



# **Homelessness Advisory Committee**

Terms of Reference

Endorsed by FMC on 20 July 2021

## 1. Purpose and Objectives

- 1.1. The role of the Homelessness Advisory Committee is to provide strategic advice on policy and practice issues to the administration and Council. This advice assists Council in continuing to implement homelessness responses in the city.
- 1.2. Provide advice on issues relevant to the ongoing implementation of City of Melbourne's homelessness response and any strategies or plans that might be developed through the life of the Committee.
- 1.3. Provide comment and feedback on other Council policies, strategies and initiatives relevant to Homelessness.
- 1.4. Represent community views on homelessness issues to ensure resolutions are balanced.
- 1.5. Provide recommendations on methods and techniques to better inform and engage the community on homelessness issues.
- 1.6. Participate in consultations and discussions on homelessness and related issues across City of Melbourne's functions and services.

## 2. Membership

- 2.1. The Homelessness Advisory Committee will comprise twelve representatives, including:
  - The Lead of the Health, Wellbeing and Belonging Portfolio, who will chair the meetings, with the Deputy Lead acting as alternate chair
  - persons with a lived experience of homelessness (minimum three members)
  - Indigenous representative(s)
  - Youth representative(s)
  - Professional industry representative(s) from the not-for-profit or government sector
  - Victoria Police representative
  - CEO Homes Melbourne
  - Manager Housing Pathways
  - Director Aboriginal Melbourne
  - at least one Senior Officer from a relevant branch of Council.
- 2.2. The Council will make appointments based on merit, skill and expertise. The Advisory Committee will bring specialist experience and skills, relevant network connections, innovative thinking, enthusiasm and passion for creating sustainable pathways out of homelessness.

### ***Advisory Committee Members***

- 2.3. Membership across the City of Melbourne will be actively encouraged from a broad range of organisations and individuals including those with specialist skills, experience and knowledge in homelessness and related issues.
- 2.4. All members except Council Officers shall have full voting rights, with the Chair having a casting vote as required.
- 2.5. The Advisory Committee may invite relevant industry stakeholders, with specific skills and expertise, to participate in discussions from time to time. Other Councillors may participate in meetings and Council Officers may attend in order to service the Committee.

### ***Appointments and Tenure***

- 2.6. Tenure of Advisory Committee members shall be a maximum of three years, with Council appointing Councillor representatives at the beginning of each term.
- 2.7. Appointment of external members shall be made by way of an expression of interest and Council resolution.

### ***Disqualification of a Member***

- 2.8. If the Council proposes to remove a member from the Advisory Committee, it must give written notice to the member of its intention to do so and provide that member with the opportunity to be heard if that member so requests.
- 2.9. If a member misses two consecutive advisory committee meetings without an accepted approval of absence, they will have disqualified themselves from membership.
- 2.10. Any vacancies will be filled by reviewing previous applicants or by placing a public advertisement as soon as possible.
- 2.11. Members may be required to undergo Police and/or Working with Children Checks.

### **Selection Criteria**

- 2.12. Committee membership will be sought on the basis of achieving a balanced representation in alignment with the three categories of homelessness (primary, secondary, tertiary) from a personal and/or professional perspective. In addition, members may have connections with the Melbourne community through business, residential status or other associations connected to homelessness. Members will be diverse in age, culture, religion, disability, gender, sexual preference or health status, with at least 50% of members identifying as female.

External members will be sought from, but not limited to, a cross section of the following categories:

- human rights, social inclusion, empowering people and building on people's strengths and knowledge
- direct experience of homelessness, or engagement with people experiencing homelessness
- service delivery, housing, social infrastructure and systemic issues across the homelessness, health and welfare sectors
- leadership, collaboration, and coordination across service sectors
- an understanding of City of Melbourne's capital city role
- community and neighbourhood relationships
- physical and mental health
- urban environment and public space
- education, skills development and employment training
- government, business, industry and commercial.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

3.1 The duties of the Advisory Committee members is to:

- attend and participate in a compulsory induction workshop, if required, on the Advisory Committee
- understand the role and responsibility of members and Council
- abide by the Homelessness Advisory Committee Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) and other related policies and protocols
- attend and participate in meetings of the Advisory Committee (including planning sessions and relevant training)
- work cooperatively with other members in achieving the aims of the Advisory Committee
- provide informed and considered advice, ideas and recommendations to Council on items
- action and follow up tasks established by the Advisory Committee and resolved by Council
- attend and participate in working groups (as required) to explore identified issues and present recommendation/s for endorsement at the Homelessness Advisory Committee
- report back to existing networks within the communities about any decisions relating to the Advisory Committee (as required), and
- use existing networks to remain informed regarding the views and interests of the particular community they represent.

### 3.2 The role of the Chair is to:

- chair meetings in accordance with the Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct and meeting agenda
- liaise with the Council Officer convening the Advisory Committee to determine the Agenda for each meeting
- initiate new issues for discussion as they arise
- facilitate the discussion of items on the agenda in a timely manner
- facilitate the moving of recommendations and voting by Committee members
- ensure all committee members have the opportunity to participate
- to co-opt additional support and/or sub committees as required, and
- to provide policy support to the Homelessness Advisory Committee

#### ***Executive Support***

3.3 Homes Melbourne will provide executive support to the Advisory Committee, and will facilitate the Expression of Interest process in consultation with the chair.

## **4. Media**

4.4 The Chair of the Homelessness Advisory Committee is the media spokesperson for the Advisory Committee.

## **5. Meetings**

#### ***Conduct of Meetings***

5.1 The CEO Homes Melbourne will:

- provide the support required to enable the meetings of the Advisory Committee and invite members of staff or others to attend meetings to provide pertinent information as necessary
- coordinate meetings, agendas and minutes
- provide policy and secretarial support to the Homelessness Advisory Committee
- supply interpreters, cab vouchers, reimbursements or any other requirements in order to support members to attend and participate in meetings, and
- facilitate a collaborative meeting format.

#### ***Attendance and quorum***

5.2 All Advisory Committee members are expected to attend each meeting.

5.3 In the absence of the Chairperson from a meeting, the meeting shall appoint an acting Chairperson from the members present.

#### ***Meeting frequency***

5.4 The Advisory Committee meetings will take place a minimum of four times per year.

#### ***Meeting papers***

5.5 Documents will be sent to members with a minimum of seven business days in advance of the Advisory Committee meeting. This will include:

- agenda for the upcoming meeting
- minutes of the previous meeting, and
- any other documents, information and/or attachments to be considered at the meeting.

#### ***Conflicts of Interest***

5.6 In the event of a conflict of interest arising from any member of the Advisory Committee, the matter must be immediately tabled and the member must abstain from any dialogue in relation to that matter.

#### ***Confidential and sensitive information***

- 5.7 Members are expected to comply with the confidential information provisions contained in sections 3 (1) and 125 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- 5.8 Members must treat information they receive as confidential unless otherwise advised. The documents presented to the Advisory Committee will often be in draft format and not ready for wider community distribution.
- 5.9 Members must not use confidential information other than for the purpose of performing their function as a member of the Homelessness Advisory Committee.
- 5.10 Draft documents cannot be referred to or used in any grant applications, presentations or in the private working roles of members.

## **6. Reimbursement of Expenses**

- 6.1 For Advisory Committee members, reimbursement of reasonable expenses associated with attendance may be made, subject to prior agreement and approval. Such reimbursement may include transport, child care or interpreting services.
- 6.2 For Councillors, expense reimbursements are to be made in accordance with Council's Expenses Policy.
- 6.3 Advisory Committee members who are holders of a concession card or health care card from Centrelink are eligible for a \$200 sitting payment for each meeting they attend.

## **7. Reporting**

- 7.1 The City of Melbourne Administration will report to the Homelessness Advisory Committee on activities and issues as they arise. The Homelessness Advisory Committee will provide strategic advice to the City of Melbourne through the Chair and other Officers.
- 7.2 The Homelessness Advisory Committee will report to Council through the Chair of the Health, Wellbeing and Belonging Portfolio and other Officers on matters of importance or priority.

## **8. Review**

- 8.1 The Homelessness Advisory Committee will be reviewed prior to the end of the current term.



# Homelessness Advisory Committee Code of Conduct

November 2021

## *Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners*

*The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.*

*We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection the Wurundjeri, Bunurong, Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wadawurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin have to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.*

*We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.*

## **Foreword**

At the City of Melbourne we set and uphold high ethical standards. As an organisation, we think not just about what we do but also how we do it through our people, the way we work and our customers' experience.

The rules and guidelines in this handbook give examples of how all Committee members are expected to behave, and provide the boundaries within which we must operate.

Council's vision is that Melbourne will be bold, inspirational and sustainable. It is therefore critical that we have a shared understanding of how we collectively work. The code works in close harmony with our values and culture, and provides instructions and advice as we work to make the difference for Melbourne and its people.

A constructive culture is critical to realising our vision. Everyone plays a part in creating our culture at the City of Melbourne. The code cannot describe every requirement or present all the details of our policies. Committee members must use their own judgement in applying these rules and guidelines. It is up to individual Committee members to seek information if unclear on any area of conduct.

## **What do you need to do?**

1. Read it: please read this code and make sure you understand it. If there is anything you don't understand it is your responsibility to ask.
2. Agree to it: you must agree to abide by the code by signing and returning this document to Council.
3. Live it: we expect you to always work and behave in accordance with the code.

We encourage you to speak up if you see a potential breach of the code or if there is an opportunity to improve the ways we work.

Breaches of the code are a serious matter and can result in sanctions up to and removal from the Committee.

Together, we can uphold and protect the high ethical standards we have set for ourselves and our organisation and achieve our vision of a leading organisation for a leading city.

## **Section 1: Understanding and using the Code**

### **Why do we need a code of conduct?**

The City of Melbourne serves the community and Council and aims to be a leading organisation for a leading city. That's why it's important we provide the best possible service.

Committee members should also respect and promote the human rights set out in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. This includes making recommendations consistent with human rights, and actively implementing, promoting and supporting human rights.

Committee members should adhere to the code and not breach its principles.

The CEO will exercise judgement and action where an appointed member may need to be removed from the committee due to poor conduct.

### **Disclosable Interest Protocol**

The Disclosable Interest Protocol and Declaration applies to all Council's Advisory Bodies. In addition to this code, all committee members will comply with the Disclosable Interest Protocol and Declaration.

## **Section 2: Commitment to our people**

### **Fairness, equity, diversity and inclusion**

The City of Melbourne promotes inclusivity, diversity, fairness and equity. This means the differences between the ideas, aspirations and needs of people are considered and valued equally.

#### **What do we mean by 'diversity'?**

Diversity consists of all visible characteristics such as age, cultural diversity, ability, gender (as well as gender identity and gender expression), sexual orientation and language. It also includes characteristics such as education, caring responsibilities, socio-economic background, life experiences, opinions and working styles. Diversity recognises the characteristics of the whole person and treats all individuals, customers and the communities in which we operate – with fairness and respect.

#### **What do we mean by 'inclusion'?**

Inclusion is the way our organisational culture, values and behaviours make a person feel welcomed, respected, valued and included. An inclusive environment draws on the unique differences of its people; where all people are treated fairly and respectfully with equal access to opportunities and resources. There are anti-discrimination and equal opportunity laws that support fairness, equity, diversity and inclusion. These laws apply to how we treat each other. It is your responsibility to be aware of the relevant laws and comply with them.

### **The principles**

At the City of Melbourne, we recognise and embrace the diversity each person brings. Our aim is to create an environment of trust, mutual respect and appreciation where everyone is treated fairly and with respect, and has the opportunity to realise their full potential.

Committee members are encouraged to feel confident that the diversity of their experiences will be valued and supported, regardless of their gender, age, language, ethnicity, cultural background, ability, religious belief, sexual orientation or identification, working style, educational level, work and life experiences, socio-economic background, opinions, job function, geographical location, marital status and family responsibilities.

### **Your responsibility**

Value and consider diversity in recommendations, program and policy advocacy.

Speak up if you see or hear anything not in the spirit of our commitment to fairness, equity and inclusivity or if you are concerned about discriminatory behaviours.

Know the policies that guide behaviour, address gender inequality and challenge attitudes and behaviours around issues such as violence against women.

Workplace diversity and inclusion ensures everyone enjoys the opportunity for full participation. City of Melbourne supports the development and achievement of well-informed and culturally-appropriate business outcomes. It also involves managing and recognising the value of individual differences in the workplace.

Diversity and inclusion are important because we value and embrace all contributions. Everyone is able to



bring something unique due to different backgrounds, varying work and life experiences, and multiple perspectives. Collectively this makes us a better organisation.

### **Ask yourself**

Am I being fair and respectful?

Are my personal feelings, prejudices or preferences influencing my decisions?

Am I using inclusive language?

How will I respond if I witness behaviour that is not respectful?

## **Section 3: Harassment and bullying**

Harassment occurs when someone engages in conduct that would make a reasonable person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated because of their age, race, religion, gender or gender expression, sexual orientation or some other attribute specified under anti-discrimination legislation.

Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed toward an individual or group of individuals that creates a risk to health and safety. There is no place for harassment or bullying at the City of Melbourne. Not only does it go against our values, it is unlawful and breaches our policies. It is fundamental that we recognise and value the diversity of others, and ensure that City of Melbourne is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.

### **What is bullying?**

Bullying occurs when a person or group of people repeatedly act unreasonably towards an individual or a group.

Unreasonable behaviour includes victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening. Whether the behaviour would be considered as unreasonable is based on whether a reasonable person might see the behaviour as unreasonable in the circumstances. Bullying behaviour creates a risk to health and safety.

### **The Principles**

The City of Melbourne does not tolerate bullying or harassment.

We do not tolerate any action, conduct or behaviour that is humiliating, intimidating or hostile.

Bullying, harassment and discrimination may lead to removal from the Committee.

### **Your responsibility**

1. Speak up and tell the person if you're upset by their actions or behaviour. Explain why and ask them to stop.
2. Report inappropriate behaviour.
3. We all have a responsibility to create a positive, safe environment which is free from harassment, discrimination and bullying.

### **Ask yourself**

- Have I behaved in an intimidating or threatening manner?
- Have I made inappropriate jokes or comments?
- Have I distributed or displayed potentially offensive material? If I'm witnessing behaviour that goes against our values, do I need to step in and say something?
- Am I supporting a culture of inclusion?

*Examples of bullying include:*

- behaving aggressively
- teasing or practical jokes
- pressuring someone to behave inappropriately
- excluding someone from work-related events
- unreasonable work demands.

## **Section 4: Drug and alcohol use and a smoke-free workplace**

We're committed to ensuring that you're able to safely perform the requirements of the role as a Committee member.

### **The Principles**

If you are affected by alcohol or drugs, you should not attend a committee meeting.

The possession or use of illegal drugs at any City of Melbourne location is strictly prohibited in line with the law.

Exposure to other people's smoke is a hazard. That's why it's important that City of Melbourne premises are smoke-free.

### **Your responsibility**

1. Do not smoke or use an e-cigarette within any of our premises or vehicles, or within five metres of any entry point to our premises and vehicles.
2. Be aware of the impacts of your smoke drift on other people's health. Exposure to high levels of environmental tobacco smoke can increase the risk of heart disease by 50 to 60 per cent, as well as increasing the risk of stroke and nose and sinus cancer among non-smokers.
3. Do not litter. Protect our buildings and equipment through keeping them clean and discarding of cigarette butts appropriately.

Thank you for reading the Homelessness Advisory Committee Code of Conduct. It provides you with acceptable standards of behaviour for the way we work. As a member of a City of Melbourne committee you are required to adhere to and uphold these standards.

For further information about City of Melbourne's Code of Conduct, go to [Code of Conduct and Protocol](#)