

Job Description

Job title	Head of Nature and Climate Response
Directorate	Regeneration, Culture and Environment
Division	Community and Culture
	Service Manager
Reports to	Chief Leisure and Environment Officer

Main purpose of the job:

To provide strategic leadership and operational management for the enhancement of Medway's natural environment and the delivery of the Council's response to climate change.

The role is responsible for developing and implementing nature and climate strategies, managing key environmental programmes and partnerships, ensuring statutory obligations are fulfilled and delivering effective services that support the Council's priorities and long-term sustainability objectives.

Accountabilities and Outcomes:

1. Lead the development and implementation of a comprehensive nature strategy for Medway, supporting the protection and enhancement of the natural landscape.
2. Lead the development and delivery of Medway's climate response strategy, ensuring co-ordinated action the Council and partners.
3. Ensure the service meets all relevant statutory duties and environmental obligations.
4. Maintain effective budgetary control, managing income and expenditure to support service delivery and value for money.
5. Provide management oversight of environment-related partnerships hosted by Medway Council, including Birdwise and the Medway Swale Estuary Partnership.
6. Lead the strategic management and delivery of the Medway trees team and associated programme.
7. Demonstrate a clear understanding of Council priorities and ensure the service contributes effectively to wider corporate and place-based objectives.
8. Support, develop and motivate staff through effective leadership, performance management and professional development.

At manager's discretion, other activities may be assigned that fit the job description.

Champion strategic stakeholder engagement to advance the [One Medway Council Plan](#) ensuring our [values and behaviours](#) are consistently modelled and embedded across all levels of the organisation.

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Key Corporate Accountabilities:

To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives and targets.

To understand and actively keep up to date with GDPR responsibilities, including completing regular refresher training.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all employees are required to act in such a way that safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

As a corporate parent, all council employees are responsible for ensuring the well-being and positive outcomes of Medway's care-experienced children and young people.

To participate in the Performance Appraisal process and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs utilising the Career Progression Framework.

Work in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Promoting equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and improving the quality of life and opportunities for everyone living and working in Medway.

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.

To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder.

Promote the Medway Carbon Neutral by 2050 commitment; supporting the Council action plan to ensure we play our part in addressing the climate emergency.

Medway Council is a Category One responder in relation to the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and as a result all staff working for the Authority may be asked to carry out Category One response duties or stand in the role of another member of staff who is responding to a Major Civil Incident.

Organisation:

This role reports to the [Chief Leisure and Environment Officer](#)

Initiative and independence

The role requires a high degree of initiative and independence, to both drive operational effectiveness and to play a leading management role within the service to set strategic direction.

The Head of Nature and Climate Response will use key identified priorities at both Council and service level to drive improvement for residents, including but not limited to alignment with the One Medway Council Plan, Marmot Place, Local Plan and service strategies.

The Head of Nature and Climate Response will develop trusted partnerships with internal colleagues and external partners to create a culture of continual improvement within the service which maximises the benefits to customers and residents.

The Head of Nature and Climate Response will demonstrate a clear understanding of finance, being able to monitor revenue and capital budgets effectively and to work with the senior colleagues to develop business cases where relevant.

The Head of Nature and Climate Response will develop a strong working relationship with Members, being able to provide clear verbal and written advice and reports.

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To role needs to meet targets and to work both independently and under pressure with at times conflicting demands |

The role needs to be able to work independently and to tight deadlines, meeting requirements of the Council's constitution and scheme of delegation. |

Supervision and Management of Staff

The Head of Nature and Climate Response will have direct line management for the Nature and Biodiversity Manager and the Climate Response Team Leader.

The Head of Contracts and Investments (Leisure and Environment) will have indirect responsibility for a range of nature and climate response staff, including partnerships hosted by Medway Council.

Number of people managed by postholder: 30 |

Job Context

The Head of Nature and Climate Response is responsible for the management of nature and climate response policies and partnerships which directly impact residents and delivery of the One Medway Council Plan and associated strategies.

Management of these activities together with staff career development play an integral role in ensuring customer satisfaction and reputational impact.

The main contacts for whom the Head of Nature and Climate Response will be expected to work effectively with include (but are not limited to): senior directorate leadership, finance, communications and marketing, HR and health and safety; legal; Members including lead Portfolio Holders in Sport, Greenspaces and Climate Response; colleagues and senior managers across the Place directorate; key contacts within national and regional organisations, external service delivery partners, and wider stakeholders including residents and members of the community.

The Head of Nature and Climate Response will likely receive direct communication from members of the public, particularly if dissatisfied or upset with services and/or seeking action from the Council in respect of the relevant services.

Resources

The Head of Nature and Climate Response is expected to comply with all GDPR and Information Governance policies when handling data, including physical documents. They must maintain allocated hardware, such as laptops, to ensure secure and efficient work.

The role involves access to personal and financial data through case files, management systems, and service-related records. As part of their budgetary responsibilities, the Head of Nature and Climate Response will use this data to support financial oversight.

The Head of Nature and Climate Response and will be responsible for ensuring the service is managed in accordance with all statutory and contractual requirements. |

Work Environment:

Working Style

HYBRID - a flexible working arrangement whereby an employee can undertake their work either in the office and/or partially or mainly from home on a temporary or permanent basis. |

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Work Demands

The Head of Nature and Climate Response will need to respond to a wide range of, and sometimes competing, demands. These include Members, customers, visitors and residents. The post holder will need to be able to put in place clear operating procedures which enable speedy and consistent responses, commensurate to the particular requirements of the inquiry.

The Head of Nature and Climate Response will be required to balance a range of projects and priorities at any given time, demonstrating an ability for clear thinking in pressured situations together with strong communication with colleagues and both internal and external partners.

The Head of Nature and Climate Response will be effective at managing deadlines, responding to changing circumstances in line with Council priorities.

The Head of Nature and Climate Response will demonstrate an ability to calmly resolve areas of potential conflict, seeking to understand respective viewpoints and working collaboratively to find the appropriate solution.

The post holder will develop strong partnerships with relevant regional and national organisations to promote and enhance Medway as an exemplar in developing nature and climate response initiatives.

Need to meet targets and to work both independently and under pressure with at times conflicting demands |

Physical Demands

The role carries minimal physical demands, with most responsibilities centred around professional engagement and communication. The post holder will frequently attend meetings, many of which will take place in office settings or external venues. In addition to these in-person commitments, a significant portion of meetings will be conducted virtually, requiring extended periods of laptop use.

Communication will largely be conducted through email and other forms of electronic written correspondence. While this facilitates efficient interaction, it is acknowledged that the volume of digital communication may have implications for manual dexterity over time

Working Conditions

There are no exposures to undesirable working conditions |

Work Context

Visits to a wide range of outdoor locations, Council buildings and external partners, will be required as part of the role. The Head of Nature and Climate Response is expected to attend internal and external events. |

Person specification

For appointment to the role at the entry point of the range all level A1 criteria must be evidenced through the selection process. All new appointments to a senior role in the Council are required to undertake a Medway specific programme of training and learning during the probation period which covers all Level A2 criteria, as detailed in the Career Profession Framework.

Qualifications

[Institute of Leadership and Management Level 5 qualification (or equivalent) plus demonstrable experience of working in Greenspaces and/or Climate Response at senior level.]

Successful completion of Medway Council service manager training modules

[Evidence of continued professional development relevant to the responsibilities of the role]

[Institute of Leadership and Management Level 7 qualification, or relevant equivalent as agreed prior to commencement with Chief Leisure and Environment Officer.]

Knowledge

[Detailed knowledge of Medway's environment and relevant statutory responsibilities.

Demonstrable understanding of One Medway Council Plan and the role Nature and Climate Response play in delivering against objectives.]

Detailed knowledge of Nature and Climate Response service

Detailed knowledge of key external investment partners and associated funding streams

Understanding budgeting, and financial analysis to support decision-making and resource allocation.

Ability to analyse and interpret data to inform strategic and operational decisions

[Knowledge of models and strategies for planning, implementing, and sustaining organisational change effectively

Comprehensive understanding of national and local political priorities and their impact on Nature and Climate Response.]

Comprehensive knowledge of key areas within the Sport, Greenspaces and Climate Response services.

Clear understanding of the activities, priorities and objectives of the Council

Excellent understanding of the political context at regional and local level and ability to work with Elected Members in a constructive and sensitive way.

Detailed knowledge of regional and national policy related to Leisure and Environment

Experience

[At least 10 years' experience in the Nature and/or Climate Response field with a local authority or relevant equivalent.

Demonstrable experience of leading and managing complex teams.

Significant and demonstrable experience in developing successful internal and external partnerships]

Experience of effective and proactive management of staff in a local authority or relevant equivalent.

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Experience of managing projects and programmes at a senior level within a large organisation

Demonstrable success in leading, managing and empowering staff to deliver inclusive and high-quality services with tangible benefits to residents. |

Demonstrable experience contributing to the development and implementation of strategy, policy, and business plans.

Experience of working collaboratively with partners and stakeholders to support service objectives.

Experience managing projects and programmes with measurable outcomes.

Experience of successful delivery of commercial operations providing improved annual income performance. |

Skills

Highly developed communication skills to confidently present complex/sensitive information in an understandable way, adapting the style to a range of audiences.

Ability to deal with very high levels of work-related pressure, for example, from deadlines, interruptions or conflicting demands.

Ability to demonstrate effective ICT skills and knowledge.

Demonstrable ability to negotiate and deliver outputs of the highest quality that will benefit customers using Medway Sport, Greenspaces and Climate Response.

Ability to work with internal and external partners to deliver mutually beneficial solutions which align with the One Medway Council Plan and associated strategies |

Demonstrable ability to lead effective change management programmes, adapting to Council priorities and the needs of residents.

Ability to demonstrate effective coaching and mentoring of team to deliver high-performing service. |

Ability to build strong professional partnerships with managers, stakeholders and Elected Members.

Demonstrate sound judgement in resolving service issues and improving processes.

Strong interpersonal skills including communication and collaboration.

Good planning, organisational, and problem-solving skills |