

Approval of Shire of Kent Customer Service Charter

30 September 2008

Economic Regulation Authority



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

DECISION

The Economic Regulation Authority (**Authority**) has approved the Shire of Kent Customer Service Charter (charter) on 30 September 2008.

REASONS

The Authority has reviewed the charter against the requirements of the Shire of Kent's licence and notes the following:

Existence

Clause 19(a) of the Shire of Kent licence states that the licensee must produce a charter outlining the principles, terms and conditions upon which the licensee intends to provide water services to its customers. Clause 19(e) of the licence requires that the Shire of Kent undertake a review of the charter at least once every 36 months.

The previous charter was approved by the Authority in October 2004.

The Shire of Kent originally submitted its charter to the Authority for approval on 11 March 2008. The Secretariat of the Authority provided feedback to the Shire regarding the charter. The Authority agreed to extend the due date for submitting a revised version of the charter until 15 August 2008. The Shire submitted a revised version of its charter on 13 August 2008. The Secretariat required one additional amendment to the charter which resulted in the Shire submitting the final version of its charter on 23 September 2008.

The Authority finds that the Shire of Kent has submitted its new charter for approval within an acceptable timeframe.

Accuracy

Clause 19(a) states that the Shire of Kent must set out in writing the principles, terms and conditions upon which it intends to provide water services to its customers.

The Authority finds that the principles, terms and conditions, as set out in the charter, are generally consistent with relevant legislation and licence requirements.

Consultation

Clause 19(c)(ii) of the Shire of Kent's licence states that the charter "should address all of the service issues that are reasonably likely to be of concern to its customers".

In order to determine the service issues that are reasonably likely to be of concern to its customers, it is generally expected that a licensee would establish a process to determine all relevant service issues that should be addressed in its charter. An example of such a process is consulting with its customers and/or their representatives. The Authority's *Customer Service Charter Guidelines* recognise this as part of its criteria for assessing customer service charter reviews (clause 6.3).

The Shire of Kent has advised that it placed an advertisement on 6 August 2008 in relevant community newspapers inviting public comment on the charter. In addition, notices were placed on all public notice boards on 30 July 2008. No public submissions were received in relation to the charter.

The Authority finds that, on the basis of the information provided, the Shire of Kent undertook a reasonable level of public consultation with regard to this review.

Accessibility

Clause 19(c) of the Shire of Kent's licence requires that the charter be developed in 'plain English' and that it should address all of the service issues likely to be of concern to its customers.

'Plain English'

The Authority finds that the accessibility of the charter is generally sound, however, it could be further improved through the simplification of some technical and legalistic language.

Issues likely to be of concern

The Authority finds that the charter is generally consistent with the licence provision in covering all of the service issues likely to be of concern to the Shire of Kent's customers.

LYNDON ROWE
CHAIRMAN

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