



BEST VALUE ANNUAL REPORT

2015-16

BEST VALUE PROGRAM

Council having completed its five-year program of Best Value Service Reviews in accordance with the requirements of section 208 of the Local Government Act 1989, now embarks on an ongoing program of review based on a strategic approach. This report provides information on Council's approach to Best Value and on the status and outcome of Best Value Service Reviews carried out in 2010-2011. Information on Council's approach to Best Value, and the timetable for the conduct of the service reviews, is located on Council's website, www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au under About Council/Good Governance.

A. Council's Approach to Best Value

Council is required by the Local Government Act to comply with the Best Value principles and to this end will take a strategic approach to the application of the Best Value Principles on an ongoing basis. These reviews are expected to take account of the Best Value principles enshrined in Section 208B of the legislation, namely:

- 1 The need for services to deliver against agreed quality and cost standards.
- 2 Services being responsive to changing community needs.
- 3 Accessibility of services to those who need them.
- 4 Continuous improvement in the delivery of services.
- 5 Community consultation on services and activities.
- 6 Regular annual reporting to the community on Council's performance.

Furthermore, section 208C of the Act requires Council to take account of these factors when developing its quality and cost standards:

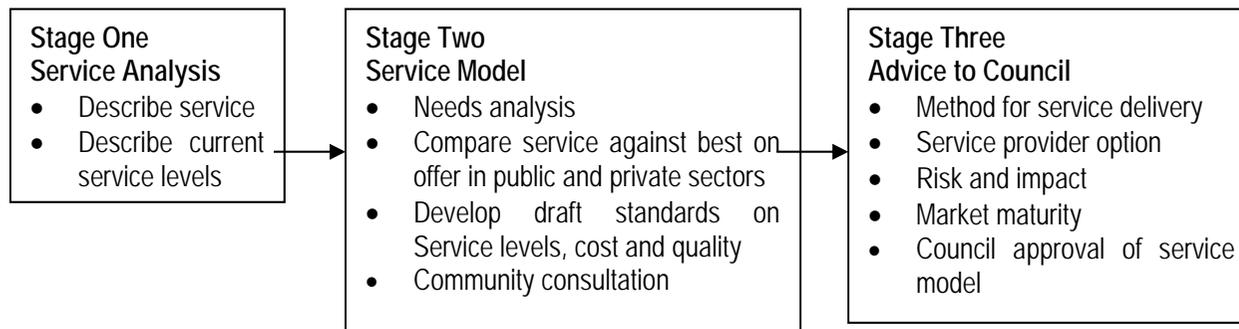
- 1 The best on offer in the public and private sectors.
- 2 Value for money.
- 3 Community expectations and values.
- 4 Balance of affordability and accessibility.
- 5 Opportunities for local employment growth.
- 6 Partnership building with other levels of government.
- 7 Environmental sustainability.

Three fundamental principles guide the implementation of Best Value at the City of Whitehorse, namely:

- 1 The Best Value process at the City of Whitehorse is used to ensure that all of the City's services and activities provide high quality and good value for money to the Community;
- 2 Council is committed to ensuring that, where appropriate, the services being provided by Council staff continue to be delivered internally unless it can be demonstrated that it would be better value to the community for these services to be provided by others; and
- 3 The Best Value process is implemented in accordance with the Victorian Government's Competitive Neutrality Policy Victoria 2000.

B. Conduct of Best Value Service Reviews

Each Best Value Service Review is conducted by the relevant work team, led by the manager of that team. Managers and teams are supported in this process through the use of a common review template and the provision of a central resource that provides information, advice and training. Service reviews have three distinct stages:



At the conclusion of each service review, both Council's Audit Committee and the Council receive a report that contains:

- a description of existing service standards and a proposed method of service delivery, with defined service levels and cost and quality standards that have been benchmarked and tested through consultation;
- an analysis of the service delivery options available, including an analysis of the maturity of the market, a risk assessment of each option and an assessment against Competitive Neutrality policy; and
- advice on the preferred service delivery option.

With the completion of Council's first 5-year program of reviews in June 2004, and in the light of the outcomes of the review of the Best Value Program, undertaken for the Victorian Government by the Best Value Commission, Council has reviewed its approach to the conduct of service reviews.

Council has found the service review process beneficial in enabling Council to ensure that its services meet the changing needs of the community and in providing an opportunity to compare its performance with like services in the public and private sectors. Whitehorse City Council will continue to apply the Best Value principles when conducting service reviews and continue to report to the community on the outcomes of its reviews through reports to Council (other than Confidential reports) and annual reports on the implementation of Best Value placed on Council's website.

In terms of the development of a program of reviews, Council will take a strategic approach to the conduct of reviews, identifying services for review on the basis of:

- Significance in achieving Council's strategic goals
- Capacity to lead to significant improvement in service delivery
- Changes in community satisfaction with the service
- Changes in community expectations or demands for the service
- Alterations in government policy that have major ramifications for service delivery
- The length of time that has lapsed since the previous review.

C. Progress of Service Reviews

Council progressively has had an ongoing program of service reviews (as required), which are currently completed (C) or in progress (IP) as listed below:

SERVICE	COMPLETION DATE OF REVIEW
Whitehorse Arts Space	Deferred. Awaiting the consideration of the Business Case for the Whitehorse Centre released by Council on 19 July 2016 (IP)
Customer Service Reviews	Ongoing (IP) Refer below

Customer Service Reviews – ongoing

Whitehorse City Council is committed to providing the highest level of customer service. Ongoing review of the major areas which impact on customer satisfaction have been categorised into three activity streams: Reporting, Culture/ CARES and Systems. There are 30 participants across the 3 project streams who provide a wide range of experience and expertise across different levels and services covering each of our directorates, these streams report to the Customer Service Steering Committee for guidance and approval.

Reporting Stream

The reporting stream has conducted a review of existing customer service measures and reporting developing a range of new measures (18) that are aligned to our CARES principles. These measures were adopted at a Measure Gallery Event open to all staff at which 800 comments were provided by those who attended, 17 of the 18 measures were adopted from this event.

The reporting stream has developed a report to display, monitor and track performance against these measures as well as the requirement of some measures to be incorporated into systems stream to enable the measuring and reporting.

CARES Stream

The CARES stream conducted an internal survey that identified customer service based training can be developed to better align to our internal policies and procedures as well as the varying levels of training that are consistent and dependent upon role functions and responsibilities, a learning path structure and content specifications has been developed as a result. The new training model has been implemented for trial in Conflict & Negotiation as well as Armed Hold Up training for assessment prior to further development.

**C**OMMUNICATION

Clearly communicate the process and set expectations

**A**CCOUNTABILITY

Be responsible for the enquiry, don't pass the buck

**R**ESPONSIVENESS

Communicate to keep your customer within the set expectations, keep them informed

**E**MPATHY

Take a moment to put yourself in your customer's shoes, acknowledge their situation

**S**OLUTION

Work towards a solution that satisfies, and if you can't meet it, explain/inform your customer

Systems Stream

The systems stream has focused on the technology that provides the supporting foundations and infrastructure for customer service, an area of focus has been to review how we receive, process and resolve customer enquiries, requests and complaints. The systems stream identified the customer request management system to be the main source of capturing interactions and has applied technical functionality enhancements aimed to streamline our internal processes and improve the customer experience. This trial is being undertaken between the community laws and customer service department commencing in July 2016 with a view to extend to other departments.

The new functionality will provide the basis to support improved business processes and increase customer satisfaction, including for example;

Customer Service Continuous Improvement Project: System Stream	
<p>New Functionality built into CRM (Smartclient/Pathway) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic Document Delivery • Mobility Device Trial • Online Services and Payments • Improved Request Structure with Increased Information at the Frontline • Task for Responding to Customers & Tracking • Cross functional Requests Tool/Process • Multiple Issues/Requests Tool/Process • Batch Functions <p>Community Laws volunteering to trial functionality 11th July 2016</p>	<p>Benefits Projected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved customer responsiveness/satisfaction • Productivity gains & administration efficiencies • Cost savings in postage • E-Services efficiencies & quality of 24/7 service • Increased customer resolution at the front line

D. Outcome of Completed Service Reviews

All Service Reviews will be reported in this Annual report and all past reports (other than confidential reports) are located on our website.

E. Continuous Improvement Program

One of the principles of Best value as identified in the Local Government Act, is *'a council must achieve continuous improvement in the provision of services for its community'*

Council through its Council Vision and Plan advocates throughout the organisation for Council Managers and staff to plan, review, analyse and act on initiatives which are for the benefit and greater good of the community.

To this end many initiatives and programs are identified within Council departments and at Council level and introduced during the course of the year and as appropriate.

Council supports and encourages a continuous improvement program, which focuses on service efficiency, service quality improvements, service capacity improvements, cost savings with no change to volume or quality and areas where there are nominal savings.

BEST VALUE REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE

For the completed Service Reviews, the cost and quality standards are included within the reports and reviewed and approved by Council's audit committee and endorsed by Council at the Ordinary Council meetings. The reports (other than confidential reports) and Minutes of the Council meetings are available on the website or contact Council administration on 9262 6338 for assistance in accessing the relevant reports.