

Job Outline

Post: Complaints and Information Manager

Location: HQ, Inverness – hybrid working available

Hours: 35

Duration: Permanent

Cluster: Corporate

Grade: HC9

Contact Name: Donna Sutherland

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Job Purpose

This post sits within the Corporate Cluster as part of the Legal and Corporate Governance Section. The role is within the wider Insurance, Risk Management, Complaints and Information Team.

To provide leadership and strategic oversight of the Council's Complaints and Information functions, ensuring high-quality, timely, and legally compliant handling of complaints, Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, Subject Access Requests (SARs), MP/MSP correspondence, and wider customer contact.

The post holder will champion excellence in complaint resolution and information governance best practice, support statutory compliance (including Data Protection and FOI legislation), and act as a key liaison with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to support adherence to the Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP), strengthen quality assurance, and embed learning across the organisation.

The role will lead and coach staff, drive continuous improvement, promote accountability across services, and use insight and data to enhance customer experience and organisational performance.

Job Description – Key Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership of the Complaints & Information Team

- Ensure complaints, FOI and SAR responses meet statutory deadlines, Council policies, and quality standards.
- Provide oversight of all customer contact types, ensuring accuracy, professionalism, and consistency of responses across the Council.
- Lead, motivate and develop the Complaints and Information team, ensuring high staff performance, resilience and a positive, customer-focused culture.
- Oversee rota planning, resource allocation, and workload distribution to maintain efficient operations.
- Oversight of the quality assurance processes, including audit checks on decision-making, tone, reasoning and legislative compliance.
- Support service areas in meeting their responsibilities under the Complaints Procedure and FOI/Data Protection legislation and reinforce that customer service is a shared organisational responsibility.
- Represent the Council at relevant internal and external meetings.
- Line Management of Senior Complaints & Information Officers, and Complaints & Information Officers.
- Lead on staff recruitment and supporting staff development plans

Information Governance & Data Protection

- Maintain and promote a strong working knowledge of Data Protection, FOI, Records Management and Information Governance requirements.
- In the absence of the Data Protection Officer support the Senior team and Service staff in management of data breaches.

SPSO Liaison, Compliance & External Accountability

- Act as the primary liaison with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), ensuring robust and comprehensive responses to investigations and enquiries.
 - Ensure full organisational compliance with the SPSO's Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) and associated guidance.
 - Lead internal learning reviews arising from SPSO decisions, identifying improvement actions and ensuring these are communicated and embedded across services.
 - Produce high-quality reports, trend analysis, lessons-learned summaries, and improvement recommendations for senior management and elected members.
 - Monitor compliance with national complaint-handling standards and participate in national networks to share best practice.
 - Act as the primary liaison with the Scottish Information Commissioner to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and requests from them regarding appeals.
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Performance Management, Quality Assurance & Improvement

- Ensure accurate and timely production of performance information for internal performance reports and external publication.
- Analyse customer insights, complaint trends, FOI themes and patterns to identify systemic issues and areas for improvement and follow these up with service stakeholders.
- Lead and support improvement initiatives across services, encouraging innovation, efficiency and customer-focused redesign.
- Oversee the development and maintenance of a library of knowledge articles, standard responses, guidance materials, and staff training resources.
- Work collaboratively with other Council teams to improve CRM functionality and customer contact systems.

Corporate Engagement

- Work across the organisation to build strong relationships with senior managers and influence decision-making relating to complaints, FOI, and service improvement.
- Provide professional advice to managers, ensuring responses reflect corporate priorities, policy context, legal requirements and best practice.
- Represent the Council at national and regional groups, contributing to sector-wide improvement work.
- Support internal and external audits, prepare evidence and ensure agreed actions are implemented.

Other Duties

The postholder may be required to undertake any other duties appropriate to the level of the post.

Duties and responsibilities will vary from time to time.



Person Specification

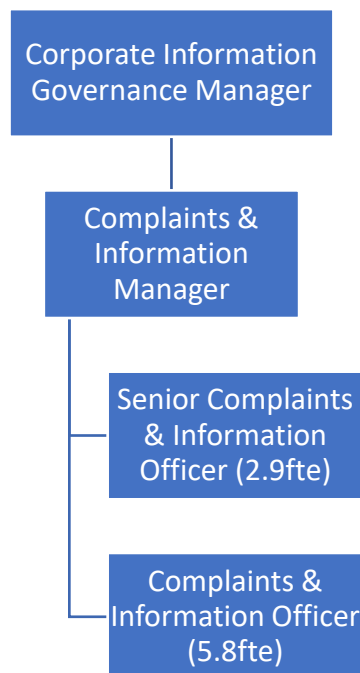
Essential

1. Significant experience in customer service, complaint/FOI handling or resolution within a large and complex organisation.
2. Experience of leading teams and developing staff capability.
3. Strong understanding of FOI legislation, data protection requirements, and information governance principles.
4. Experience of quality improvement, service redesign or innovation.
5. Proven ability to analyse data, identify insights and drive change and improvement across services.
6. Experience using CRM systems to record, analyse and improve outcomes.
7. Ability to build influential, high-trust relationships with senior leaders and provide authoritative advice.
8. Ability to work to deadlines, manage competing priorities and maintain accuracy under pressure.
9. Strong communication skills, including committee report writing and presenting to diverse audiences.
10. The ability to work independently, exercise sound judgement and professional autonomy.

Desirable

11. Experience participating in national complaint or information governance networks.
 12. Experience contributing to policies, procedures or corporate governance frameworks.
 13. Knowledge of SPSO requirements and experience managing Ombudsman correspondence or investigations.
 14. An understanding of the range of Council services and organisational structure
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Structure Chart (July 2026)



Health and Safety

Health & Safety is an integral part of any role within the Highland Council. As such we would expect that all employees:

- Become familiar with Violent Incident and Accident reporting procedures and comply with them.
- Undertake a continual program of Risk Assessment in relation to their role within Highland Council.
- Have an understanding of the importance of Health and Safety in the workplace and familiarise themselves with the Highland Council's Health & Safety Procedures.

