the rights of equal treatment established by equality legislation

Our Actions:

- support the initiatives undertaken by the Equality Action Team in the implementation of diversity management and customer care policies
- implementation of the Equality and Diversity Management Programme

Staff

We shall provide enhanced opportunities for our staff to participate in the development of quality customer services

We employ up to 1,400 people including office and outdoor staff. Our staff are located throughout the county: in Áras an Chontae, Area and Regional Offices, Town Councils, Libraries and Fire Service network. The dedication of our staff is recognised as one of the main strengths of our organisation. We will continue to ensure that staff are valued and enabled to provide a quality service to you and are involved in the advancement of customer service initiatives through training and development.

Our Objectives include to:

- ensure that our staff are familiar with customer care practice and principles
- ensure that sufficient numbers of staff are competent to provide counter services in Irish
- expand training and development for our staff
- facilitate staff involvement in the development of customer service initiatives
- further develop the intranet to enhance information availability to staff

Our Actions:

- pursue the 'Excellence Through People' award and promote its values and objectives
- reflect our customer service commitments in the implementation of the Performance Management and Development System
- ensure our annual Staff Training Plan incorporates adequate training for staff in customer care
- establish a 'customer services review group' representative of front-line service providers to assess customer service initiatives and performance
- ensure that prompt internal replies are provided to staff dealing with the public so that a prompt and efficient service is delivered

Quality Service Initiatives

We will develop initiatives to support enhanced service delivery and customer satisfaction

Customer service is delivering on what is promised. Good customer service is delivering more than what is promised. We aim to understand your needs and achieve the standards you expect from us. We will develop systems and initiatives that make it easy, convenient and as pleasant as possible to deal with us. We will implement a series of quality service initiatives to enhance services provided. These initiatives will help us fulfil our obligations under our Corporate Plan and will establish minimum service standards.

Our Objectives include to:

- conduct surveys to find out what you think about our services
- develop customer contact centres at selected office locations and for selected services
- enhance freepost and direct dial services
- assist you to complete applications for services
- ensure application forms are easy to use and understand

Our Actions:

- develop the role of Customer Services Officer in each of our Units
- provide dedicated and highly trained customer services staff at Áras an Chontae and regional offices to provide high quality, integrated frontline customer information responses
- establish customer panels to give feedback on our services and assist us in the continuous improvement of services
- publish and display our customer service principles at each point of service delivery
- complete an independent customer satisfaction survey in 2005
- further develop the customer contact centre and customer service enquiry freepost service developed by the Planning Unit

Complaints and Redress

We will facilitate you to inform us what you think about our services

We will maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided together with a system of appeal and review. Enabling you to provide feedback or make a complaint is an important part of our commitment to customer service. We will implement a system that lets you tell us how we are performing. We acknowledge that you are the greatest source of feedback on the quality of our services.

Our Objectives include to:

- investigate and address all complaints received in a timely manner
- develop additional ways for you to provide feedback and comment on how we are doing
- ensure that you know how to make a complaint if you feel our service standards have slipped
- review complaints received and use the feedback to improve service delivery
- let you know the outcome of a complaint within agreed timescales

Our Actions:

- implement our agreed complaints handling procedure
- develop an online feedback and comment system available on galway.ie
- designate individual Customer Services Officers within each Unit to deal with complaints
- display customer comment forms in all our office locations

Monitoring and Review

Our Customer Service Action Plan will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the annual review of our Corporate Plan. Your comments and feedback on the quality of our service delivery will be an essential element of this review. Throughout the lifetime of this plan regular internal reviews will take place to assess the effectiveness and level of compliance with the customer responsiveness standards set out in this plan. We are fully committed to building upon the levels of customer care already in place and to review our performance on an ongoing basis.

YOUR ENTITLEMENTS UNDER OUR SERVICE COMMITMENT

The principles of quality customer service outlined in this plan and our commitments to providing a quality service require that you are treated with courtesy and respect. To ensure that this happens we have adopted a code of practice that will underpin our relationship with you. All staff are aware of their individual obligations and will receive ongoing training and support in meeting best practice standards. There are a number of ways by which you can provide us with feedback, seek information or make a complaint if you feel the standard of service is not meeting our customer care commitments.

Complaints and Redress

A complaint against us indicates your dissatisfaction with the manner in which we have dealt with you. We will address a complaint where a decision or action is taken by us which relates to the provision of a service or the performance of a function which, it is claimed, is not in accordance with our rules, practice or policy or the generally accepted principles of equity and good administrative practice and which adversely affects the person concerned.

An appeal against us indicates that you are unhappy about a decision we have made regarding a service provided or an entitlement to a service. If you want to query or appeal a particular decision you should contact the relevant Unit in question. Similarly, if you are not satisfied that we are meeting our service standards or have concerns or a complaint about any aspect of your dealings with us you may make a complaint to the Customer Services Officer in the relevant Unit you have been dealing with. You will receive a response within 15 working days. If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction and if you wish to do so, please write to:

Customer Services Officer
Corporate & Cultural Affairs Unit
Galway County Council
Áras an Chontae
Prospect Hill
Galway

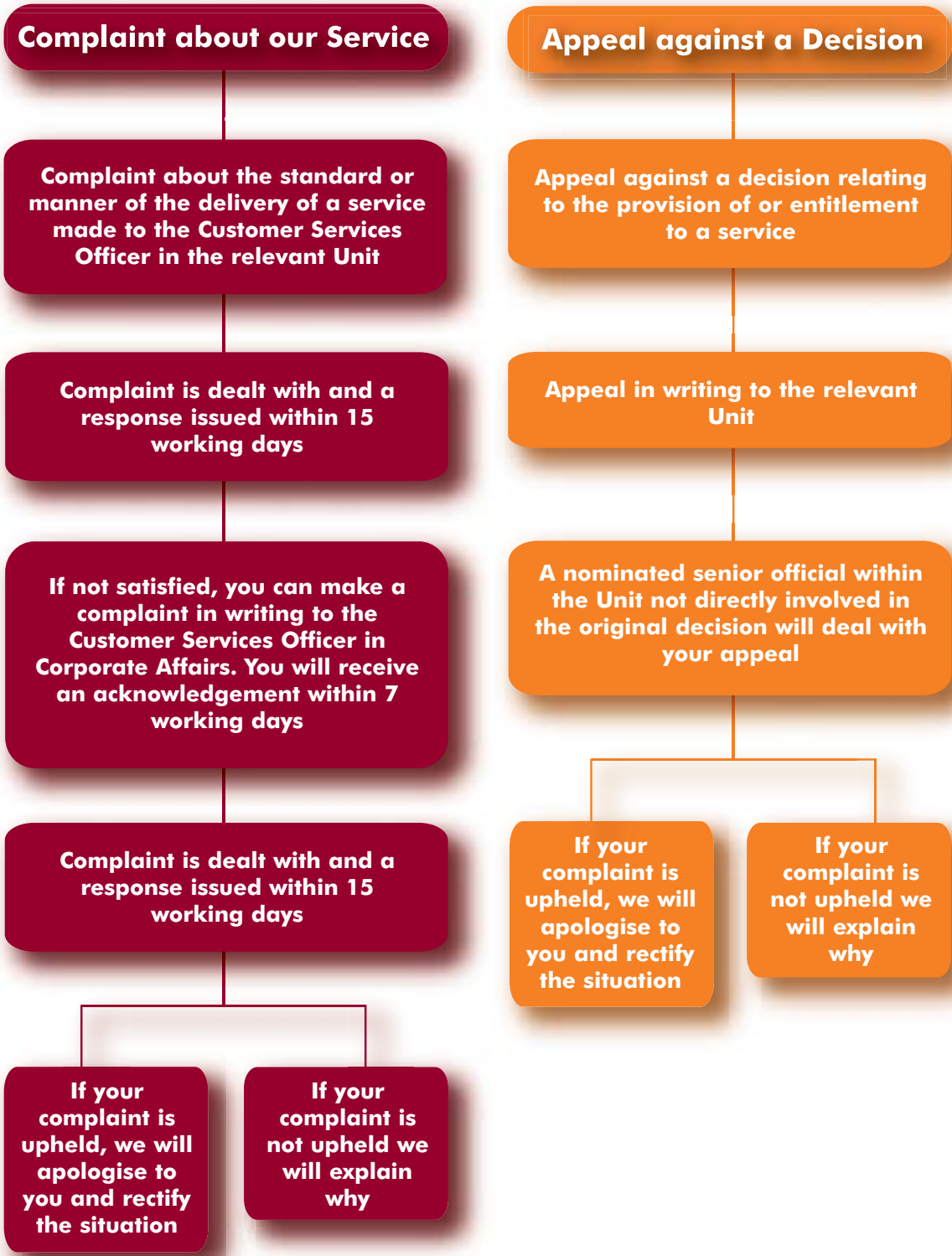
Tel: 091-509000 Fax: 091- 509010 e-mail: customercare@galwaycoco.ie

Our Customer Services Officer in Corporate Affairs will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 7 working days
- complete the processing of your complaint within 15 working days
- where your complaint is upheld, apologise to you and, where possible, try to rectify the situation immediately
- where your complaint is not upheld, explain our reasons to you
- advise you of any statutory rights of appeal

Your Statutory Rights

Freedom of Information	Ombudsman
Requests under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 & 2003 should be addressed in writing to:	Statutory redress through the Ombudsman can be taken by contacting:
Freedom of Information Officer Corporate & Cultural Affairs Unit Galway County Council Áras an Chontae Prospect Hill Galway	Office of the Ombudsman 18 Lower Lesson Street Dublin 2 Tel: 01 6785222 Lo-call 1890223030 e-mail: ombudsman@ombudsman.irl.gov.ie



Online Customer Comment

It is also possible to provide feedback on the service you received using our on-line customer care comment form located on www.galway.ie. This facility allows you to leave a comment or observation about any aspect of our service. If you require feedback on any comment you are welcome to request it.

Upon receipt of an online comment we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your comment by return e-mail within 3 working days
- complete the processing of your complaint or comment within 15 working days

OUR SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS

Housing

SERVICE	RESPONSE TIME
Acknowledge receipt of housing application/transfer request and advise of procedures	Within 1 week
Acknowledge receipt of housing loan application and advise of any omissions	Within 1 week
Arrange to interview loan applicant where all details supplied.	Within 1 week
Acknowledge receipt of Shared Ownership application and advise of any omissions	Within 1 week
Arrange to interview shared ownership applicant where all details supplied.	Within 3 weeks
Acknowledge applications and advise of any omissions for Disabled Persons Grant	Within 1 week
Advise applicant for DPG of recommendation/procedure on receipt of medical officers report	Within 3 weeks
Acknowledge application for Essential Repairs Grant	Within 1 week
Acknowledge application for Mortgage Allowance/ request further details	Within 1 week

Roads and Transportation

SERVICE	RESPONSE TIME
Pothole Repairs	
(a) National Roads & Roads where daily traffic exceeds 5000	Within 2 working days of notification.
(b) Regional Roads (daily traffic between 3000 - 5000)	Within 5 working days
(c) Regional, Local Primary & Secondary Roads (daily traffic between 250 – 2999)	Within 10 working days
(d) Local Tertiary & Local Roads (daily traffic less than 250)	Within 20 working days
Acknowledge requests during emergencies & advise complainants of planned action.	By return
Response to emergency flooding in houses/structures.	On priority basis.

Planning and Sustainable Development

SERVICE	RESPONSE TIME
Issuing of planning decisions	Before statutory deadline
Building Control Inspections	Exceed the recommended 12%-15% inspections of valid commencement notices received.
Planning consultation meetings held in Ballinasloe and Loughrea area offices	Once per week
Planning consultation meetings for the Conamara North / South, Tuam and Oranmore areas held in Aras an Chontae	Once per week
Registration and acknowledgement of planning applications	Within 7 days
Referral of applications to statutory bodies	Within 2 weeks
Submission of documents to An Bord Pleanála	Within 14 days
Acknowledge complaints of unauthorised development	Within 14 days



Environment, Water & Emergency Services

SERVICE	RESPONSE TIME
Investigation of illegal dumping and water pollution	Complaint prioritised and response within 3 working days or less depending on seriousness. Serious pollution complaints response on same day
Delivery of Recycone Home Composter to purchasers	Within 2 weeks
Issue of waste management information to households	Twice yearly
Dog Warden Response Time	Complaint prioritised and response within 3 working days or less
Acknowledge receipt of request for water allocation off existing public water schemes	Within 1 week.
Decision on water allocation off existing public water schemes.	Within 4 weeks
Inspection of complaint of no water supply.	Within 4 working hours
Inspection of complaint of "poor pressure" or "no supply during peak demand"	Within 4 working hours
Inspection of complaint of household water quality. (public water supply)	Within 4 working hours.
Inspection of complaint of "blocked sewer"	Within 4 working hours
Reports received by consultants on Capital Programmes are examined, certified and delivered to DEHLG	Within 1 month of receipt
Issues raised by DEHLG on delivered reports, are addressed	Within 3 weeks of receipt
Fire Service response to an Emergency Mobilisation	Full –time in City within 1-2 minutes. Retained in City & County within 5-6 minutes
Senior Fire Officer on call assistance at fires or other emergencies including Major Emergencies	Respond Within 10 minutes and attend within two hours if required
Fire service inspection of premises following written complaint from public	Complaint prioritised and response within 10 working days or less depending on priority Life Critical complaints prioritised respond within one working day
Consultative appointment with member of the public/ consultant on fire safety matters	Prioritised and within 2 weeks of request
Dangerous substance (petroleum) tests	Prioritised and within 1 week of request
Fire safety inspections of public assembly venue at annual licensing	Applications prioritised. Within 4 weeks for annual licensing inspections of selected licence applications
Fire safety certificate applications processed	Within 2 month statutory period
Fire safety education or training to public	Prioritised and within 6 weeks, by arrangement from request

Corporate and Cultural Affairs

SERVICE	RESPONSE TIME
Notification of outcome of job interviews	Within 2 weeks
Payment of retirement gratuity	First payment run after retirement date
General staff enquiries	Within 1 week
Register of Electors	Meet statutory deadlines
Payment of Higher Education Grants	In accordance with dates in grant payments schedule
Library Service response to request for information	Within 1 week if not immediately available
Library service advice on books and reading	Within 1 week if not immediately available
Issue of Casual Trading Licences	Within 3 weeks

Community, Enterprise and Economic Development

SERVICE	RESPONSE TIME
Advice on community and local economic development, social inclusion, participation issues.	Within 5 working days
Payment of Arts, Amenity and Community Based Economic Development Grants	Within 10 working days of receipt of completed claim and compliance with conditions
Notification of relevant community and economic based national and local funding programmes	10 working days notice
Circulation of CDB Newsletter	Twice per annum

Finance

SERVICE	RESPONSE TIME
Process postal vehicle tax renewals	3-5 days
Process postal driving licence applications	3-5 days
Efficient payment of accounts payable	Compliance with Prompt Payment requirements



Our Opening Times and Availability



Áras An Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway 091-509000

General	Monday - Friday 9.00 am - 4.00 pm
Motor Tax	Monday - Friday 9.00 am - 3.30 pm
Planning Office	Monday - Friday 9.00 am - 4.00 pm (10.00 am - 4.00 pm Wednesdays)

Departments	Tel: +353 (0)91	Email
Corporate Affairs	509000	secretary@galwaycoco.ie
Motor Taxation	509304	motortax@galwaycoco.ie
Driving Licences	509305	motortax@galwaycoco.ie
Planning	509308	planning@galwaycoco.ie
Register of Electors	509310	electors@galwaycoco.ie
Housing Applications	509300	housing@galwaycoco.ie
Housing Loans & Grants	509301	housing@galwaycoco.ie
Environment	509302	environment@galwaycoco.ie
Human Resources	509303	personnel@galwaycoco.ie
Water Services	509306	water@galwaycoco.ie
Community & Enterprise	746860	bfcg@galwaycoco.ie
Arts Office	746875	artsoffice@galwaycoco.ie
Roads & Transportation	509309	roads@galwaycoco.ie
Higher Education Grants	509310	education@galwaycoco.ie
General Services	509310	general@galwaycoco.ie
Library Service	562471	info@galwaylibrary.ie
Community Wardens	509408	communitywardens@galwaycoco.ie
Dog Wardens	797210 North Galway 847102 South Galway 552548 West Galway	dogwardens@galwaycoco.ie
Veterinary Service	509298	vetservice@galwaycoco.ie
Fire Service HQ	585555	fireservice@galwaycoco.ie
Civil Defence Office	583396	civildefence@galwaycoco.ie
Finance	746800	financeofficer@galwaycoco.ie
National Roads Design Office	735332	nrdo@galwaycoco.ie
Central Stores	509000 (ext 722)	

Area / Regional Offices	Telephone	Opening Hours Monday-Friday
Athenry	(091) 844042	9.10 am to 12.55 pm
Ballinasloe	(0909) 642274	9.10 am – 5.00 pm (closed 12.55 am – 2.10 pm) Motor Tax Desk 9.30 am – 3.00 pm
An Cheathrú Rua	(091) 595771	9.10 am – 5.00 pm (closed 12.55 am – 2.10 pm) Motor Tax Desk 9.00 am – 3.00 pm (closed 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm)
Clifden	(095) 21186	9.10 am – 5.00 pm (closed 12.55 am – 2.10 pm)
Gort	(091) 631040	9.10 am – 5.00 pm (closed 12.55 am – 2.10 pm)
Lackagh	(091) 737020	9.10 am – 5.00 pm (closed 12.55 am – 2.10 pm)
Loughrea	(091) 841536	9.10 am – 5.00 pm (closed 12.55 am – 2.10 pm)
Milltown	(093) 51314	9.10 am – 5.00 pm (closed 12.55 am – 2.10 pm)
Mountbellew	(0909) 679221	9.15 am – 5.00 pm (closed 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm)
Oughterard	(091) 552353	9.10 am – 5.00 pm (closed 12.55 am – 2.10 pm)
Portumna	(0909) 741019	9.10 am – 5.00 pm (closed 12.55 am – 2.10 pm)
Tuam	(093) 24123	9.10 am – 5.00 pm (closed 12.55 am – 2.10 pm)

Town Councils	Telephone	Opening Hours
Ballinalsoe	(0909) 642263	9.30 am – 1.00 pm 2.00 – 5.00 pm Mon - Fri
Tuam	(093) 24246	9.30 am – 12.30 pm (Mon, Wed, Fri)
Loughrea	(091) 841536	9.10 am – 5.00 pm (closed 12.55 am – 2.10 pm)

Libraries (for opening times visit galway.ie)	Telephone
Library Headquarters	(091) 562471
Galway City Branch	(091) 561666
An Cheathrú Rua	(091) 595733
An Spidéal	(091) 504028
Athenry	(091) 845592
Ballinasloe	(0909) 643464
Ballygar	(0909) 624919
Cil Rónáin	(099) 20018
Clifden	(095) 21092
Dunmore	(093) 38923
Eyrecourt	(0909) 675056
Glenamaddy	(0949) 659734
Gort	(091) 631224
Inisbofin	(095) 45861
Inis Meáin	(099) 73126
Inis Oírr	(099) 75008
Killimor	(0909) 676061
Loughrea	(091) 847220
Moylough	(0909) 679073
Oranmore	(091) 792117
Oughterard	(091) 557002
Portumna	(0909) 741261
Roundstone	(095) 35518
Tir an Fhia	(091) 551610
Tuam	(093) 24287
Westside Galway City	(091) 520616
Woodford	(0909) 749620

Fire Stations	Telephone
Athenry, Ballinasloe, Clifden, Galway City, Gort, Inis Mór, Loughrea, Mountbellew, Portumna, Tuam	112 / 999 – emergencies only
For administrative calls all stations contact Galway City HQ	(091) 585555

