

Approval of Shire of Gnowangerup Customer Service Charter

10 March 2010

Economic Regulation Authority



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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DECISION

1. The Economic Regulation Authority (**Authority**) approves the Shire of Gnowangerup's Customer Service Charter (**charter**) for non-potable water supply and sewerage services.

REASONS

2. The Authority has reviewed the charter against the requirements of the Shire of Gnowangerup's Operating Licence 11 (**licence**) and notes the following:

Existence

3. Schedule 3, clause 2.1 of the licence states that the licensee must have in place a charter that accords with the Authority's Customer Service Charter Guidelines (**review guidelines**).
4. Schedule 3, clause 2.6 of the licence requires that the Shire of Gnowangerup undertake a review of the charter at least once in every three year period. Similarly, clause 5.1 of the review guidelines requires the licensee to undertake a review process, at regular intervals and within the required timeframe.
5. The previous charter was approved by the Authority in August 2006.
6. The charter was due for review by 31 August 2009. The Shire of Gnowangerup submitted the first draft of its charter to the Authority for approval on 14 August 2009. The Secretariat of the Authority provided feedback to the Shire regarding the draft charter. The Shire submitted the final version of its charter on 5 March 2010.
7. The Authority finds that the review has been undertaken within the required timeframe.

Accuracy

8. Under Schedule 3, clause 2.1 of the licence, the charter must accord with the Authority's review guidelines. Clause 5.2 of the review guidelines requires that the charter comply with all relevant legislative, code or regulatory requirements and be in line with the standard form contract and/or the licence requirements.
9. Schedule 4, clause 1.1 of the licence requires the licensee to provide an emergency telephone advice system such that customers need make only one telephone call to report an emergency. Although the charter contains three emergency telephone numbers, the Shire of Gnowangerup has advised the Authority in writing that each number will be manned at all times to ensure a customer will only have to make one telephone call to report an emergency.
10. 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

11. Clause 5.3 of the review guidelines requires that the licensee engage with customers and/or their representatives in the review process.
12. The Shire of Gnowangerup has advised that it placed an advertisement in the local paper advising the public of the Shire's intention to review the charter and calling for public submissions. No public submissions were received.
13. The Authority finds that, on the basis of the information provided, the Shire of Gnowangerup undertook a reasonable level of public consultation with regard to this review.

Accessibility

14. Schedule 3, clause 2.2 of the licence states that the charter should be developed in 'plain English' and that it should address all of the service issues likely to be of concern to customers.

'Plain English'

15. 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

16. 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 Gnowangerup's customers.

LYNDON ROWE
CHAIRMAN