

<b>Job title:</b> Customer Advocate Lead	
<b>Classification:</b> Band 7	<b>Effective Date:</b> April 2024
<b>Reports to:</b> Manager Customer Service	<b>Tenure:</b> Permanent

### About Us:

At Whitehorse City Council, community is at the heart of everything we do.

We aspire to be a healthy, vibrant, prosperous and sustainable community. We enable this through strong leadership and community partnerships.

We strive to stay ahead of evolving changes and needs of our community.

Our five key principles empower our employees to be innovative and provide an excellent customer experience. We are a resilient organisation where everyone belongs.



**Excellent Customer Experience and Service Delivery**



**Great Organisational Culture**



**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**



**Good Governance and Integrity**



**Long Term Financial Sustainability**

### CREATe - Our Values and Behaviours:

Our shared values and behaviours are integral to how we go about our work, interact with each other and our community. Our employees 'live' these shared values. In living these values we also ensure that everyone has a voice and that everyone matters.

#### Collaboration

We work flexibly together to achieve outcomes and solve problems.

#### Respect

We actively listen, value diversity and care.

#### Excellence

We adapt, respond, learn and grow.

#### Accountability

We take responsibility and follow through on our promises.

#### Trust

We act with integrity and are empowered to make decisions.

City of Whitehorse is a culturally and linguistically diverse community. We are proud of the diversity of our workforce and recognise the strength this provides in meeting the needs of our community. We are committed to upholding a safe, inclusive and respectful workplace that values the contribution of all.

Whitehorse City Council is committed to being a child safe organisation. We recognise our responsibilities to keep children and young people safe from harm and have established policies, procedures and training to achieve these commitments.

## Goal Statement

To provide effective support and resolution for Council to resolve customer complaints, ensuring a positive experience for residents and stakeholders.

The role will champion Council's Complaints and Feedback Policy to be an enabler for customers to provide feedback and complaints to Council with ease, ensure we respond and take action to resolve complaints and identify opportunities to learn from feedback and improve our services.

Council's goal is to maintain the Council's reputation for exceptional customer service and promote community feedback by addressing concerns promptly and professionally.

## Key Responsibilities

### *Position Specific Responsibilities*

#### **Complaint Handling and Resolution**

- Collaborate with relevant departments to ensure timely and appropriate responses to complaints.
- Monitor and follow up on unresolved complaints, striving for satisfactory outcomes.
- Investigate and resolve customer complaints (for tier three and four complaints) efficiently and in accordance with Council policies.
- Handle complex customer cases and keep the customer updated with timely and frequent information about progress towards resolving the issue.
- Support employees to understand and uplift complaint handling practices through daily support as well as through formal training.
- Act as Council's contact for the Victorian Ombudsman with referred issues and complaints.

#### **Data Analysis and Reporting**

- Analyse complaint data to identify recurring issues and areas for process improvement.
- Prepare regular reports summarising complaint trends and recommendations for service enhancements.
- Utilise data-driven insights to develop strategies for reducing the number of complaints.

### *Corporate Responsibilities*

- Ensure adherence to all Corporate Policies, Procedures and the Organisational Goals and Values Principles in the current Whitehorse City Council Collective Agreement by all staff under supervision.
- Ensure the organisation is aware of and compliant with relevant statutes and legislation.
- Identify and develop changes to policy and procedure in areas of responsibility.

- Ensure that risk management principles are adopted in all decision-making processes within the team.
- Undertake identification, reporting and resolution of risk management activities (including that staff are appropriately trained) and ensure that all relevant operating procedures provide for a safe working environment.
- Apply sound financial management techniques to team budget processes.
- Provide equitable and sound supervision of staff, (including ensuring appropriate training, development and motivation) to ensure that team KRA's are met and contribute to the strategic objectives of the team.
- Ensure appropriate care and use of assets and equipment.

## Accountability and Extent of Authority

**Budget:** Nil.

**Staff responsibility:** The position is responsible for the supervision of the Customer Advocate Support Officer.

## Judgement and Decision Making

- Utilise strong analytical skills to solve problems, make informed decisions and show initiative in designing and implementing appropriate responses to unexpected situations.
- Resolving Councillor customer service requests and customer issues that have been escalated to a Councillor.
- Applying sound judgment and decision-making abilities in the day-to-day management and resolution of customer complaints.
- Delivery of complaint resolution in line with relevant regulatory and legislative requirements.
- Identifying any organisational issues that lead to poor customer service outcomes and suggest recommendations that address these issues.

## Specialist Knowledge and Skills

- Proven experience in complaint handling or customer advocacy, preferably in a municipal or government setting.
- Applying sound judgment and decision-making abilities in the day-to-day management and resolution of customer complaints.
- Well-developed sense of political acumen and demonstrated understanding of working within a political environment.
- Familiarity with local government regulations, policies, and procedures.
- Strong ability to problem solve issues and offer solutions, and proficient in the application of theory or best practice in search of solutions to new problems or opportunities.
- Strong ability to advocate for the voice of the customer.
- Ability to respond sensitively to issues or concerns and make sound decisions in the best interests of Council and the customer.
- A valid Victorian driver's licence.
- Satisfactory National Criminal History Check.

- Working with Children Check.

## Qualifications and Experience

- Tertiary qualifications in Business Management, Business Administration, Public Administration or Dispute Resolution.
- Significant experience in managing complex enquiries
- Substantial relevant experience in resolving customer disputes.
- Demonstrated experience in undertaking research, collation of information, statistical analysis, and interpretation of results

### Technology:

- Strong computer skills including a sound knowledge of Microsoft Office applications.
- High level of proficiency with software applications including spreadsheets, databases, dashboards and presentation tools.
- A working knowledge of contemporary tools for creating actionable customer insights such as Power BI, CRM and telecommunications software.

## Interpersonal Skills

- Communicate with empathy, professionalism, and active listening skills when interacting with complainants.
- Handle emotionally charged or sensitive situations with diplomacy and tact.
- Collaborate with internal departments and external partners to ensure a coordinated approach to complaint resolution.
- Diplomatic experience with conflict resolution
- List essential communication skills (including requirement to deal with those with difficult or challenging behaviours, and conflict situations).
- Excellent communication skills both verbal and written, with an ability to communicate and interact with all levels of business and with members of the public who may be frustrated or aggrieved by the time their complaint is escalated.
- Excellent ability to gain internal and external co-operation and assistance
- Strong negotiation and problem-solving skills
- Accepts changed priorities without undue discomfort; recognises the merits of different options and acts accordingly.

### Key Relationships:

- Customer Service Team
- All Council Staff
- Customers/residents
- Senior Leadership Team
- Executive Leadership Team
- Supervises 1 team member, the Council Liaison Officer within the Customer Service broader team.
- Reports to the Manager Customer Service.

## Management Skills

- Confident in decision making and able to work with minimal supervision
- Well-developed planning and time management skills in meeting deadlines and managing conflicting demands in the most efficient way possible.
- Persistent in the face of obstacles.
- Ability to strike a balance between protecting council's business interests and promoting customers' need for superior service.
- Ability to add value for the customer, link people with other areas as appropriate, monitor customer feedback and constructively deal with customer issues and complaints.
- Lead and manage the performance of the Council Liaison Officer.
- Strong leadership skills to maintain an environment which motivates and supports others to achieve high levels of performance and customer service.

## Key Selection Criteria

- Demonstrated experience in a customer service role, ideally with experience in handling complaints and/or case management.
- Proven ability to research and source relevant information or data sets, interpret and formulate recommendations or provide advice.
- High level written and verbal communication skills with the ability to communicate and liaise confidently with management and employees, and with customers and service providers.
- Highly developed interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to be professional, discrete and courteous and maintain confidentiality.
- Solution focused individual with a strong dispute resolution mindset approach

## Physical Requirements

Physical Functional Demand	Specific Physical Job Tasks	Frequency/Duration of performance of task per day	Comments
<b>Kneeling/Squatting</b> Tasks involve flexion/bending at the knees, ankle, and waist to work at low levels.	NIL	<b>Sitting at desk at times throughout the day</b>	
<b>Hand/Arm Movement</b> Tasks involve use of hand/arms	NIL	Sitting at desk and using keyboard and mouse	
<b>Bending/Twisting</b> Tasks involve forward or backward bending or twisting at the waist.	NIL		
<b>Standing</b> Tasks involve standing in an upright position	NIL	Standing at desk at times throughout the day	
<b>Reaching</b> Tasks involve reaching above head, and above and equal to shoulder height	NIL		
<b>Walking</b> Tasks involve walking on slopes and walking whilst pushing/pulling objects	NIL		
<b>Lifting/Carrying</b> Tasks involve raising, lowering, and moving objects from one level position to another	NIL		
<b>Pushing/Pulling</b> Tasks involve pushing/pulling away, from and towards the body	NIL		
<b>Keyboard Duties</b> Tasks involve sitting at workstation and using computer.	No	Daily keyboard duties	
<b>Satisfactory Vision</b> Standard of vision required equal to that required for driver's licence	NIL		

**Any other relevant comments:**