WEST OF ENGLAND | MAYORAL COMBINED AUTHORITY

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Senior Policy Manager
MANAGED BY:	Head of UK Mayors Network
GRADE:	12

THE ROLE

About the UK Mayors Network

The UK Mayors Network brings together the directly elected Mayors across England to collaborate, influence, and share innovation. Through collective advocacy and insight, the network strengthens the voice of devolution and enables practical collaboration between places, government, and partners.

The Secretariat team provides strategic, policy, and operational support to the Mayors and their Chief Executives — ensuring the network operates effectively, remains outward-facing, and drives tangible impact.

About the role

The Senior Policy Manager will play a key role in shaping and coordinating the collective policy agenda of the UK Mayors Network.

Working with Mayors, Chief Executives, senior officers and partners across the Network, the postholder will identify shared policy challenges and opportunities, bring together insight and experience from member authorities, and support the development of collective positions and propositions on issues of strategic importance.

The role combines policy insight and strategic coordination with the development of practical programmes of activity, including expert sessions, workshops and opportunities for peer learning and collaboration. The postholder will lead an agreed portfolio of policy themes, building relationships with relevant stakeholders and ensuring that the Network's work is focused, relevant and valuable to its members.

This role will suit someone who enjoys navigating complex systems, connecting dots across central government and regional leadership and driving collaborative solutions that deliver both policy influence and on-the-ground outcomes.

We work in ways that are:

- **Proactive and agile** – anticipating needs, not just reacting.
- **Collaborative and outward-looking** – connecting Mayors, central and local government, and partners across sectors.
- **Pragmatic but ambitious** – focused on delivery while always pushing for better.
- **Reflective and self-challenging** – assessing relevance and impact as we go.
- **Learning-oriented** – drawing on global and cross-sector practice to inform our viewpoint.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

You'll support the smooth running and strategic development of the UK Mayors Network by:

1. Collective policy, insight and positioning

- Lead the Network's work across an agreed portfolio of policy themes. This may include fiscal devolution, public service reform, health, policing, fire and rescue, housing and regeneration, accountability and governance, arms-length bodies alongside wider themes of work aligned with Mayoral priorities.
- Maintain an understanding of developments across these areas, identifying issues of shared interest, emerging opportunities and implications for Mayors and their authorities.
- Draw together evidence, insight and experience from across member authorities and relevant external sources to inform the Network's collective understanding and priorities.
- Support the development of collective positions, propositions, briefings and responses on issues where a shared Network perspective would add value.
- Work collaboratively with the Senior Policy and Innovation Manager to identify connections between policy themes and ensure coherence across the Network's wider agenda.
- Maintain sufficient breadth across the devolution and local government landscape to respond to emerging issues and changing priorities.

2. Programme development and thematic coordination

- Translate agreed Network priorities into purposeful programmes of activity within the postholder's portfolio. This could include developing and coordinating workshops, expert sessions, roundtables, peer-learning opportunities and other practical interventions that respond to shared challenges and interests.
- Monitor progress across the postholder's programmes and workstreams, identifying risks, opportunities and issues requiring strategic input.

3. Strategic relationships and representation

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with relevant Government departments, member authorities, research organisations, professional bodies, think tanks and other external partners within the postholder's portfolio.
- Engage with Mayoral offices, Chief Executives and senior officers to understand shared challenges and inform the development of the Network's collective work.
- Represent the Network in relevant meetings, working groups and external forums, communicating its priorities and interests effectively.
- Work closely with the Head of UK Mayors Network to ensure that portfolio-level relationships and engagement support the Network's wider strategic priorities.
- Exercise sound political judgement and discretion when representing the Network and engaging with external stakeholders.

4. Secretariat contribution and team working

- Contribute to the development and delivery of the Network's strategic plan and annual work programme, ensuring that the postholder's portfolio supports agreed priorities.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues across the Secretariat, sharing insight and ensuring effective coordination across policy themes and programmes.
- Provide regular updates to the Head of UK Mayors Network on progress, emerging issues, risks and opportunities within the postholder's portfolio.
- Exercise autonomy and professional judgement in managing the postholder's responsibilities, taking ownership of agreed workstreams and escalating matters where strategic direction or senior intervention is required.
- Provide flexible, Network-wide support as required, including the coordination and delivery of Network meetings and activities, and respond proactively to incoming requests and emerging priorities.
- Being adaptable to change when priorities or politics may change and require alternative action

Initial portfolio of policy themes

The postholder's initial areas of responsibility may include:

- **Public services and reform:** health, public service reform, policing, and fire and rescue.
- **Housing and place:** housing, regeneration and related strategic authority responsibilities.
- **Cross-cutting issues:** Including the implications of data, environmental policy and wider devolution developments for Mayoral Strategic Authorities.

These areas will be kept under review as the Network's priorities and the devolution landscape evolve. The postholder will also contribute to wider cross-network issues, including fiscal devolution and integrated settlements, where these intersect with their portfolio.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)
Qualifications and Knowledge • Significant knowledge of policy development, public affairs and devolution • Awareness of the political, institutional and organisational context in which Mayors and Mayoral Strategic Authorities operate. • Understanding of the relationship between national Government, local government and public services, or the ability to develop this quickly.
Experience • Significant experience working in policy, strategy, public affairs or a related field. • Experience analysing complex policy or strategic issues and contributing to the development of collective positions, propositions or recommendations. • Experience in two or more policy themes including housing, policing, fire and rescue or institutional governance. • Experience working with senior stakeholders across different organisations and sectors. • Experience coordinating complex workstreams, projects or programmes involving multiple partners.
Skills and Competencies • Strong analytical skills, with the ability to synthesise complex information and identify common themes, implications and opportunities. • Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to produce clear briefings and communicate complex issues to different audiences. • Strong relationship-building and influencing skills, with the confidence to engage constructively with senior stakeholders. • Ability to bring people together, facilitate discussion and support the development of shared understanding and agreement. • Strong organisational and programme coordination skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities and maintain momentum across several areas of work. • Sound political awareness and judgement, with the ability to navigate sensitive or complex institutional contexts. • Ability to work autonomously, exercise initiative and make sound decisions, while contributing effectively as part of a small team. • Demonstrate the ability to work at pace and take forward ad-hoc tasks and issues across a broad range of work areas • A collaborative and adaptable approach, with the ability to respond to changing priorities and work across a broad range of policy areas.

- A proactive, systems-oriented mindset — able to connect ideas, people, and opportunities.

DESIRABLE

Experience

- Experience of working in or alongside local or central Government, Mayoral Strategic Authorities or other devolved institutions.
- Knowledge of devolution and the development of strategic authorities.