

LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY

Job Description

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| POST TITLE: | Senior Adviser to the Mayor |
| DIRECTORATE: | Chief Executive's Directorate |
| SERVICE: | Mayor, Cabinet & Civic Support and Member Casework |
| GRADE: | PO8 |
| LOCATION: | Within the London Borough of Hackney |
| RESPONSIBLE TO: | Head of Mayor, Cabinet & Civic Support and Member Casework |
| RESPONSIBLE FOR: | Mayor's Political Assistant; Cabinet Policy & Research Officers (2 posts), Cabinet Executive Support Manager |

PURPOSE OF THE JOB:

To lead the work of the Mayor & Cabinet Office, delivering high level support and advice to the Mayor and Cabinet in support of their priorities, including the provision of strategic advice, policy, research, stakeholder engagement, diary and administrative support.

To drive delivery of the Mayor's priorities across the Council, working with senior officers to identify resolutions, address any challenges and progress next steps.

To develop and lead a stakeholder engagement strategy for the Mayor, to ensure a strategic and coordinated approach to the Mayor's engagement with residents, community groups, local businesses and other partners.

To coordinate and deliver a public affairs strategy, with colleagues in Communications and Strategic Policy & Delivery.

MAIN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

The postholder will have lead responsibility and accountability for the following:-

- Advise and provide high level strategic support to the Mayor and Cabinet, in delivering the Mayor's priorities.
- Analyse, summarise and advise the Mayor on their inbox, correspondence, briefing and speeches as necessary, on a wide range of topics. Work with colleagues to ensure that all materials meet the Mayor's expectations and to provide answers and further information from colleagues as required by the Mayor.
- Lead on the Mayor's meetings with senior key stakeholders and co-ordinate and proactively develop relationships which ensure the Mayor is well received.
- Develop and manage a stakeholder engagement strategy for the Mayor, and provide advice in its implementation.
- Develop a programme of strategic liaison meetings for the Mayor with significant stakeholders to effectively manage relationships with internal and external contacts.
- Liaise with policy teams and senior officers to maintain effective and proactive relationships with key players across a range of associated bodies and organisations.
- Proactively build effective relationships on behalf of the Mayor with staff at all levels within the Council, partners, and with Members and external stakeholders as necessary. Develop a range of contacts on behalf of the Mayor; build effective working relationships with these contacts and represent the Mayor's views.
- Produce briefings, draft speeches and tailor those for the audience the Mayor is addressing.
- Lead and manage the work of the Mayor & Cabinet Support team, ensuring the provision of high quality diary and administrative support, enabling the Mayor & Cabinet to make the most effective use of their time and to deliver their strategic objectives.
- Ensure systems and processes are in place to effectively triage Mayor and Cabinet support requests and to enable the effective prioritisation and distribution of work across the team.
- To support the Mayor and Cabinet in the development of their priorities and support needs.
- Take or arrange for notes to be taken of the Mayor's meetings as required, ensuring these are appropriately approved and communicated.

- Ensure that either directly or through colleagues, the Mayor has the appropriate Council support for meetings and external visits, ensuring the Mayor is fully briefed and provided with on-the-spot advice as required.
- Provide high quality advice and guidance to the Mayor. Where necessary, act as trouble-shooter in resolving difficult or sensitive issues on behalf of the Mayor.
- Lead on a complex and diverse range of projects working directly with the Mayor and Cabinet with a minimum of supervision.
- Lead with Communications and Policy colleagues the development and delivery of a public affairs strategy.
- Coordinate the Mayor and Cabinet's engagement with Scrutiny, including provision of briefings ahead of Scrutiny Question Time sessions and coordinating Executive responses to Scrutiny reports and recommendations.
- Respond promptly and effectively to a range of internal contacts, external stakeholders and residents on behalf of the Mayor, and maintain oversight and management of the Mayor's inbox.
- Develop and support effective working arrangements between the Mayor & Cabinet Office, Mayor & Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny, the Chief Executive's Office, the Executive Support Team and directorates across the Council.
- Source and provide advice for the Mayor to support them in their executive role, including preparing the Mayor for meetings of Mayor & Cabinet, Full Council and external appointments including with national and regional government.
- Undertake research and write briefings on a wide range of complex issues that impact on council services, to ensure that the Mayor and Cabinet are fully apprised of issues.
- Actively consider new and innovative ways of doing things, recognising and promoting the positive benefit of change to improve services and achieve goals.
- Have a sound grasp of the bigger picture, including national government policy, the Council's vision and priorities, and national, regional, and local developments.
- Be politically sensitive and able to recognise and deal with a range of sensitive issues that impact on the Mayor and Cabinet Office.
- Be responsible for the supervision, direction and development of staff reporting to the role.

- Carry out any other duties appropriate to the grade that may be requested by the Head of Mayor, Cabinet & Civic Support and Member Casework or Mayor and Cabinet.
- Realise the benefits of Hackney's diversity by ensuring that equalities and inclusiveness are given appropriate consideration in all aspects of the work of the Mayor & Cabinet office and follow best practice to create a working environment that offers true equality of opportunity.
- Work out of hours as necessary.
- Deputise for the Head of Mayor, Cabinet & Civic Support and Member Casework as necessary.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS POST IS POLITICALLY RESTRICTED UNDER THE TERMS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989.

NB: All employees are expected to adhere to the Council's Diversity & Equality and Health and Safety Policies.

Person Specification

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SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Ability to work in a pressurised political environment, identifying and dealing with a range of sensitive policy issues and managing competing priorities.
- Ability to research, analyse and interpret complex information and to present this in clear, concise written and verbal form.
- Ability to think laterally and develop creative and innovative solutions to problems.
- Strong interpersonal skills demonstrating qualities of tact, diplomacy, leadership and professionalism.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in order to promote the Mayor and Cabinet in a positive and professional manner.
- Demonstrable ability to develop and deliver effective public affairs and stakeholder engagement strategies.
- Ability to develop effective working relationships with the Mayor and Cabinet members and with other Members, Chief Officers, Council staff and a wide range of service users and external organisations.
- Excellent IT skills

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE:

- Experience and knowledge of working closely with elected Members, and knowledge of political and government affairs.
- Experience of managing staff including responsibility for staffing and workplace issues including recruitment, training and performance appraisal. Able to demonstrate a track record of standard setting for staff including expectations, timescales, and establishing clear lines of responsibility and accountability.
- Knowledge of local government policies, strategy, legislative and financial framework
- Experience of providing research and strategic policy analysis within a political or complex business environment, on a wide range of topics.
- Experience of stakeholder engagement and building and maintaining relationships with a wide range of stakeholders including Members, external organisations, community groups and other key contacts

CIRCUMSTANCES

- Available to work flexible hours to ensure the Mayor & Cabinet Office is covered between the hours of 9 am and 5.30 pm.
- Available to work out of normal office hours to ensure that deadlines are achieved and work is completed on schedule.

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