

Head of Democratic Services & Deputy
Monitoring Officer
JE Code: JE1460



Values – We are dedicated, respectful, collaborative, we are Milton Keynes Council

Service: Law & Governance
Reports to: Director Law & Governance
Job Family: Strategic Leadership
Grade: M
Political restricted: Y
Date: October 2022

Key Deliverables

1.	Deliver and lead high- quality decision making, scrutiny, electoral, civic and councillor support functions in accordance with all legal and constitutional requirements.
2.	Be a Deputy Monitoring Officer for the Council and a member of the Law and Governance Management team.
3.	Effectively manage the Democratic Services Budget including monitoring and reporting.
4.	Be the Council's designated Scrutiny Officer in accordance with the Local Government, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
5.	Develop, interpret, and manage the documents associated with the Council's Constitution, including the Constitution itself, the various Procedure Rules, and the Scheme of Delegation to ensure that they meet statutory requirements, are relevant, and are up to date. Ensure that all decisions made are in the context of the above documents and that effective governance is achieved through seamless collaboration with Legal Services.
6.	Provide advice and support to all councillors, and specifically to the Mayor, Leader, Cabinet, Group Leaders, Scrutiny Chairs and Committee Chairs in relation to effective and lawful decision-making processes, civic and ceremonial responsibilities and appropriate courses of action/processes that achieve issue resolution.
7.	Deliver and lead the Council's youth led democracy project (currently Youth Cabinet). Lead engagement in local democracy from across the whole community, including groups who have traditionally been less involved including producing an annual democratic engagement plan.

Within reason these key deliverables may evolve to meet service need and it is expected that you will be flexible and adaptable in your delivery to meet both service and council wide needs

Essential Requirements (key skills & qualifications)

1.	Educated to Degree level in a public administration discipline, or able to demonstrate extensive relevant experience & membership of appropriate professional organisation (ADSO, AEA or previously the ICSA), to reflect the professional nature of the post.
2.	Extensive demonstrable knowledge and experience of current operational knowledge of governance, law, and practice of Local Authority meetings.
3.	Extensive demonstrable knowledge and experience of managing Election/ Electoral Registration Services.
4.	Significant demonstrable knowledge of relevant Acts of Parliament and Statutory Instruments.
5.	Extensive proven experience of administering / supporting formal committee / decision making processes at a senior level.
6.	Proven Advanced research, analytical and problem-solving capabilities with the ability to work effectively with complex information presented in a range of different ways, along with significant experience in local government policy/research environment.
7.	Ability to act with integrity in accordance with standards of behaviour that is ethically appropriate.
8.	Excellent negotiating skills and an ability to deliver difficult messages with the appropriate level of tact and diplomacy and broker resolutions to complex and often emotive issues.
9.	Understanding of politics and politicians with the ability to work within the political process, with extensive experience in dealing with politically sensitive issues involving Members and Senior Managers in a local authority context.

Job Family

Strategic Leadership
Grade M



Colleagues expectations

- Be professional at all times
- Work together for the good of the team, council and local people
- Promote a supportive culture
- Challenge assumptions
- Take ownership
- Be willing to change and do things differently
- Always work in a safe manner

Managers expectations

- Be a role model by displaying positive behaviours at all times
- Make well-considered decisions
- Support, coach and communicate with my team
- Be accountable for my team's performance

The essential characteristic of Strategic Leadership jobs is that they bear responsibility for the planning and development of the Council's approach to its statutory and elective aims, maximising efficiency, value for money and the quality of service delivery across entire operating functions.

Role characteristics

At this level job holders report to a Group Head or Director and are responsible for the development and implementation of strategy relating to several Services within that Group.

Role carry significant responsibilities for finance and a range of other non-financial assets.

Job holders make autonomous decisions and lead the management of change throughout their area of influence within the Group.

The knowledge and skills required

Job holders require advanced theoretical knowledge to make appropriate judgements and decisions at this level. In addition, job holders will maintain ongoing professional development and have a thorough understanding of external legislative and societal change, as well as a deep understanding of the Council's operational structures which both support and depend upon the job holder's actions and advice. Roles will be professional experts, providing expert leadership across a number of Services.

Thinking, planning and communication

Job holders will use their professional expertise to deal with highly complex, pressing issues including change initiatives and risk management across a range of services. They will also look well ahead and take a long-term, strategic view of their project and service delivery objectives over several years into the future, shaping their service's composition, approach and operating procedures in accordance with wider goals mandated by Group management.

The information exchanged at this level will be routinely complex, contentious in nature and/or highly significant to the Council's reputation. Job holders will have additional demands placed upon them by the need to persuade others to adopt courses of action they may not otherwise wish to take, based on evidence based and reasoned argument. This will occur in written interactions but can also be the case in face to face verbal exchanges where job holders will advocate the Council's position in response to opposing opinion in a formal or informal setting.

Decision making and innovation

The limitations to job holders' decision making will be only the broad policy and practice guidelines that exist at both a corporate and even national/professional level. At this level of autonomy, job holders will be the final arbiter of many escalated technical and professional disputes and problems. They will report to a Group Head or Director and will devise and implement strategic plans and policy in relation to several service areas.

Areas of responsibility

With a diverse range of jobs being represented at this level, the precise blend of responsibilities for which the job holder is accountable will depend upon the service in which they operate.

Roles will focus on the needs of external service users or partners and will be responsible for critical day to day decisions with legal and reputational dimensions and the development of directorate level policy and functional procedures.

In addition, such roles are likely to have very high levels of responsibility for such elements as finance (very substantial budget management), information assets (council-wide systems) or premises (of extremely high value and critical operational importance).

Job holders will have full line management responsibility over several service areas, each with their own full management structure and featuring highly diverse specialties and employee profiles.

Impacts and demands

The combination of both tactical and strategic matters that job holders deal with means that roles are inherently very complex, demanding of particularly lengthy periods of concentrated mental attention while also managing very high levels of work-related pressure from deadlines, interruptions or conflicting demands.

At this level, tasks and duties will be generally carried out in a sedentary position but there will always be a requirement for standing and walking from time to time, and the occasional need to lift or carry items.

Job holders will not be required to develop and maintain working relationships with people who, through their circumstances or behaviour, place particular emotional demands on the job holder.

Job holders at this level will find themselves very occasionally exposed to some disagreeable, unpleasant or hazardous working conditions.