

MEMBER PROFILE – ANNA HOLLAND

This month we have interviewed Anna Holland, Principal Advisor, Customer Relations, City of Hobart and LG Professionals Board Member.

Anna, what do you do in your role and how long have you been doing it?

Currently, I am the Principal Advisor of Customer Relations at the City of Hobart. I have held this role for 13 months.

I have been at the City of Hobart for 4.5 years and in Local Government for 18 years.

For most of my 18 years, I worked as an internal service provider and I have thoroughly enjoyed the switch to be more involved with the front line and the customers in general.

My role is working with the Council staff to ensure that the community get the best result from their experience with the City of Hobart.

As Richard Branson said, treat your staff well, and they will treat your customers well. For me, this is about making it easy for the staff to do their job through easy access to systems and information and having simple logical internal processes and policy.

I am passionate about looking at the process and finding efficiency, which ultimately helps both the staff and in turn the community.

Additionally, I have a strong interest in the complaint's management process – ideally, we should not get to the complaint stage but how we handle it once it gets there is critical.

I believe it's important to embrace the complaints and criticism as it's the best way to learn and improve.

What made you want to work in Local Government?

I had spent eight years working for a small family run ICT consultancy and began to crave the experience of working in a larger organisation. The job that presented within Local Government was appealing as it was in my municipality and I felt it would be great to learn how larger publicly funded organisations operate, and the Council in question was looking after my needs as a ratepayer.

The learnings I gained and continue to gain have been very insightful. Working for a community is ever-evolving. Community expectations and desires continue to change and increase every year. It is fascinating to see the community priorities and interests change over the years.

What made you join LG Professionals Tasmania?

I participated in the Management Challenge very early on in my career within Local Government. I found it a very rewarding experience and it introduced me to what was then the LGMA. It took a few years and a couple of kids before I joined the association properly. I think it's very important to be involved in your own Industry Association, being part of something bigger than yourself is something everyone should do.

I love being part of Local Government and I want the LGPro to be relevant to its members, I want Local Government employees to be proud of their organisation and what it achieves. The LGPro is an avenue to

share experiences, gain learnings and celebrate achievements on an individual Council level and at the sector level.

What interests do you have outside of work?

I love to travel and I love food + wine, so if I can combine the two my life is complete. One of my best travel experiences was doing a wine trail through Mendoza – Argentina. The drive across the Andes to get there was an experience in itself, let alone the amazing degustation menus with matched wine experiences. We soon learnt to eat slow and drink fast. South America is certainly a favourite destination of mine.

Having recently bought some acreage the travel has been curbed, while we spend some time setting up a small hobby farm..... looking to plant some Malbec grapes and recreate our Argentinian wine experience at home! Scope creep has meant the time frames have blown out and the project plan for the first bottle of wine is certainly not on track.

If you could give your 12-year-old self 1 piece of advice what would it be?

Trust yourself, and trust your judgement. If you have confidence in yourself the rest will follow.

Surround yourself with people smarter than you and learn everything you can from them then use your confidence to achieve your goals.

What is something most people don't know about you?

I am a first-generation immigrant child; my parents were political refugees from Eastern Europe. I grew up in a household with a non-English speaking background.

What do you think are some of the biggest challenges facing the sector at the moment?

Community expectations are increasing, our customers want more from us, more access to Council officers, more information, more services, more quickly. The community demands are far higher than when I first entered Local Government.

Workforce planning and retention are changing, traditional work patterns are being challenged by staff, making it harder to meet community expectations.

Our community is more informed and wants to be more involved in every decision made and every dollar spent.

There is a greater passion amongst our community and there are strong opposing views on contentious issues, again making it harder to satisfy community expectations and desires.

The old saying of 'do more with less' is very true in Local Government. The community expectation is blurring the lines of what was traditionally the Council's role within the Community.

Biggest regret outside of work in the past 10 years?

Not investing in 'those' shares... not picking the winning lotto numbers.... not betting on the Melbourne Cup winner....

On a serious note, I think that there are always regrets along the way, but I take the perspective that everything that does not go to plan helps you learn, adapt and improve.



Without regrets, I wouldn't be the person I am today. (I'm sure some may say that wouldn't be a bad thing.
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