



105C
Communication and Response

Prepared By: Office of the CAO

Council Approval Date: Sept. 14, 2020

Council Resolution No.: 20-329

References:

- Council Code of Conduct Bylaw
- Records Management Retention Schedule Bylaw
- Brand Standards Policy
- Public Engagement Policy
- Report a Problem Procedure

POLICY STATEMENT

Town of Olds will strive to respond to the public in a timely fashion after receiving general inquiries in an effort to provide good customer service and to demonstrate professional business practices.

PURPOSE

To provide for standards on the response to communications for the public, other organizations and employees.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all elected officials and all Town of Olds employees.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or designate(s) is responsible for administering this policy within the standards established. All managerial and supervisor administration are responsible for ensuring that their employees are familiar with, and comply with the standards of this policy.

STANDARDS

All communication must comply with the Town of Olds Brand Standards. This allows for a consistent visual identity through all aspects of communications including correspondence, advertising, brochures, correspondence and signage.

Public response requirements set by federal and provincial legislation, Town of Olds bylaw or specific policy, take precedence over the standards provided within this policy.

1. Written inquiries (letter, fax, email) must meet the following criteria to receive a response:
 - a. Be legible and understandable;
 - b. Be signed by at least one person (or provide a printed name) and address; and
 - c. Not be libelous, slanderous or defamatory.

General written inquiries (letter, fax, e-mail) shall be responded to, in writing by the applicable department, within seven business days of the date received, where possible. When an email inquiry is received, an acknowledgement of receipt of the inquiry shall be provided within three business days of the date received, where possible.

Mail requiring a response to be answered ~~to~~ by signature of the Mayor, CAO or designate, with an acknowledgement of receipt, shall be completed within five (5) business days.

Due to the complexity and timeliness of an inquiry, it may not be possible to provide all the information requested within the required time frames. In these instances, an acknowledgement of receipt of the inquiry shall be provided either in writing, via e-mail or by phone within the timelines set within this policy. An explanation as to how and when the Town will be responding to the original inquiry is to be included with this acknowledgement.

2. Telephone inquiries shall be responded to, by phone, promptly and effectively within three (3) business days of being received.

At the discretion of Town Administration, and for clarity, a written inquiry may be requested prior to a response being provided.

3. All reports (verbal and written) of dissatisfaction with service and/or interaction will be deemed a complaint. Complaints received are dealt with promptly by the applicable department, and appropriately, as per Town of Olds Report a Problem procedure.

Council Decisions

Council decisions, key issues and status, shall be conveyed quickly and accurately to the public and town employees.

- a. The Town's website shall be the primary method of providing access for the public to minutes, bylaws, council policies, and public Town of Olds documents.
- b. Meeting highlights and complete council meeting minutes are to be available for circulation or access within seven (7) days of the meeting.
- c. The CAO and/or designate, will ensure that a newsletter is prepared and circulated monthly to residents.
- d. The CAO and/or designate, will publicize the dates, location and purpose of all Town of Olds public meetings.
- e. Where appropriate, articles written (internally and externally) for the purpose of sharing Council issues should be promoted using other communication platforms such as social media, where residents can provide feedback directly.
- f. Involve the public in the development of community priorities (see Public Engagement Policy).

Amended: June 25, 2012 Motion 12-181

Amended: February 22, 2016 Motion 16-78

Amended: May 23, 2017 Motion 17-222