

<b>Job Title:</b>	Assistant Director – Democracy, Information and Elections
<b>Grade:</b>	TBC
<b>Responsible to:</b>	General Counsel
<b>Responsible for:</b>	Head of Democratic Services Electoral Services Manager Senior Information Management Officer (Data Protection Officer)



## Job Purpose

The purpose of this role is to lead and develop democratic information governance and electoral services for the city of Sheffield, providing strategic advice to senior officers and elected members in terms of governance, decision making and member support.

The Assistant Director – Democracy, Information and Elections will ensure that the City Council has in place effective arrangements for core elements of our governance, enabling the council to make the best possible decisions in line with our strategic objectives and securing our local democracy. In particular you will:

- Deliver and lead high-quality decision making, electoral, civic and Member support functions for the authority in accordance with all legal and constitutional requirements
- Secure the effective governance of the organisation and support the Monitoring Officer in ensuring that the constitution and governance frameworks are upheld and kept under review
- Provide advice and support to all councillors in relation to effective and lawful decision-making processes and civic and ceremonial responsibilities
- Work collaboratively with the senior leadership team, directors, members and key partners to inform strategic decision making that supports the delivery of corporate programmes of work and key priorities.
- Lead the planning and delivery of all elections and referenda and supporting the discharge of the statutory duties of the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer
- Promote, support and champion participation in the democratic process, including from under-represented groups
- Lead the Democratic Services, Members' Support and Information Governance and Electoral Services teams
- Participate in national networks, identifying shaping and embedding good practice across the council

Additionally, working as part of the senior leadership team of the General Counsel the post holder will play a key role in fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement within the organisation. At times the postholder may be required to deputise for the General Counsel.

## Duties and Responsibilities

### Specific Functional Accountabilities:

#### Governance and Decision-Making

- To provide advice to Members, the Chief Executive, and the General Counsel (Monitoring Officer) on all aspects of the constitution, governance and democracy for the authority
- To take lead responsibility for the maintenance of the Council's constitution, supporting the Monitoring Officer in the discharge of their statutory responsibilities
- To have lead responsibility for the development of the Council's Annual Governance Statement and to work with the Chief Executive, General Counsel and Senior Leadership Team to ensure that identified areas of good practice are shared across the authority and weaknesses are rectified
- To support the General Counsel (Monitoring Officer) in the effective running of the Corporate Assurance Board.
- To support the Monitoring Officer in administering the Standards Regime for Councillors, including acting as Deputy Monitoring Officer.
- To take a lead role in ensuring effective interface between democratic decision making and organisational / corporate governance.

#### Democratic Services and Members' Support

- To ensure that all policy, regulatory and other committees (including Local Area Committees and Full Council), are effectively supported and administered in line with the constitution
- To maintain forward work programmes for all committees and, working with committee chairs and the chief executive and Senior Leadership Board, ensure that all decisions are supported by high quality reports and information
- To ensure that senior Members, including the Lord Mayor and committee chairs, are provided with efficient and effective support in the discharge of their duties
- To ensure the provision of an effective casework service for all Elected Members
- To develop and deliver an effective programme of Member Development to provide the opportunities for Elected Members to develop the essential skills and knowledge they need to undertake their roles and responsibilities

### **Electoral Services**

- To ensure that the electoral register is maintained and that the annual canvass is successfully completed in line with the relevant Electoral Commission performance standards
- To ensure that both scheduled and unscheduled elections and other polls are appropriately planned and delivered in line with the relevant Electoral Commission advice and performance standards, and, if required, to act as deputy returning officer during an election or referendum period.
- To lead and manage reviews in relation to polling stations and boundaries, Community Governance Reviews etc, reporting to committee as required and implementing the resulting decisions. To support the delivery of periodic ward boundary reviews by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

### **Information Governance**

- To be responsible for Information Governance across the organisation, including robust management of the risks involved in handling of information and compliance with legislative requirements. To manage the Data Protection Officer and ensure they can effectively deliver their statutory role.
- To have an effective relation with the Senior Information Risk Owner and contribute to corporate information governance meetings.

### **Other accountabilities**

- To secure an effective school admissions appeals and exclusions appeals service, in line with the relevant legislative provisions

### **Service Leadership**

- To lead the Democratic Services, Members Support Information Governance and Electoral Services teams giving direction and leadership, providing appropriate support to, and developing the function to meet current and future business needs
- To keep abreast of developments in the field of elections, information and electoral registration law and the law relating to local authority governance and decision-making and ensure that these support services operate in accordance with modern good practice.
- To develop the policy and practice of the authority in relation to democracy, information and wider governance and elections
- To champion and promote local democracy, openness and accountability both internally and externally, including taking active steps to improve democratic participation amongst under-represented groups

### **General Duties:**

### **Strategic and Corporate Responsibilities**

- As a Senior Manager of SCC, work to promote positive cultural change and a 'One Council' approach, embodying and promoting the values of the Council.

- Contribute to the strategic leadership of the Council by establishing, leading, developing and implementing effective strategies that will deliver for the City.
- Lead, participate in and contribute to key projects on corporate areas of activity involving Council-wide strategies, which promote innovation and creativity in the provision of council services, the city and the region.
- Develop and implement coherent strategies and policies to better meet the needs of all customers of the service.
- Ensure that all relevant statutory duties within the purview of the post and across the Council (where applicable) are effectively discharged.
- Proactively engage in and receive constructive peer challenge in order to improve and develop services.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the wider environments within which the Council operates, including political and economic impacts, technological advances and strategic commissioning to promote innovative service models and deliver the best value for public money.

### **Innovation and Change**

- Utilise data to understand the changing needs of customers, challenge the status quo to ensure areas of responsibility are innovative and continuously improve by reviewing services, strategies and procedures.
- Effectively champion, engage with and manage change programmes, whilst motivating others to deliver.

### **Political Awareness**

- Inform, support and advise elected members of the Council so that they can perform their responsibilities and ensure that decisions are appropriately informed, and services delivered according to Council priorities.
- Serve all Members equally with dignity, respect and courtesy, regardless of political group or position, creating and maintaining effective and productive relationships.
- Lead the development of corporate and service strategy aligning with political direction and decision making.

### **Partnership working**

- Developing corporate and service-based relationships with government departments, professional bodies and other public, private and voluntary sector organisations, including the Information Commissioners Office, Association of Democratic Services Officers and Electoral Commission to represent and promote the council's interests and build its reputation and ensure the Council delivers cohesive, integrated services across the city and fulfils its role in the community effectively.
- Use innovative, creative thinking to build relationships and influence and negotiate complex and contentious issues as they arise.
- Ensure knowledge and information is shared across partners and stakeholders both internally and externally to enable common objectives to be achieved.

### **Resource Management:**

#### **Financial**

- Ensuring effective financial management, cost controls and income maximisation in a changing environment, fluctuating demands and priorities.
- Responsible for the effective management of all resources within a corporate context, ensuring that:
  - Arrangements are put in place to ensure the service has a clear framework to comply with the Council's financial regulations, Standing Orders, and financial policies, maintaining spending within approved limits and budgets.
  - The resources of the function are targeted at priorities and demonstrate value for money.

### **Human**

- Develop and implement sustainable workforce plans, management and staffing structures, including maintaining an on-call rota for out of hours communications support, emergency planning and business continuity.
- Recruit, manage, motivate, and develop employees ensuring their health, safety and wellbeing at work.

### **Performance Management**

- Pursue best practice and value for money for the service through the establishment of effective management and procurement, systems of governance and accountability, target setting and performance management.
- Produce Service Development Plans for the function and ensure that the plans are developed and implemented via a framework of customer and staff involvement.
- Conduct annual performance reviews in accordance with Council policy.

### **Customer Focus**

- Drive a customer ethos in all services areas ensuring that the use of data and insight informs activities and priorities which contribute to the councils customer experience strategy.
- Have a focus that is attuned to the national and regional agenda, understanding customers' changing needs.
- Ensure the development and delivery of good quality public services and a service-wide culture of customer responsiveness.

### **Other Policies – your responsibilities**

- To undertake all duties and responsibilities in line with current Council Policies and Procedures, including those relating to health and safety; equalities, diversity and inclusion; safeguarding procedures; financial instructions; procurement and commissioning.
- This is a senior post and you will be required to be flexible and responsive to unexpected demands. You may be required to undertake any other related duties and responsibilities as they arise from time to time, commensurate with the level of the post.
- Responsibilities in relation to strategic resilience and business continuity are integral to the role of a senior public servant and you will be required to undertake all reasonable activity associated with such responsibilities including participation in relevant duty and on call rotas.

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

**Issue date: December 2024**

## Person Specification Post Title: Assistant Director – Democracy and Elections

Minimum Essential Requirements	Assessment Method
<b>Section One: Knowledge and Experience</b>	
Extensive demonstrable knowledge and experience of current operational knowledge of governance, law, and practice of Local Authority meetings.	Interview/ Application/ Assessment
Extensive demonstrable knowledge and experience of managing Election/ Electoral Registration Services and Information Governance Services .	
Extensive proven experience of providing advice to Elected Members and senior officers about effective governance and decision-making	
Extensive experience of leading and inspiring teams to deliver	
Experience of working at senior level in cross-functional teams in order to progress corporate objectives.	

<b>Section Two: Skills and Abilities</b>	
Proven research, analytical and problem-solving capabilities with the ability to work effectively with complex information presented in a range of different ways	Interview/ Application/ Assessment
Excellent communication skills, including the ability to promote understanding to a variety of audiences using a variety of communication channels and media.	
Ability to act with integrity in accordance with standards of behaviour (including the Nolan Principles) that is ethically appropriate.	
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.	
Demonstrating judgement when building relationships, being proactive in developing and maintaining constructive and ethical relationships	
Passionate about working in partnership with others, and a track record of collaborating to deliver shared outcomes	
Able to describe and explain progress, and to persuade others of a course of action in the case of changing circumstances or emerging challenges	
Inspiring others – providing a powerful sense of purpose that energises others to deliver a changing agenda	
Experience of successful involvement in and management of large scale or major projects.	
External and customer focus – having a focus that is attuned to the national and regional agenda, understanding customers’ changing needs; working collaboratively by breaking down barriers with partners and internally between departments.	
Managing organisational resources (financial, human and infrastructure) – running the business responsibly and assuring quality of service delivery	

Evidence of success in establishing effective performance measures and a performance culture that has achieved significant outcomes for service users	
Ability to understand financial and legal/contractual information and to develop innovate strategies to maximise service provision within tight financial limits and to maximise funding available.	
Ability to work to deadlines and cope with pressures and setbacks.	
Ensure high professional standards are maintained and compliance with appropriate procedures and statutory requirements with evidence of continuous professional development.	

<b>Section Three: Qualifications</b>	
<u>Essential qualifications</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EITHER: Educated to degree level in a relevant subject OR: able to demonstrate extensive relevant experience in a similar or related field</li> <li>• Membership of an appropriate professional organisation (either the Association of Democratic Services Officers or Association of Electoral Administrators) to reflect the professional nature of the post.</li> </ul> <u>Desirable qualifications</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant professional qualification (e.g. AEA Certificate or Diploma; ADSO Certificate or Diploma)</li> </ul>	Application

<b>Section Four: Our Values</b>	
<p>All colleagues are expected to demonstrate commitment to our values. Leaders and Managers are expected to role model behaviours in line with our values and nurture a culture where our values are brought to life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People are at the heart of what we do</li> <li>• Openness and honesty are important to us</li> <li>• Together we get things done</li> </ul>	Interview



# Health Risks Specification

Risks that apply to this post:

<b>Fitness to Work</b>	<b>Potential health risks: please add Yes or No against each risk</b>
Working with computers	Yes
Working at heights	No
Confined spaces	No
Moving and handling includes people and objects	No

<b>Vocational Health Checks</b>	<b>Potential health risks: please add Yes or No against each risk</b>
Driver medicals, minibus, forklift trucks and HGV	No
Night Worker Questionnaires	No
School crossing warden	No

<b>Statutory Health Surveillance</b>	<b>Potential health risks: please add Yes or No against each risk</b>
Exposure to excessive noise levels	No
Exposure to excessive vibration levels	No
Exposure to skin irritants	No
Exposure to respiratory irritants	No

