

Job Description

Job title	Political Assistant>
Directorate	BUSINESS : Business Support
Division	Legal & Governance
Range	MPR 4
Reports to	Assistant Director Legal and Governance and Leader of Political Group

Main purpose of the job:

< Provide strategy and administrative support to the Leader and members of the Group as required, including research and advice on policy issue to support preparation of speeches and briefing notes and communication management such as website, social media and publications.>

Liaise with stakeholders in a way that promotes the [One Medway Council Plan](#) and embeds our [values and behaviours](#).

Accountabilities and outcomes:

< To provide research and advice on policy issues, preparing speeches and briefing notes

To provide management of the Group's website, social media and strategy, and Group materials

To provide both administrative and strategy support to the Leader and members of the Group as required

To liaise with the Leader, Group Secretary, Group members, Council officers, local and national bodies such as MPs, local authorities, the relevant national party, professional and voluntary bodies and promote information exchange.

To maintain a strong rapport with local media, routinely drafting replies and organising interviews on behalf of portfolio holders. They should also co-ordinate official replies from/ to members of the public on behalf of the Leader and the Group.

To keep abreast of new legislation and of political developments of a national, regional and in particular local nature. Gather, analyse, interpret and circulate information from external sources as necessary for use by the Group. Monitor publications and identify areas of potential interest to the Group and brief the Leader accordingly.

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To develop an outstanding cross cutting working relationship with officers throughout much of the council, maintaining an excellent understanding of the functions, operations and programmes of the Council and its directorates so that information can be readily obtained.

To attend Cabinet, Council, Scrutiny or other meetings, as required, and to keep abreast of items being considered at such meetings to support and assist the Members of the Group as well as attending internally and externally organised conferences, seminars and meetings and report back to the Leader, or Members of the Group as appropriate.

To be professionally empathetic to the aims of the Political Party of the Group by which engaged.

To identify training and development needs of individual political group members and produce a draft training plan.>

At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.

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 into the role of another member of staff who is responding to a Major Civil Incident.

Organisation:

This role reports to the Assistant Director Legal and Governance and Leader of Group

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The post holder will not be required to line manage others but may be required to direct, coordinate or train other employees.

The post holder will be required to liaise with all stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation.

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.

Person specification

All criteria at level A are considered essential unless stated otherwise.

Qualifications

Level A

- < Good general level of education with five GCSE grade 'C' equivalent or above, or equivalent level 2 qualification, to include Maths and English.>

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

< Qualified in appropriate first aid course >

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

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Knowledge

Level A

- < Good knowledge and understanding of Local Government and the interaction between Members and officers.
- Good knowledge of Party's rules and regulations of local government.
- Good knowledge of health & safety and well-being issues and the application of these in relation to the development of policy and/or production of briefings etc.
- A developed practical and procedural knowledge of undertaking and presenting policy research in a political setting as well as the knowledge to be able to turn theory into practical applications,
- Good knowledge about the governance arrangements in local government such as the structure of decision-making, the role of the constitution, and how decisions are made.>

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

- < Developed knowledge and understanding of the nature of Local Government and the relations between Members and officers.
- Developed knowledge of Party's rules and regulations of local government.
- A good working knowledge of the Council's Constitution, particularly the rules of debate and procedures relating to motions and questions and demonstrable evidence of using this to provide good quality advice and guidance to the Group.
- Good understanding of the Council's priorities and providing consistent and confident advice to the Group about how to implement them (or seek to amend them) through the Council's decision-making structure.
- Good understanding of the Council's rules for the secure and safe handling of data and information, and GDPR and implementing them in your day-to-day work using emails and the internet.
- Practical knowledge of relevant committee management software (Mod.gov) to support/ train members for their use.
- Good understanding of the council's code of conduct for elected members and an ability to foresee potential issues arising for their group members and pre-emptively support them to seek advice.
- Good working knowledge of the members register of interests to be able to review the document completed by members and identify obvious/ common omissions / incorrect entries.>

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Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

- < A developed working knowledge of the Council's Constitution, particularly the rules of debate and procedures relating to motions and questions and demonstrable evidence of using this to provide good quality advice and guidance to the Group.
 - Developed understanding of the Council's priorities and providing consistent and confident advice to the Group about how to implement them (or seek to amend them) through the Council's decision-making structure.
 - Developed understanding of the council's rules for the secure and safe handling of data and information, and GDPR and implementing them in your day to day work using emails and the internet.>
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Experience

Level A

- < Experience of identifying and acting on own development needs.
- Experience in using Microsoft packages such as, Word, Excel and Microsoft Outlook at an advanced level, including spreadsheets with formulae, mail merge, etc.
- Administration experience including management of website, social media and creation of a variety of content in a political environment.
- Experience of successfully handling sensitive policy issues, being politically sensitive and identifying issues of local importance.
- Experience of maintaining confidentiality within a variety of work-based scenarios.
- Experience of managing time effectively, planning own workload and setting appropriate objectives and deadlines.>

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

- < Experience of Web publishing and system content management.
- Experience of being politically sensitive, aware of the political issues within the council and nationally.
- Experience of developing innovative responses relating to diverse subjects with extensive policy or service implications.
- Experience of exercising developed influencing, negotiating and persuasive skills, or advocacy, leading to the adoption of policies, strategies and courses of action that might not otherwise have been taken.
- Experience of regularly and successfully prioritising and planning own work to achieve successful completion of projects or programmes.
- Experience of consistently and regularly meeting tight deadlines, producing high quality work.
- Experience of coping well under extreme pressure and difficult situations, remaining calm, respectful, taking responsibility for own well-being.
- Experience of engaging with members to identify their training needs based on gaps in skills, knowledge, experience and support the development of individual training plans, which can then be consolidated into political group training plans.
- Experience of researching policy background papers and producing succinct analysis in a local authority setting.>

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

- < Experience of keeping abreast of local and national development in several service areas and using information to provide good quality advice and guidance to the Group.>
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Skills

Level A

- < Ability to interpret complex information and situations, develop medium-to-long term solutions or plans for the Group, that require a range of imaginative solutions and responses and involves application of fresh and innovative thinking.
- Developed communication skills with the ability to present complex and/or sensitive information in an understandable way, using a variety of methods across a range of audiences.
- Ability to produce accurate high quality social media content, often with quick turnaround times.
- Ability to problem solve using established procedures and process to support without ready access to senior managers.
- Ability to develop and maintain working relationships with a variety of stakeholders, including local media, local and national bodies such as MPs, local authorities, professional and voluntary bodies and promote information exchange.
- Ability to deal with high levels of work-related pressure, for example from deadlines, interruptions or conflicting demands.
- Ability to display integrity, fairness, and high personal and professional standards.
- Able to demonstrate professional empathy with the aims of the Political Party by which engaged.
- Understands and complies with the council's Values and Behaviours, and priorities and the impact of them on policies the Group are considering or implementing
- Ability to present policy research in a political setting as well as the ability to turn theoretical knowledge into practical applications.
- Ability to undertake First Aid training.>

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

- < Able to pro-actively identify ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness across the Groups' activities and demonstrably able to be flexible to changes in work, deadlines and requirements.
- Highly developed communication skills with the ability to build and maintain relationships with a variety of stakeholders.
- Demonstrably applies the principles and practical implementation of the Council's Values and Behaviours, and priorities, to policies being considered or implemented by the Group.
- The ability to establish and use a sophisticated network of key stakeholders to ensure information sources are robust.>

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

- < Able to provide guidance and lead as a role model to the Group on the secure and safe handling of data and information, and the implications of GDPR.
- Demonstrably encourages all Group members to apply the principles and practical implementation of the Council's Values and Behaviours, and priorities, to all policies being considered and implemented.>