

COUNCIL TAX & BUSINESS RATES OFFICE CHARTER

The revenues office has a duty to collect Council Tax & Business rates as quickly and efficiently as possible which is in the interest of all taxpayers in the Borough.

We are here to help and will be polite, open and honest, although we will not tolerate aggression, violence or bad language, but we will treat our customers fairly and objectively.

We ensure that all staff is continually developed to retain high calibre staff and recognise staff achievement through the reward and recognition scheme.

We ensure that all staff are monitored for quality and quantity to ensure that we meet our targets and maintain high quality service to the public.

We maintain good channels of communication within the team through team meeting, appraisals, staff focus groups and one 2 one's.

We are constantly striving to improve our service to all our customers and have developed a set of standards that we aim to achieve.

We review all our leaflets, publications and charters on a two yearly basis and review our standards regularly through surveys, customer and staff suggestions and will publish our performance annually.

We narrate every telephone call and counter enquiry to ensure a full history of a customers account is available

We work closely with the Benefits Office for the good of the Taxpayer and have joint team meetings twice a year to discuss cross team issues.

We adhere to the Council's recovery policy incorporating customer care and we will explain our policies and send leaflets in plain English.

We work with Age Concern, CAB and other outside agencies to ensure they have a better understanding of our policies and to improve customer care for the public.

We support the Council's 'Dress down Days' for local charities

TELEPHONE CALLS

We try to answer 95% of all calls within five rings using the Councils Corporate greeting.

We provide a telephone service from 8am to 6pm Monday to Thursday and 5pm on Friday.

Answer phone facilities are available when the office is closed or the team is receiving training

We ask assistance from Senior Officers to ensure correct advice is being given and offer to ring back if the enquiry becomes too complicated or the Taxpayer requests it.

We will not terminate a call unless the taxpayer is being continually abusive and we have requested they stop or given them the opportunity to speak to a senior officer

In extreme circumstances, where a taxpayer has been abusive, we will refer to Customer Services who hold an incident register.

CORRESPONDENCE

We reply to general correspondence within 10 working days.

Where this cannot be achieved, we will send an acknowledgement letter explaining when they can expect a reply.

We deal with notifications from the Valuation Office within 10 working days, change of circumstances including Discounts and Exemptions within 7 working days and Refunds within 5 working days.

We ensure all letters are written in plain English and that all points are answered.

We promote E-Billing, Self Service and Payments by Direct Debit.

PERSONAL CALLERS

We follow the Counter Charter.

We wear a name badge so taxpayers know who they are dealing with.

We try to deal with the enquiry as quickly and politely as possible, but if the enquiry becomes too complicated we can offer a private interview appointment at a mutually convenient time.

HOME VISITS

We can provide a home visiting service to customers if they are unable to come into the Council Offices.

This service is limited and will be based on individual needs.

The Revenue Inspector is available to arrange a home visit to verify Disabled Relief Applications.

Appointments are offered within 5 working days.