

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE: Senior Strategy & Policy Officer

GRADE: 10

DIVISION / UNIT: Policy, Partnerships & Performance

DEPARTMENT: Strategy & Communities

REPORTS TO: Strategy & Policy Manager

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

- To work within a multi-disciplinary team of Strategy and Policy officers that will draw on research, data and evidence-based intelligence to develop innovative approaches to some of the most pressing challenges facing the borough, ensuring residents and communities' needs are at the centre of shaping activities and stronger collaborative working with strategic partners.
- To facilitate the design of evidence-based strategy and policy, using participatory methods to involve a range of stakeholders, developing evidence packs capturing emerging ideas, innovative and best practice.
- To ensure that council-wide strategies, policies and plans under their remit are consistent, aligned and creates a coherent framework to council goals and priorities.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

The post holder will lead on up to three pressing council's strategy and policy development:

1. Facilitate the strategic input across council for a wide portfolio of complex policies and projects, driving them forward and championing the insights and outcomes.
2. Provide urgent specialist support and advice to enable service leaders, senior officers, Council departments and the Cabinet as needed.
3. Build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders internally and partners across the borough and region.
4. Facilitate the curation of a cross-council community of practice around strategy and policy development; ensuring they are inspired to work collaboratively, transparently and share knowledge and continuous improvement of delivery
5. Conduct research and analysis of current policies, legislation, and horizon scanning for emerging trends to identify strategic opportunities and challenges.
6. Collaborate with key stakeholders, including senior management, government officials, and external partners, to gather insights and ensure policy alignment.
7. Manage designated policy development projects, including drafting policy proposals, conducting impact assessments, consulting with relevant stakeholders, implementation and evaluate its effectiveness, recommending adjustments or improvements, as necessary.
8. Provide sound advice and guidance to senior management on policy issues, offering innovative solutions and alternatives when appropriate.
9. Foster relationships with external organisations, strategic partners, government bodies, and industry experts to stay connected and share knowledge.
10. Prepare and present reports, briefings, and presentations to communicate complex policy concepts effectively to a diverse audience.

JOB CONTEXT / REPORTING

The Policy, Partnerships and Performance service brings together the teams which drives and promote coherent corporate strategy, policy and plan development aligned to council priorities, business intelligence and performance data that enables transparency and continuous improvements through building of evidence-base and external lens, and strategic partnerships management that co-ordinates, aligns and embeds Southwark's strong organisational, place and political leadership through common partnership goals.

The Strategy and Policy team generates strategy and policy responses to the changing political landscape in Southwark. They will use expertise which exists across the council and beyond to help shape our response in a way that will have greatest impact on meeting residents and communities' needs. They will hold the organisation's strategy framework and enable it to focus on delivery of its key strategic priorities.

Reporting:

The post holder will have line management responsibility.

The post-holder will be part of the Policy, Partnerships & Performance service and may be required to provide cover in the absence of other Officers.

Financial responsibilities:

Appropriately manage any resources delegated to the team.

GRADE/CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Grade: 10

The employment is subject to a probationary period of twenty six weeks from your start date of employment with Southwark Council, during which time you will be required to demonstrate to the council's satisfaction your suitability for the position in which you are employed.

Must be able and willing to work outside normal office hours as required, such as evening meetings, but this will be subject to agreement, where possible.

This post is politically restricted under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person specification is a picture of skills, knowledge and experience required to carry out the job.

	Essential (E)	How assessed (S/ I/ T)
Knowledge, including educational qualifications:		
Educated to degree level or equivalent standard in politics, sociology or economic related fields or qualification in relevant area or demonstrable appropriate experience, e.g. project management	E	S
Knowledge and understanding of the national policy context, requirements and future direction for relevant service areas	E	S/I
Understanding of the challenges facing Local Government and the future provision of services	E	S/I
Understanding of the public policy making process	E	I
Good understanding of performance management and knowledge of quality/improvement tools and their application	E	I
Experience:		
Experience of strategy or policy development in central, local government, public body or think tank. Familiarity with the UK government structures, and policy-making processes.	E	S/I
Working with politicians and senior stakeholders.	E	I
Experience of developing strategy and policy through consultation with key stakeholders and residents.	E	I
Experience of managing multiple high-profile projects, meeting tight deadlines and adapting effectively to changing priorities	E	I
Partnership working with a range of public or private agencies.	E	I
Experience of managing and leading policy and strategy development, from initiation through to implementation and evaluation.	E	S/I
Experience of supporting and managing junior members of staff	E	I
Aptitudes, Skills & Competencies:		
Project management of research and policy development	E	I
Highly skilled influencer, negotiator, and networker.	E	I
Adept at presenting and communicating clearly, through written and spoken communication, effectively and appropriately for a variety of audiences across seniority levels in the form of policy briefings, position statements, discussion papers and options papers for officers, members and partners	E	S/I
Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to build relationships with stakeholders at all levels, fostering collaboration and consensus.	E	I

Ability to respond rapidly to requests for written briefs and information.	E	I
Ability to conduct and analyse research	E	I
Ability to work flexibly and quickly get to grips with new areas and support others to do so	E	I
The ability to work creatively to solve problems	E	I
Horizon scanning of and to inform the strategic operating context of the council, covering political, partnership and service-level domains.	E	I
The ability to operate with sensitivity within a political environment	E	I
Prepared to challenge existing thinking in a positive manner	E	I
Strong analytical skills with the ability to research, interpret, and synthesise complex information from various sources.	E	I
Special Conditions of Recruitment:		
Comply with and promote the Council's Equal opportunities policy.		

Key: E Essential S Shortlisting criteria
 I Evaluated at interview
 T Subject to test