

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Healthwatch Warwickshire (HWW) is committed to delivering all its customers, both internal and external, with a high quality excellent service. As a countywide organisation providing a wide range of services to different organisations and individuals HWW aims to ensure that everyone receives the same quality level of service.

2. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

- 2.1** HWW aims is for all employees and volunteers to be professional at all times and:
- 2.1.1** Show courtesy in verbal communication, body language and demeanour in all circumstances, even where a customer may not demonstrate similar courtesy;
 - 2.1.2** Ensure accuracy of information;
 - 2.1.3** Be accountable for the level of service that they provide as an individual, referring any outstanding queries to an appropriate colleague where necessary;
 - 2.1.4** Act with integrity at all times
 - 2.1.5** Respond promptly at all times;
 - 2.1.6** Seek to continuously improve the level of service HWW deliver by addressing any barriers to quality customer service;
 - 2.1.7** Act in accordance with the law.

3. CUSTOMER CARE STANDARDS

- 3.1** In person:
- 3.1.1** Our premises will be easily accessible;
 - 3.1.2** Our office opening times will be displayed and adhered to, should there be an exception a notice will be displayed accordingly;
 - 3.1.3** We aim to greet visitors within five minutes of their arrival;
 - 3.1.4** Employees/volunteers will always introduce themselves and responding appropriately to questions or enquiries.
- 3.2** By telephone:
- 3.2.1** We aim to answer the telephone within 30 seconds (six rings), during normal office working hours.
 - 3.2.2** Activate answerphones for other times, whereby an employee and volunteer is out of the office, which will inform the caller as

to the normal locality office opening times.

- 3.2.3** Attempt to resolve queries at the first point of contact – where this is not possible, the call will be passed to the appropriate person or the appropriate contact details will be given or the person taking the call will endeavour to find a suitable answer – the enquirer will be informed accordingly of the action to be taken and provided with a realistic timescale for return contact to be made.

3.3 In writing:

- 3.3.1** Aim to respond to standard written enquiries within five working days (one week) of receipt.
- 3.3.2** Aim to respond to emails sent within 24 hours to info@healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk between Monday and Friday, except during Bank Holidays. Where an employee is taking planned absence from the office, the out of office email notifications should always be enabled.
- 3.3.3** Provide the contact details to the enquirer when acknowledging correspondence of the designated employee or volunteer identified to handle the query.

4. CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

- 4.1** All customers will be offered a consistent standard of service through employees/volunteers consulting with the individuals or organisation about their specific needs, as opposed to employees making assumptions. Information will be made available in different formats to comply with HWW's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy.
- 4.2** All customers are encouraged to provide HWW with feedback concerning the standard of service experienced. Compliments when we have got things right are always appreciated. Similarly, concerns or where it is believed that we could do things better are always welcomed as we are continually working on improvements to the services that we provide.

5. EXPECTATIONS REQUESTED FROM CUSTOMERS IN RETURN

- 5.1** Customers are respectfully requested to treat HWW employees and volunteers with similar courtesy and respect in accordance with our Anti-Harassment Policy. Any abusive or intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated. Should an employee and volunteer experience any behaviour that is rude, abusive or threatening towards them from customers, the customer will be asked to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour. If this persists the customer will be politely informed that discussion will be terminated or that the telephone call will be brought to an end. If on HWW premises the customer will be asked to leave and if necessary, the police will be called to attend to the situation and escort the offending customer off site.

6. COMPLAINTS

- 6.1** From time to time there may be occasions when users of our services feel that the quality or level of service provided falls short of what they might reasonably expect. HWW would want to know of any such occasion so that this can be put right. We hope that most problems or

concerns can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If your problem cannot be sorted out in this way and you wish to make a formal complaint, we would like you to let us know as soon as possible. The issue should be formally raised under the following complaints procedure within a matter of days, or at most a few weeks after the concern arose. This will enable us to establish what happened more easily and take steps to resolve the issue or complaint made.

6.2 How to make a formal complaint

6.2.1 You should normally make a written complaint to us within six months of the event. The formal procedure that you should follow is: -

- Make your complaint to the Chief Executive. If your complaint concerns the Chief Executive, please address your complaint to the Chair of the HWW Board and mark it “Private and Confidential to be opened by the addressee only”.

6.3 What we will do

6.3.1 You will receive written acknowledgement of your complaint within 5 working days of your complaint being received and you will receive notification of the timescale for a considered written reply to be forwarded to you (usually within 1 month).

6.3.2 The recipient of the written complaint will conduct or arrange for the complaint to be investigated.

6.3.3 The complaint will be fully investigated and you will be informed of the result of the findings, together with any proposed course of action to be taken. If this is likely to take longer than one month you will receive a letter providing you with details of the delay, the reason and the new date expected for you to receive the written response to your complaint.

6.3.4 If on receipt of the formal response and action taken by HWW, should you remain dissatisfied you should write to the Chair of HWW’s Board notifying the Chair of the reasons why you remain dissatisfied. The Chair will convene a sub-committee, drawn from members of the HWW Board, to re consider your complaint and the reasons that you remain dissatisfied within 21 working days of receiving your letter. The decision of the sub-committee will be final and confirmed to you in a letter, within 5 working days of the meeting being held.

7. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

7.1 HWW will:

7.1.1 Provide appropriate awareness training for all managers, employees and volunteers, as part of their induction process, and thereafter periodically, of the customer services standards expected from all employees and volunteers;

7.1.2 Raise with employees and volunteers not conforming to HWW’s Customers Service Standards at their support and supervision meetings the expected standards. If employees

continue to fall short of the standards or refuse to work to the required standards this will be considered as insubordination and appropriate action will be undertaken under HWW's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. For volunteers their placement will be brought to an end.

8. MONITORING

8.1 To monitor the success of this policy, HWW will:

- 8.1.1** Publicise the Customer Service Standards and Complaints Procedure Policy on the HWW's website;
- 8.1.2** Perform annual customer and consumer surveys on HWW services being delivered, which will be formally reported to the Board as a measure of the success of this policy and HWW as an organisation;
- 8.1.3** Conduct an employee and volunteer annual survey to assist in monitoring adherence to the Customer Services Standards;
- 8.1.4** Maintain a compliments and complaints register which the Chief Executive will monitor to identify where improvements are required or can be made, providing an annual report to HWW's Board.
- 8.1.5** At HWW's organised events a general Feedback form will be circulated to participants. There will be a box located at the exit that forms can be placed in anonymously. The form will allow for contact detail should the participant should wish to discuss their comments further See Appendix 1.

Reviewed: June 2016

Adopted by the Board: September 2016

Date of next review: March 2018



CONFIDENTIAL FEEDBACK

Please tell us your experience

If you would like to discuss this further, please write your contact information below:

Optional information:

Name:

Telephone number:

Email:

Postcode

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