The text of the Customer Care Policy adopted by Council on 30 July 2014 has been adapted for easy reading for the purposes of this easy reader version which will be available in all service centres and libraries in the form of a brochure in both official languages.

Both texts, the official text adopted by Council, and this easy reader version, may be found on www.durban.gov.za
The eThekwini Municipality commits itself to providing a customer-focused and quality customer service and urges customers to submit their comments and ideas as to how we can improve customer service in the Municipality. The Municipality further commits itself to redress when the service delivered does not meet the standards set out in this policy.

The following values adopted in the first Customer Care Policy (2008) epitomise the Municipality’s customer focused approach and will guide the interaction of the Municipality with its customers:
- Respect – We value our relationship with our customers and citizens
- Good Customer Care
- Service Excellence
- Integrity and Professionalism
- Mutual trust and Understanding.
1. **Preamble**

(1) Municipalities were established in terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998) with the purpose of achieving, amongst other objectives, democratic and accountable government to local communities.

(2) EThekwini Municipality, therefore, must regulate how it relates to its customers, communities and organised community groupings within its jurisdiction and the Customer Care Policy creates a platform and means to facilitate constructive and healthy relationships with its customers and citizens.

(3) This policy also covers internal customers i.e. municipal officials assisting other municipal officials. In addition to the legal requirements and Batho Pele principles, our Municipal values and standards guide the Customer Care rules and procedures in this policy.

2. **Purpose**

(1) To ensure the provision of excellent, customer-focused service for all customers and citizens of the Municipality;

(2) To ensure that the highest standards of customer service are adhered to and observed, including the sustainable principle of “getting it right the first time”; and

(3) To make provision for redress, in the event that customer satisfaction is not achieved.
### Definitions And Acronyms

#### (1) Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batho Pele Principles</td>
<td>Batho Pele is an initiative to get public servants to be orientated to strive for excellence in service delivery and to 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers</td>
<td>People the Municipality deals with on a daily basis. These include people who live within the Municipal area, visitors to our Municipal area, people who do business with the Municipality and internal customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Services</td>
<td>Services offered by the Municipality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Care Forum</td>
<td>An administrative body representative of all Line Departments involved in customer service delivery in the Municipality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpline</td>
<td>A toll free number where customers can report poor services and other customer service/ service delivery related complaints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Care Standards</td>
<td>A standard is a &quot;basis of measurement&quot; and &quot;a definite level of excellence&quot;. A departmental service standard is something desired (by the Department and citizens) and achievable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>Dedicated groups whose membership is determined from time to time by the Customer Care Forum do deal with customer service related matters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iThekunet</td>
<td>Internal web-based intranet service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mystery Shopper Programme</td>
<td>An objective study conducted by an independent contractor or agency to assess the performance of staff and Customer Service Centre using predetermined assessment criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review Mechanism</td>
<td>An initiative to enable Units and Departments to assess one another’s performance relating to customer service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Units</td>
<td>Various departments that are responsible for representing different functions within the Municipality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratman All</td>
<td>A joint seating of all senior management members, convened by the City Manager on a monthly basis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(2) Acronyms

(a) CSQ: Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire;
(b) ICMS: Integrated Complaints Management System;
(c) IDP: Integrated Development Plan;
(d) IPP: Individual Performance Plan;
(e) SCSU: Sizakala Customer Service Unit;
(f) SDBIP: Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan; and
(g) WSP: Workplace Skills Plan.

4. Problem Statement

(1) eThekwini Municipality’s vision is that by 2030, eThekwini will enjoy the reputation of being Africa’s most caring and liveable city, where all citizens live in harmony.

(2) However, the Municipality experiences social instability characterised by poverty, homelessness, unrest, crime and lack of cohesion, an unstable economic environment faced by its citizens including a high rate of unemployment, and scepticism in respect of transformation and the need to change the mind-set relative to customer service and relations1.

(3) To eThekwini Municipality’s advantage, it has a stable and enabling political environment with committed leadership, thereby providing a reasonable platform to address socio-economic ills in the City.

(4) The Municipality adopted its first Customer Care Policy in 2008 to regulate customer care across all its structures. During a comprehensive review process commenced in 2013, it was noted that the policy did not adequately cover all critical areas and was not in line with policy guidelines adopted by the Municipality hence this reviewed version was written and adopted by Council on 30 July 2014.

(5) The review process entailed considerable consultation and included:
(a) Consultation with Ward Committees;
(b) Tabling at the Customer Care Forum;
(c) Circulation to Stratman All for comment;
(d) Call for public comments; and
(e) Consultation with relevant stakeholders and civil society2.


2See Annexure 1 for the names of groups and people consulted.
In addition research was done from the following sources:
(a) Knysna Municipality Customer Care Policy; and
(b) Tshwane Municipality Customer Relations Quick Guide for Customers.

In drafting the Customer Care policy, the Municipality complied with the legal and national policy environment that compels the Municipality to ensure sound relations with its citizens and customers, thereby ensuring effective participation and involvement in municipal affairs.

Legislation applicable to the Policy:
(b) Objects of local government as outlined in Chapter 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996:
(i) To provide democratic and accountable government to local communities;

To ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
(ii) To promote social and economic development;
(iii) To promote safe and healthy environment; and
(iv) To encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government.

The Batho Pele Principles which form part of a national political initiative to encourage public servants to be service orientated and which eThekwini Municipality has adopted, together with a further three principles adopted by the KZN Provincial Legislature and used in the creation of its Customer Care Standards. The institutionalisation of the Batho Pele Principles is intended to facilitate the transformation of local government and the change of mindset amongst staff and citizens.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Batho Pele Principles</th>
<th>Consultation</th>
<th>Redress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Service Standards</td>
<td>Value for Money</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing Access</td>
<td>Encouraging innovation and rewarding excellence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring Courtesy</td>
<td>Service delivery impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing Information</td>
<td>Leadership and strategic direction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness and transparency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 See Annexure 2

4 See Annexure 2
5. Policy Rules

(1) Scope

(a) This policy applies to all eThekwini Municipality’s external customers and must be enforced and implemented across Service Units, including back office and support staff, as their contribution is critical to a holistic service delivery.

(b) The same standards of service excellence must apply to all categories of customers including internal customers i.e. municipal officials assisting other municipal officials.

(2) Institutional Responsibilities

(a) The Head: Sizakala Customer Service Unit or her/his delegate is responsible for this policy.

(b) The Sizakala Customer Service Unit is the custodian of the policy and must facilitate the implementation of the policy and ensure monitoring and evaluation.

(c) The Customer Care Forum is responsible for the co-ordination and management of the implementation and review of the Customer Care Policy and can from time to time establish Task Teams and Focus Groups to deal with specific issues as deemed necessary.

(d) The Heads of all Units must take responsibility for enforcing and implementing the customer service standards and ensure that the level of service as stipulated in this policy is applied by all staff when dealing with customers whether external or internal.

(e) The Batho Pele Office must perform an advocacy and oversight function in relation to customer service standards.
(3) Commitment to Batho Pele

(a) All customers must receive a consistently high standard of customer care.

(b) Officials must conduct their service functions in a manner that is professional, transparent and accountable.

(c) All customers must be able to access municipal services in a manner that is convenient and easy, and practically and physically accessible.

(d) Within the context of good municipal practice, the Municipality must put its customers first in all its dealings in a “do it right, the first time” fashion.

(e) All customers must have access to relevant Municipal information to assist them.

(f) The impact on customers must be taken into account in the community-based planning and delivery of municipal services.

(4) Customer Care Standards - Quality Assurance

(a) The eThekwini Municipality is committed to the continuous improvement of the standard of service received by municipal customers and citizens.

(b) The Municipality must consistently provide services and manage complaints in a manner that is considerate, timeous, efficient and effective.

(5) Managing Our Customer Care Standards

(a) The Sizakala Customer Service Unit, in collaboration with the Customer Care Forum, must put processes and systems in place to manage customer care standards, and relevant tools to monitor performance in relation to the standards.

(b) Comments, complaints and compliments received from customers must be acknowledged and packaged into a process that will assist the Municipality to build a customer-focused organisation.
(6) **Communicating the Policy**

(a) The Sizakala Customer Service Unit must use various media for communicating the policy:

(i) The Batho Pele principles and Customer Service standards must be displayed in the reception of all municipal units and departments;

(ii) The policy must be translated into isiZulu and printed as a brochure in both official eThekwini Municipality languages and made available in all service centres and libraries; and

(iii) The policy must be uploaded onto www.durban.gov.za and also onto iThekunet.

(b) Newspaper and radio media must be used regularly to publicise the helpline and other contact details and relevant customer information.

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6. **Procedures**

(1) **Scope**

(a) The Sizakala Customer Service Unit will publish the Batho Pele principles and customer care standards on www.durban.gov.za and iThekunet.

(b) The Sizakala Customer Service Unit will ensure on-going training of staff on the Batho Pele principles and customer care standards.

(c) New staff members will learn about customer care in an induction course, viz. Introduction to Local Government.

(2) **Institutional Responsibilities**

(a) The Head: Sizakala Customer Service Unit will report on customer care and relations to Council and the Customer Care Forum on a quarterly basis.

(b) The Head: Sizakala Customer Service Unit’s responsibility for customer service and monitoring evaluation in terms of this policy will be an item in her/his IPP and the SDBIP.
(c) The Customer Care Forum will meet quarterly where reports and projects relating to customer care will be tabled and its minutes made available by the Sizakala Customer Service Units.

(d) All Unit Heads will take action to improve customer care by scheduling training and good management, and report back at Customer Care Forum meetings.

(e) Unit Heads’ responsibility for customer service in terms of this policy will be an item in her/his IPP.

(f) The Batho Pele Office will meet regularly to discuss their activities to promote the principles in all Units, support Batho Pele champions, and will report quarterly to the Customer Care Forum.

(3) Commitment to Batho Pele

(a) Extensive and on-going training will be rolled out in all aspects of customer care and the Batho Pele principles.

(b) In all Customer Service functions, good customer care means:

(i) Customers will be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect;
(ii) Customers will be communicated with in the language of their preference in accordance with the eThekwini Municipality’s Language policy;
(iii) Customers will be given the information they need and an explanation provided if the required service is not available; and
(iv) Customers will be kept informed of progress in addressing their complaints, requests or enquiries.

(c) The commitment to equal opportunities, empowerment and access will be in the provision of:

(i) Support, interpretation and translation services when required;
(ii) Clear signage to direct customers;
(iii) Translation of documents and policies into English and IsiZulu;
(iv) Providing for sign language interpreters for workshops and Imbizos;
(v) Buildings that are accessible and welcoming;
(vi) Disabled access where practicable;
(vii) Private areas for customers to discuss personal and sensitive matters; and
(viii) Illustrative pictures, publications, posters and demonstrations.

(d) Various platforms and media will be used to interact effectively with Customers, such as:
(i) Face to face interface (in Sizakala and any other customer service contact centre);
(ii) Call centre interface;
(iii) Web-based interface;
(iv) Media and publicity interface; and
(v) Mass-based and facilitative interface.

(e) In all municipal planning and service delivery, the impact on communities will be considered.

(4) Customer Care Standards - Quality Assurance

(a) In setting Customer Care Standards they should be:
(i) User-friendly, customer-focused, measurable and put the customer first;
(ii) A clear detailed statement as to how staff must behave in dealing with customers; and
(iii) Inclusive of realistic performance targets that are subject to review.

(b) In instances where a problem arises, the staff must:
(i) Deal with the problem promptly;
(ii) Advise the customer when a delay is anticipated;
(iii) Advise the customer on the progress from time to time; and
(iv) Advise the customer of whom to contact if they are not satisfied with the service or outcome.
(5) Managing Our Customer Care Standards

(a) The Customer Care Policy will be supported by a Customer Service Charter, Customer Care Standards and Customer Service Pledge signed by each frontline staff member to ensure compliance with the policy.

(b) The human resources and performance management systems to manage customer care standards and a relevant tool to measure performance will be developed by the Sizakala Unit and a task team set up by the Customer Care Forum.

(6) Communicating the Policy

(a) The Sizakala Customer Service Unit will work with the Communications Unit to develop a plan to communicate the policy using the various media outlined in Policy Rules (6) (a) and (b).
# Policy Evaluation And Review

Evaluation and Review in terms of this schedule will be undertaken every five years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Measurement methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| (1) To ensure the provision of excellent, customer-focused service for all customers and citizens of the Municipality. | • Adherence to Batho Pele Principles  
• Adherence to Municipal Values.                                      | • Number of staff trained in Batho Pele principles  
• Scope of Batho Pele office activities  
• Number of staff trained in ethics and professional behaviour  
• Effectiveness of ICMS                                                  | • Skills Development Report  
• Batho Pele office Annual Report  
• City Integrity and Investigation Unit Report on Ethics and professional training  
• WSP Report  
• Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire Surveys                             |
| (2) To ensure that the highest standards of customer service are adhered to and observed, including the sustainable principle of “getting it right the first time”. | • Adherence to Customer Service Charter  
• Adherence to Customer Care standards  
• Adherence to Customer Service Pledge                                   | • Number of staff trained in Customer Care Standards  
• Responses from Service Centres’ CSQ Surveys  
• Responses from Mystery Shopper programme                               | • CSQ Report  
• Mystery Shopper Report                                                   |
| (3) To make provision for redress, in the event that customer satisfaction is not achieved. | • Redress Processes  
• Integrated Complaints Management System                               | • 24 hours turn-around time after receipt of complaints  
• Findings from Customer Satisfaction questionnaires  
• Findings from Mystery Shopper Programmes                                 | • ICMS Statistical Report  
• Customer Satisfaction Report                                              
• Mystery Shopper Report                                                     |
8. Annexures

8.1. Annexure 1. Customer Care Policy Schedule of Consultation
Can be accessed at www.durban.gov.za

8.2 Annexure 2 Batho Pele Principals as adopted by KZN Legislature in 2009.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td><strong>You can tell us what you want from us:</strong> You will be asked for your views on existing public service and may also tell us what new basic service you would like. All levels of society will be consulted and their feelings will be conveyed to the city manager. You should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services you receive and should be given a choice about the services they are offered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Standards</td>
<td><strong>Insist that our promises are kept:</strong> All units of the eThekwini municipality will be required to review and publish service standards. Standards may not be lowered. They will be monitored at least once a year and be raised progressively. Citizens should be told what level and quality of Municipal services they receive so that they are aware of what to expect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td><strong>One and all should get their fair share:</strong> Unit of the eThekwini municipality will have to set targets for extending access to public servants and Municipal services. They implement special programmes for improved service delivery to physically, socially and culturally disadvantaged persons. You and all citizens should have equal access to services to which they are entitled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtesy</td>
<td><strong>Don’t accept insensitive treatment:</strong> All units will set standards for the treatment of the public and incorporate these into their codes of conduct, values and training programmes. Staff performance will be regularly monitored, and discourtesy will not be tolerated. Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td><strong>You are entitled to full particulars:</strong> You will get full, accurate and up to date facts about services you are entitled to. Information should be provided at service points and in local media and languages. Contact numbers and names should appear in all departmental communications. Citizens should be given full accurate information about the municipal services they are entitled to receive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness &amp; Transparency</td>
<td><strong>Administration must be an open book:</strong> You have the right to know. Departmental staff numbers, particulars of senior officials, expenditure and performance against standards will not be secret. Report to citizens will be widely published. Citizens should be told how the eThekwini Municipality is run, how much it costs and who is in charge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redress</td>
<td><strong>Your complaints must spark positive action:</strong> Mechanism for recording any public dissatisfaction will be established and all staff will be trained to handle your complaints fast and efficiently. You will receive regular feedback on the outcomes. If the promised service standards are not delivered citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value for money</td>
<td><strong>Your money should be employed wisely:</strong> You pay income, rates and other taxes to finance the administration of the council. You have the right to insist that your money should be used properly. Departments owe you proof that efficiency savings and improved service delivery are on the agenda. Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging Innovation &amp; Rewarding Excellence</td>
<td>New and innovative ideas from among the staff and teams should be encouraged, especially if those ideas will improve service delivery and help to raise your standards of service excellence. Staff and teams should receive recognition for new ideas and good practices. Again, apart from using the prescribed measures, this can be done in a number of ways, through special lunches, certificates, and incentives of various kinds. To introduce mechanisms to encourage innovation and creativity. Recognise and reward performance and identify new ways of rewarding excellence. Keep track of the number of contributions made and impact of new ideas implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Delivery Impact</td>
<td>By putting all the Batho Pele principles into action at the same time, we should improve our service, which should, in turn, have a positive impact on our customers. By working together as a team, we will give better service and we will help to improve the lives of all our customers. Through the KZN Citizens Charter, all Provincial government departments have committed themselves to measuring the impact of their Batho Pele-aligned service delivery on the lives of citizens of KwaZulu-Natal in the 3 years and thereafter, every five years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Annexure 3: Programs that will be developed and implemented to effect the Customer Care Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The Human Resources and Performance Management Units</strong></th>
<th>Factoring customer satisfaction and service standards into individual performance plans of all frontline staff.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills Development Unit</strong></td>
<td>Customising training and induction programmes offered to all Municipal staff to ensure that there is relatively sufficient customer service content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IDP office</strong></td>
<td>Using customer satisfaction results in integrated development planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Participation and Action Support Unit</strong></td>
<td>Conducting civic education and empowering communities and customers about their service rights and responsibilities thereby ensuring that they know what to give and expect from the Municipality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sizakala Customer Service Unit</strong></td>
<td>Soliciting customer feedback from time to time and factoring customer input into programmes aimed at improving service delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Customer Care Forum and Human Resources Unit</strong></td>
<td>Introducing a reward and recognition programme to reward staff who excel in their service to customer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peer Review Mechanism</strong></td>
<td>Using a series of questionnaires to ascertain whether internal staff is giving customer satisfaction to staff in other units and departments. Creating a platform where units and departments will share best practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sizakala Customer Service Unit
60 Kings Road
Pinetown
Contact: (031) 311 6101

Enquiries: Customer Service Information Officer
(031- 311 6264
Email: sizakala@durban.gov.za
Statistics and Information Section