

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Directorate & Section/Unit: Chief Executive - Legal and Governance
Salary Grade: Scale 5/6

Reporting to: Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager
Management Responsibility for: N/A

DMA Level: 1
DMA Span of control (Direct Reports): 0

Our People Values:

To uphold and act in accordance with Worcestershire County Council's values;

- **Customer Focus** – Ensure delivery of a high quality service which meet the needs of customers or Provide high quality services which meet the express needs of the community/customer
- **Can Do Culture** – Be proactive to achieve excellence, finding solutions and creative ways of working.
- **Freedom within Boundaries** - Make constructive change through cohesive decision making, ensuring services are responsive.

Purpose of job:

To support the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager in providing efficient and effective administrative services, with particular reference to the Overview and Scrutiny functions of the Council

Main Activities & Responsibilities:

- To implement agreed arrangements to put into effect overview and scrutiny exercises.
- To organise meetings of the assigned overview and scrutiny committees, panels or task groups including briefings, dealing with public notices and access requirements, arranging accommodation, equipment and catering as necessary and to ensure that the provisions of the Local Government Access to Information Act are complied with.
- To compile and produce agenda papers, produce reports, records of proceedings and any other correspondence or documentation as required.
- To attend meetings, recording proceedings to form the legal record of the authority's decisions, ensuring any administrative arrangements are carried out, and any comments and conclusions of the panel are summarised.
- To undertake work arising from meetings assigned, including liaison with officers of other departments and other agencies in implementing outcomes and informing those who need to know of decisions made.
- To liaise with the Chairmen, Scrutiny Lead Members and lead officers regarding the content of agendas and advising on the appropriateness of items for inclusion.
- To liaise with other officers, advisers and witnesses with regard to their input to the relevant scrutiny committee or task group.
- To contact and, if necessary, arrange visits to national and regional organisations and other authorities on behalf of the relevant scrutiny committee, panel or task group to identify best practice and make comparisons.
- To ensure that the views of external organisations and the public are effectively represented in the Overview and Scrutiny process.

- To assign tasks as appropriate to the democratic clerk and to ensure that their workload is at a reasonable level.
- To undertake research.
- To summarise and analyse material from public surveys and stakeholder meetings.
- To assist in the production of reports and recommendations.
- To assist in monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of recommendations arising out of such reports.
- To assist in relation to the Council's 'call in' procedures.
- To provide advice and assistance to elected members, council officers, external agencies, the press and the public on administrative, procedural and constitutional matters.
- To assist with the compilation of the monthly Forward Plan of key decisions.
- To maintain a good understanding of current legislation and regulations which have a direct bearing on the Council's Overview and Scrutiny functions.
- To maintain an awareness of the work of the Council's Committees.
- To contribute to the continuing development of the Council's democratic and constitutional structures and procedures.
- To advise on and set up new procedures to take account of any requirements that may arise under the Council's constitution.
- To seek legal and other advice as appropriate, on behalf of the scrutiny function, by directly accessing support from the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance.
- To secure, in liaison with the County Council's communications unit, appropriate publicity for the activities and recommendations of the scrutiny committees and task groups.
- To develop and sustain good working relationships with all Governance staff, other Council staff, Chairmen and other elected members and co-opted members and representatives of external organisations at local, regional and national level.
- To give advice to members of the public who wish to exercise rights to participate in meetings and to representatives of external organisations who have been invited to give evidence to overview and scrutiny.
- To support the work of the Governance Team during the absence of colleagues or at peak periods of work activity.
- To contribute to the development of the Legal and Governance Unit Business Plan and the delivery of objectives and targets contained within it.
- To assist in the development and maintenance of modern information systems in line with e-government initiatives and changing service needs.
- To ensure the maintenance of the Council's data systems, indexes, statutory registers, preparing and sending files for archiving.
- To contribute to the provision of timely and relevant information available via the Council's website.
- To contribute to developing effective services for the Unit's customers.

Generic Accountabilities:

- To maintain personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the job, participate in appropriate training activities and encourage and support staff in their development and training
- To undertake other such duties, training and/or hours of work as may be reasonably required and which are consistent with the general level of responsibility of this job
- To undertake health and safety duties commensurate with the job and/or as detailed in the Directorate's Health and Safety Policy
- The duties described in this job description must be carried out in a manner which promotes equality of opportunity, dignity and due respect for all employees and service users and is consistent with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy

Contacts:

In all contacts the post holder will be required to present a good image of the Directorate and the County Council as well as maintaining constructive relationships.

Internal: Elected Members (in particular Chairmen and Members serving on the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Panels and task groups), Chief Officers, Service Heads and other Directorate staff

External: a variety of external contacts General Public, Co-opted members, representatives of Service Users, Partner Organisations, local, regional and national organisations, officers and councillors in other local authorities and the press

Additional Information:

- This post is politically restricted under the terms of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989
- The Council reserves the right to alter the content of this job description, after consultation to reflect changes to the job or services provided, without altering the general character or level of responsibility
- The duties described in this job description must be carried out in a manner which promotes equality of opportunity, dignity and due respect for all employees and service users and is consistent with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- The duties of this post may change over time. The postholder in conjunction with the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager is expected to monitor such changes and prepare appropriate changes to the job description.
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered as required by the Equality Act

Author: Samantha Morris

Date:06 February 2025

PERSON SPECIFICATION

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EXPERIENCE:

It is **essential** that the postholder has:

- Considerable experience/understanding of local government systems and services and the law and practice of committee administration;
- An understanding of the need for political awareness, sensitivity, confidentiality and professional impartiality.

It is **desirable** that the postholder has:

- An understanding of the political climate within the Council, partner organisations and stakeholder groups and understand the impact this has on strategy and service provision. It includes both party political and organisational politics;
- An understanding of local government decision making processes, especially the Leader and Cabinet model;
- An understanding of the Scrutiny function in a local authority.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

It is **essential** that the postholder has:

- The ability to act in a professional and competent manner at all times;
- Excellent organisational and time management skills;
- Excellent interpersonal skills to engage with people of different backgrounds and collate information and identify fresh approaches;
- the ability to work creatively, coming up with new, imaginative and innovative ideas;
- the ability to work flexibly and to adapt to different environments, organisational cultures and ways of working;
- the ability to research, financial, statistical and service information/data;
- the ability to make rational, realistic and sound decisions based on the consideration of all the facts and alternatives available;
- the ability to influence and negotiate;
- the ability to challenge constructively and to persuade through strength of argument;
- the ability to seize opportunities and take the initiative to move things forward in a proactive and positive manner;
- the ability to communicate both written and orally in a clear, fluent and concise manner with councillors and officers at all levels and with partner organisations and members of the public taking account of plain English principles;

- the ability to draft and ensure the accuracy of reports and agendas for Panels, Cabinet and Council and prepare minutes within statutory timescales;
- the ability and self-motivation to work without supervision;
- tact and diplomacy;
- the ability to work in a corporate environment;
- the ability to work under pressure, to deal with competing and conflicting demands and to priorities tasks to meet service standards and deadlines;
- the commitment to work in a customer focused environment;
- the ability to recognise and have regard to the need for confidentiality;
- the ability to use relevant IT systems via Windows applications;
- the ability to work productively and harmoniously as part of a team, supporting team decisions, co-operating with others and keeping people informed and up to date.

It is **desirable** that the postholder has:

- Experience of successfully completing complex projects;
- the ability to analyse and interpret complex financial, statistical and service information/data.

QUALIFICATIONS/TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT:

It is **essential** that the postholder has:

- B/TEC HNC or equivalent

It is **desirable** that the postholder has:

- Evidence of Continuing Professional Development

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

It is **essential** that the post holder has:

- an ability to travel in and out of the county and at times when public transport may be limited.
- An understanding of, and commitment to equal opportunities

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