

Job Description

Job title	Electoral Services Manager
Directorate	BUSINESS : Business Support
Division	Legal & Governance
Range	MPR 7
Reports to	Assistant Director Legal and Governance, (and ERO and RO)

Main purpose of the job:

To lead and manage the Council's Electoral Services function

To be the council's most senior professional advisor in respect of the elections service, electoral registration and the conduct of elections and referenda

To develop and implement strategies for the successful completion of the annual canvass

To develop and maintain a strong strategic project management approach to the various activities of the team

To develop and maintain the property database as a strategic tool

To provide high quality, impartial advice, support and guidance

To develop and implement a strategy for the successful operation of the issue and opening of postal votes during elections and referenda

To be responsible for ensuring that the requirements and responsibilities of the Data Controller (Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer) are fully met,

To develop and maintain a fraud awareness and security strategy

To be responsible for the management and monitoring of the Electoral Services budget

To undertake projects as required

To ensure that relevant software updates have been installed

To develop and deliver a training plan for staff and other relevant stakeholders

To produce draft briefing notes for the ERO and RO on changes to the law and best practice

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

Accountabilities and outcomes:

As the most senior officer in the elections service to lead and manage the Council's Electoral Services function on behalf of the Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer, including providing support to the rest of the team on complex technical and politically sensitive issues as they arise, allocating and directing work, recruiting, supervising and training staff.

To develop and implement strategies for the successful completion of the annual canvass meeting the functions' objectives of maximising a complete and accurate register of electors, in particular increasing registration rates amongst groups least likely to register and vote.

To develop and maintain a strong strategic project management approach to the various activities of the team and pro-actively keep abreast of good and innovative practice to ensure the teams' success.

To develop and maintain the property database as a strategic tool for the registration of electors, conduct of elections and referenda and implementation of boundary reviews including developing data matching and data mining.

To provide high quality, impartial advice, support and guidance to the public, candidates and agents, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer on complex electoral registration and elections issues, using own technical knowledge, national guidance and good practice undertaking research, evaluation and analysis to formulate an outcome.

To develop and implement a strategy for the successful operation of the issue and opening of postal votes during elections and referenda ensuring full compliance with all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements. To be responsible for other specific activities as allocated during elections and referenda etc.

To be responsible for ensuring that the requirements and responsibilities of the Data Controller (Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer) are fully met, including development and maintenance of retention policies, impact assessments etc.

To develop and maintain a fraud awareness and security strategy relating to electoral registration, absent voting and election activities.

To be responsible for the management and monitoring of the Electoral Services budget (approximately £446,000) and the elections budget (approximately £350,000) and assist with the collation of election accounts for submission to the Cabinet Office.

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To undertake projects as required such as planning and implementing boundary reviews, reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations, Community Governance Reviews etc.

To ensure that relevant software updates have been installed and tested in a safe environment

To develop and deliver a training plan to ensure team members are kept up to date with changes in law and best practice

To develop and deliver a training plan for relevant stakeholders involved in elections and or referenda

To produce draft briefing notes for the ERO and RO on changes to the law and best practice, recommend changes to increase effectiveness and efficiency of the service

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 the ERO and RO.

The post holder will have line management responsibility.

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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

- Working towards the Association of Electoral Administrators Diploma or, hold a relevant academic, professional or management qualification >

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

- Hold the Association of Electoral Administrators Diploma, a relevant academic, professional or management qualification >

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

- <Hold the Association of Electoral Administrators Diploma
 - Pro-actively identifies further training and development for self-improvement
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Knowledge

Level A

- A thorough, detailed and high level of knowledge and understanding of the current extensive electoral legislative framework and good practice, and experience of applying such knowledge and understanding, including a clear understanding of matters relating to boundaries
- Good Understanding the requirements of Data Protection and relevant employment and health & safety legislation, and their impact on the management of electoral services
- A developed understanding of local government political structures and the role of members as well as an understanding of the role of other organisations involved in the conduct of electoral registration and elections and the development of good practice
- Good Understanding of the concepts of finance and budgeting, and ability to undertake accounting for the costs associated with the annual canvass and conduct of elections in particular and monitoring budgets and forecasting year end expenditure
- Good Understanding of health & safety issues in relation to the work undertaken by the team, canvassers and polling station staff and application of these in the day to day running of the team, annual canvass and election activities
- Good Understanding of how GDPR relates to sharing of information from the open and full registers, requests to be removed from the register of electors, Subject Access Requests, Freedom of Information requests and the right to be forgotten. Taking the lead on responding to FOI requests allocated to the service>

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

- Utilises resources that enable pro-active curiosity to keep abreast of Electoral Commission, AEA guidance and support, and good and emerging practice at other local authorities and offering support to rest of team to raise awareness of such guidance, support and good practice to be used in daily operations
- Good knowledge and demonstrable experience of undertaking and co-ordinating data matching exercises and of using GIS systems for mapping
- Developed Understanding of the requirements of Data Protection and relevant employment and health & safety legislation, and their impact on the management of electoral services
- An expert understanding of local government political structures and the role of members as well as an understanding of the role of other organisations involved in the conduct of electoral registration and elections and the development of good practice

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- Developed Understanding of the concepts of finance and budgeting, and ability to undertake accounting for the costs associated with the annual canvass and conduct of elections in particular and monitoring budgets and forecasting year end expenditure
- Developed Understanding of health & safety issues in relation to the work undertaken by the team, canvassers and polling station staff and application of these in the day to day running of the team, annual canvass and election activities
- Developed Understanding of how GDPR relates to sharing of information from the open and full registers, requests to be removed from the register of electors, Subject Access Requests, Freedom of Information requests and the right to be forgotten. Taking the lead on responding to FOI requests allocated to the service

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

- Demonstrably respected widely as the Council's expert on elections and electoral registration
- Expert knowledge and demonstrable experience of undertaking and co-ordinating data matching exercises and of using GIS systems for mapping

Experience

Level A

- More than 5 years relevant experience in electoral services and elections in a similar capacity to this post and in an authority of a similar size and type to Medway.
- Experience of managing the complete process for the registration of electors, including the annual canvass, on-going maintenance of the Register, reviews and objections and annual declarations as well as the absent voting processes
- Experience of using electoral administration software and databases and the maintenance of the property database for the planning and conduct of elections, the production and maintenance of the register of electors and boundary reviews amongst other uses
- Experience and evidence of a successful record in the planning and organisation of all aspects of elections, including District, Parish, Parliamentary, Police and Crime Commissioner elections and referenda including the development of comprehensive project plans, risk registers, assessing nomination papers, dealing with prospective and actual candidates and agents, liaison with print and other suppliers, developing & delivering training to polling station staff
- Experience of effectively managing professional and administrative staff, including prioritisation and allocation of work, provision of guidance and support, training and conduct of performance appraisals
- Experience of advising impartially a wide range of stakeholders on the application of the electoral statutory and regulatory frameworks, creating confidence and being persuasive
- Experience of using project management techniques for the delivery of time-driven projects including the annual canvass, postal vote identifier refresh, postal vote identifier rejection letters for example
- Experience of undertaking direct responsibility for the line management of a team, providing direction, empowering people to achieve objectives, providing advice, guidance and feedback, dealing with poor performance, encouraging ideas and undertaking performance development
- Experience of undertaking accessibility audits of polling stations, producing risk assessments for electoral services activities, including the annual canvass and elections taking into account the well-being of individuals or groups of people, aiming to provide satisfaction to voters, election and canvass staff and the core team
- Experience of working collaboratively with other team members to ensure consistency of approach and to keep abreast of issues and good practice.

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Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

- More than 6 years relevant experience in electoral services and elections in a similar capacity to this post and in an authority of a similar size and type to Medway
- Experience of pro-actively contributing to the enhancement and development of innovative changes to the annual canvass, maintenance of the Register, reviews and objections, annual declarations or absent voting processes
- Experience of providing guidance, support and training to members of the Team on all aspects of the electoral administration software
- Experience of managing one of the main activities relating to the conduct of elections, such as the opening of postal vote process, the count, the nomination process including acting as first point of contact for candidates and agents
- Experience of developing and delivering briefings for candidates and agents
- Experience of pro-actively contributing to the enhancement and development of existing procedures and processes, including the design of project monitoring documentation.
- Experience of being politically sensitive, aware of the political issues within the Council and nationally, whilst maintaining impartiality, and use awareness when dealing with Councillors, candidates and agents
- Experience of developing an innovative response to a new service or policy or change to existing service or policy
- Experience of keeping abreast of Electoral Commission, AEA guidance and support, and good and emerging practice at other local authorities and incorporating these as appropriate into recommendations for change at Medway
- Experience of exercising very highly developed influencing, counselling, negotiating and persuasive skills, or advocacy, to convince managers and members to adopt policies, strategies and courses of action they might not otherwise wish to take
- Experience of using discretion effectively and appropriately to develop effective, pragmatic solutions which balance the needs of the service with legal/policy requirements, and where action involving a calculated risk is justifiable
- Experience of ensuring that development plans are in place for all members of the team and of promoting development in others, giving regular constructive feedback on individual performance to motivate and ensure productivity
- Experience of taking the lead on a Polling District and Polling Place Review including developing a timetable, identifying key issues, developing options, convening and advising the member-level Working Group, producing the report to Full Council with the Working Groups; recommendations and undertaking all follow-up work
- Experience of developing realistic budgets in line with the service plan and monitoring using the Council's finance system
- Experience of developing a Privacy Policy, retention scheme and data audit for the activities of the Team as required by the Council's Information Governance Manager
- Experience of encouraging staff and the Team to put forward ideas for improvements to ways of working and acting on these were possible.

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

- More than 7 years relevant experience in electoral services and elections in a similar capacity to this post and in an authority of a similar size and type to Medway.
- Experience of developing creative ways of using and sharing information more effectively by organising the use of IT
- Experience of successfully using different leadership styles to deal with a series of complex situations or issues
- Experience of taking the lead on security and information governance for the service
- Experience of developing a high performing, motivated team capable of meeting key service objectives

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- Experience of initiating collaborative working with other Teams within Medway Council and externally, to assist with the development of innovative ideas for the service
 - Experience of monitoring and reporting on budgets in line with the service plan and monitoring using the Council's finance system
 - Confidence to diplomatically speak truth to power and collaboratively seek to mediate solutions
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Skills

Level A

- Ability to analyse and interpret complex electoral legislation, statutory timetables, procedures and policies as well as Data Protection, relevant employment and Health & Safety legislation and develop solutions and/or strategies to resolve difficult problems and issues.
- Ability to develop constructive and innovative responses to new legislative requirements or emerging good practice that have significant service implications
- Developed communication skills with the ability to effectively and persuasively present complex and/or sensitive information relating to electoral registration, elections, boundary reviews for example, in an understandable way, using a variety of methods across a range of audiences including members of the public, Councillors, candidates and their agents as well as election staff, senior officers and other Council staff.
- Ability to confidently work independently across the scope of the role
- A high level of IT competence, including the use of Microsoft Office products, with a focus of the production of spreadsheets with formulae and PowerPoint presentations
- Ability to build sound and productive working relationships with colleagues, partners and staff groups
- Ability to deal with high levels of work-related pressure, for example from strict, statutory deadlines, interruptions or conflicting demands, remaining calm, respectful, taking responsibility for own well-being and providing support and encouragement to other team members as a good role model
- Ability to plan and organise own and others work methodically, effectively and to meet changing, competing and tight statutory deadlines, maintaining high levels of quality and accuracy

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

- Ability to use different leadership styles where required, to deal with particular situations or issues
- Skilled in recognising and identifying the warning signs of stress and implementing strategies for stress management, undertaking stress risk assessments, coping mechanisms and support
- Able to create service plans and objectives to support the health, safety and well-being of the members of the Team, canvass and election staff
- Able to build team morale and recognise when additional support is required, involving employees in setting team objectives in line with corporate objectives and values.
- Good skills in managing stakeholder expectations and communicating effectively across a range of scenarios
- Skilled and experienced in managing difficult colleagues and adept in having challenging conversation with colleagues regarding their approach to work, behaviour, and conduct

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

- Developed skills in managing stakeholder expectations and communicating effectively when making plans or dealing with organisational change
- Demonstrable evidence of having taken a positive approach to building trust with all members of the Team

22 May 2026