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Job Profile comprising Job Description and Person Specification

Job Description

Job Title: Democratic Services Officer	Grade: SO2 – PO4
Section: Democratic Services – Richmond/Wandsworth	Directorate: Chief Executive's Group
Responsible to following manager: Democratic Services Manager	Responsible for following staff: None
Post Number/s: RWC0182/ 0183/0184/0185/0186 RWC0173/0174/0176/0177/0178/7080	Last Review Date: October 2019

Working for the Richmond/Wandsworth Shared Staffing Arrangement

This role is employed under the Shared Staffing Arrangement between Richmond and Wandsworth Councils. The overall purpose of the Shared Staffing Arrangement is to provide the highest quality of service at the lowest attainable cost.

Staff are expected to deliver high quality and responsive services wherever they are based, as well as having the ability to adapt to sometimes differing processes and expectations.

The Shared Staffing Arrangement aims to be at the forefront of innovation in local government and the organisation will invest in the development of its staff and ensure the opportunities for progression that only a large organisation can provide.

Job Purpose

To service the Council's democratic processes, primarily decision-making arrangements involving elected Members; this includes servicing a range of meetings (committees, sub-committees, working parties, etc.) and delegated decision mechanisms. The role embraces providing reliable advice and support to Members and others as necessary to ensure that all procedures conform to the requirements of relevant legislation and the Council's Constitution.

Some of the duties outlined below may apply to one or the other Council or both.



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Specific Duties and Responsibilities

To support the Council's decision-making arrangements by servicing meetings of Council committees, sub-committees and other bodies, and advise on their powers, terms of reference and the interpretation of the Council's Constitution as well as any other relevant legislation. To provide guidance to the chairman, other committee members, ward councillors and the public on their role and rights at the meeting.

1. To prepare agendas, decision notices and other documents for meetings as required and to circulate in accordance with statutory requirements and timescales; draft and circulate minutes, ensure decisions are processed and notified as appropriate and ensure that relevant information is available on the Intranet and the Council's website.
2. To maintain the Forward Plan and other allocated work programmes.
3. To ensure that reports submitted by officers and Members are consistent with corporate guidelines and support robust and reliable decision-making by the Council. To observe appropriate confidentiality with all sensitive materials and information passing through the system.
4. To support the School Appeals Service (school admissions and permanent exclusion reviews) including, where necessary, arranging and servicing appeal hearings and associated work.
5. To arrange working groups, undertake research/analysis and prepare reports as required, to support the Scrutiny function of the Council.
6. To prepare, check and process delegated authorisation reports under the relevant Council procedures.
7. To support the work and role of councillors through relevant administrative processes (e.g. registration of interests recording councillors attendance at meetings) and provide appropriate and politically-sensitive advice to them.
8. To maintain knowledge of relevant legislation and guidance in order to ensure that all relevant documentation and formal procedures comply with statutory requirements and to be able to implement new procedures, as necessary.
9. To keep under review practices and procedures relating to the duties of the post with a view to improving activities, including, where appropriate, with the use of technology or digital solutions.
10. To assist generally in all aspects of the functions of the Democratic Services team, as required.
11. To contribute as required to change programmes within the service and to consider how efficiencies or improvements could be achieved as a result of being part of the SSA.



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12. To support ways of working that ensure residents and stakeholders are actively engaged and are able to influence decision making.

13. To develop good working relations and to work collaboratively across the SSA Democratic Services team and with internal and external stakeholders. This includes communicating effectively with other Council departments, Council partners, external organisations and the general public to promote effective engagement and participation in democratic processes.



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Progression Criteria

ENTRY LEVEL

A maximum of two posts (2 FTE) are required to perform the duties at this level:

Appointment at the entry level would be seen as a 'Trainee' role for those able to demonstrate that they meet the criteria for appointment but do not have the skills, knowledge or relevant qualifications to fulfil all aspects of the job description without training and/or support.

At SO2:

To be appointed at the entry level, the postholder will need to demonstrate that they can undertake the full duties and responsibilities of the post with regular supervision/input from the Democratic Services Manager or Deputy/Head of Service.

The postholder will be expected to undertake a variety of democratic services work, including attendance at meetings, preparing agendas, taking minutes and advising on basic procedural issues.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

A maximum of two posts (2 FTE) are required to perform the additional duties at this level. The postholder must demonstrate that they are able to undertake the full duties and responsibilities of the post with some supervision/input from the Democratic Services Manager or Head of Service.

At PO1:

- Dealing with complicated queries relating to governance processes from councillors and officers.
- Undertake complex responsibilities in relation to school appeals, e.g. Dealing with issues/complaints raised by parents and/or schools.
- Responsibility for specific tasks/projects allocated by the Democratic Services Manager or Head of Service.

At PO2:

- Undertake democratic services work of a complex nature (e.g. attendance at complex Sub-Committees/Committees, able to explain statutory and constitutional requirements relevant to the practice of meetings).
- Successful management of special governance projects as directed
- Liaison with staff in other teams, as required, on work where it is necessary to take a lead/supportive role.



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- Undertake the servicing of school admission appeals with minimal support.

UPPER LEVEL

A maximum of two posts (2 FTE) are required to perform the additional duties at this level: The postholder must demonstrate that they are able to undertake the full duties and responsibilities of the post with minimal supervision/input from the Democratic Services Manager or Head of Service.

At PO3:

- Dealing with complex and/or demanding responsibilities in relation to governance processes, formal Council committees and queries from councillors, with responsibility for decision-making/formal committees subject to formal procedures.
- Responsibility for additional tasks and projects to develop the service allocated by the Democratic Services Manager or the Head of Service.
- Undertake the servicing and clerking of school admission appeals, with minimal supervision. Ability to service Exclusion Review hearings with supervision.

At PO4:

- To assist the Democratic Services Manager in coordinating any issues arising from time to time which affect the democratic services function.
- The ability to supervise specific projects requiring the co-ordination of a group of staff in the Democratic Services team.
- Ability to make suggestions for improvements to governance processes, procedures and practices.
- Ability to coach less experienced colleagues and deputise for the Democratic Services Manager.

Generic Duties and Responsibilities

- To contribute to the continuous improvement of the services of the Boroughs of Richmond and Wandsworth.
- To comply with relevant Codes of Practice, including the Code of Conduct and policies concerning data protection and health and safety.
- To adhere to security controls and requirements as mandated by the SSA's



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policies, procedures and local risk assessments to maintain confidentiality, integrity, availability and legal compliance of information and systems

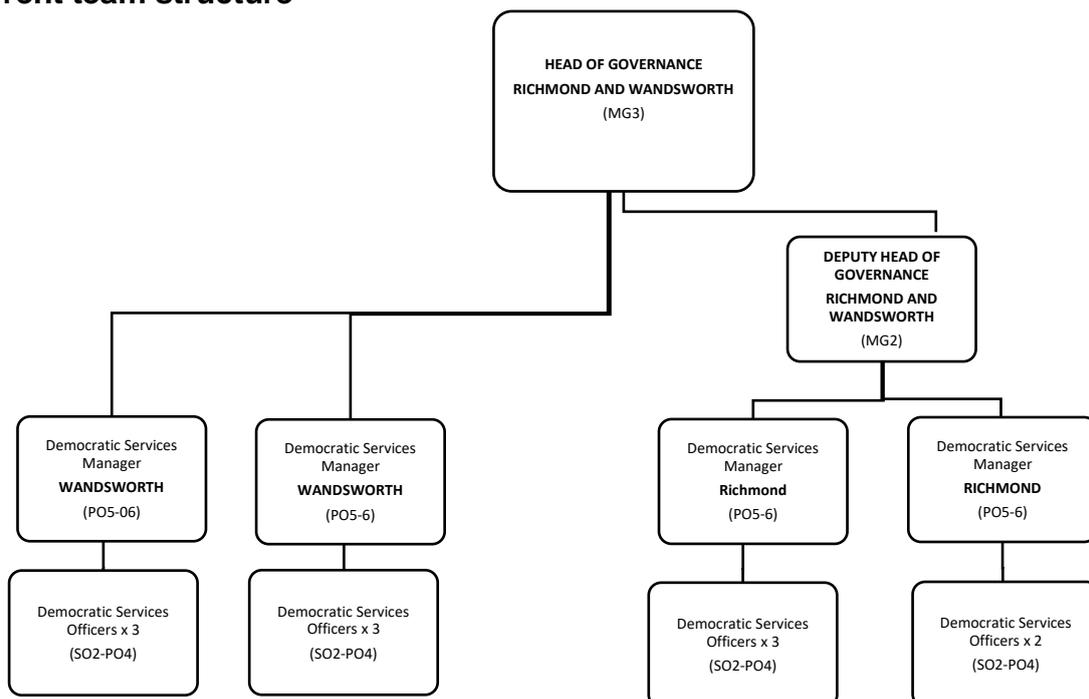
- To promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, maintaining an awareness of the equality and diversity protocol/policy and working to create and maintain a safe, supportive and welcoming environment where all people are treated with dignity and their identity and culture are valued and respected.
- To understand both Councils' duties and responsibilities for safeguarding children, young people and adults as they apply to the role within the council.
- The Shared Staffing Arrangement will keep its structures under continual review and as a result the post holder should expect to carry out any other reasonable duties within the overall function, commensurate with the level of the post.

Additional Information

Ability to attend evening meetings – the postholder will be expected to attend evening meetings and may be required to provide cover for others, occasionally at short notice.

Flexibility and ability to work across both Boroughs – Whilst the main place of work will be either Wandsworth Town Hall or York House/Civic Centre in Twickenham, the postholder may be asked to work at the other main place of work on special projects or to assist colleagues to maintain capacity and resilience across the Chief Executive's Group.

Current team structure





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Our Values and Behaviours

The values and behaviours we seek from our staff draw on the high standards of the two boroughs, and we prize these qualities in particular –

- Being open

Being open means we share views openly, honestly and in a thoughtful way. We encourage new ideas and ways of doing things. We appreciate and listen to feedback from each other.

- Being supportive

Being supportive means, we drive the success of the organisation by making sure that our colleagues are successful. We encourage others and take account of the challenges they face. We help each other to do our jobs.

- Being positive

Being positive and helpful means, we keep our goals in mind and look for ways to achieve them. We listen constructively and help others see opportunities and the way forward. We have a 'can do' attitude and are continuously looking for ways to help each other improve.

Person Specification Requirements	Assessed by A & I/T/C (see below for explanation)
Knowledge	
Appointment at entry level General knowledge of the public sector and local government issues and committee procedures.	A + I

Person Specification Requirements	Assessed by A & I/ T/ C (see below for explanation)
Knowledge	
Appointment at intermediate level A sound knowledge of relevant local government legislation and its application to the decision-making process.	A + I
Working knowledge of ModGov or another committee management system.	A + I
Appointment at upper level A sound knowledge of relevant local government legislation and the ability to demonstrate how knowledge has been applied in various governance scenarios.	A + I
Sound working knowledge of ModGov or another committee management system.	A + I
Experience	
Appointment at entry level No direct experience of committee management. However, experience in administration tasks (production of documents, giving advice and information and interpreting procedures) is required.	A + I
Appointment at intermediate level Demonstrable proficiency and practical knowledge of committee management will be required of staff appointed at a higher grade or promoted through the career grades.	A + I
Appointment at upper level Demonstrable track record of strong performance in the role with responsibility for decision-making committees subject to formal procedures.	A + I
Skills	
Ability to work as part of a team, exchanging ideas and providing support to colleagues to ensure that team and service objectives are met.	A + I
Ability to write clearly and concisely, particularly minutes of meetings and reports to Committees.	A + I
Ability to communicate orally and speak with confidence so that clear messages are conveyed to a wide audience (these include people at all levels, both within and outside the Council such as Members, Senior Management, other staff and members of the public.	A + I

Ability to demonstrate competence in the use of IT based office systems, particularly in Microsoft Word and O365.	A + I
Ability to self-motivate, work well under pressure and to prioritise a variety of tasks and conflicting demands.	A + I
Ability to demonstrate a good grasp of a range of sometimes complex service issues, and the ability to research, analyse and evaluate data.	A + I
Person Specification Requirements	Assessed by A & I/ T/ C (see below for explanation)
Skills	
At entry level All of the above skills.	A + I
At intermediate level All of the above plus: Ability to explain the Constitutional provisions in relation to meetings and rights of Members.	A + I
At upper level All of the above plus: Ability to manage a wide variety of different types of meetings e.g. formal, informal, quasi-judicial bodies and partnerships. Ability to respond to changing situations and needs across services on corporate issues.	A + I
Ability to work with councillors, colleagues and external organisations to foster good working relationships at all levels.	A + I
Ability to coach less experienced staff to allow them to develop their learning in democratic services	
Qualifications	
A degree or equivalent/significant experience in a governance field.	A + C
Degree (or equivalent Certification demonstrating professional experience in governance including ADSO Diploma, ICOSA)	A + C

A – Application form

I – Interview

T – Test

C – Certificate