

AMBITIOUS
CREATIVE
COLLABORATIVE
SUPPORTIVE

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager (Statutory Scrutiny Officer)
MANAGED BY:	Director of legal and democratic services
GRADE:	Grade 10

BACKGROUND

The Employer: The West of England Combined Authority

The West of England is an economic leader with an economy worth over £33 billion a year. With a population of over 1.1 million people, one of the highest rates of employment in the country, and over 45,000 businesses, the region competes on a global scale. The West of England is a place where highly-skilled people work, where ideas flourish, and where businesses grow. It's also a place that a diverse population of people call home.

The West of England Combined Authority was formed in 2017, to champion the region and drive clean and inclusive economic growth. As a result, significant powers and funding have been transferred to the region through the new Combined Authority and West of England Mayor.

Our aim is to deliver economic growth for the region and address some of our challenges, such as productivity and skills, housing and transport.

Covid-19 has had a big impact on the West of England, and we are leading the regional economic recovery, bringing people together to ensure our region remains a thriving, successful and innovative place to live and work. By joining the West of England Combined Authority, you will be helping us with this important work.

The West of England Combined Authority is made up of three of the local authorities in the region - Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Building on a strong track record of partnership working in the region, the West of England Combined Authority continues to work closely with North Somerset Council. The Combined Authority also the accountable body for the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership.

The West of England Combined Authority is an equal opportunities employer, in line with the Equalities Act 2010, and invite applicants to contact us to identify any additional support they may need during the recruitment process.

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

To provide confident leadership and clear management across the below services so as to ensure the effective strategic development and operational delivery of those services in line with the West of England Combined Authority's statutory and constitutional obligations and business plan;

- The Democratic Services function
- The Scrutiny functions

To ensure the decision-making process is well managed, open, transparent and accessible to members of the public.

To hold the statutory role of Statutory Scrutiny Officer for the West of England Combined Authority as set out in s9FB of the Local Government Act 2000.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Deliver strategic leadership and management of the decision-making pathway and statutory obligations of the West of England Combined Authority to enable the Mayor and Cabinet to discharge their democratic duties to the best of their abilities and minimise risk in accordance with the Authorities statutory and constitutional obligations. This includes but is not restricted to:
 - Facilitating the decision-making processes through ownership of a decision pathway
 - Management of the decision-making forums and delivery of all associated procedures in accordance with the Authorities constitution and statutory functions
 - Accountability for the delivery of the Authorities scrutiny function
- To act as the Combined Authority's designated Statutory Scrutiny Officer as set out in s9FB of the Local Government Act 2000; Subject as follows, a local authority must designate one of its officers to discharge the functions in subsection (2).

(2) Those functions are—

- To promote the role of the authority's overview and scrutiny committee or committees
- To provide support to the authority's overview and scrutiny committee or committees and the members of that committee or those committees,
- To provide support and guidance to—
 - i. members of the authority,
 - ii. members of the executive of the authority, and
 - iii. officers of the authority, in relation to the functions of the authority's overview and scrutiny committee or committees.

An officer designated by a local authority under this section is to be known as the authority's "scrutiny officer".

- To support the Chair of Scrutiny to develop an effective scrutiny work programme and manage the West of England Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Ensure the effective, planning, organisation and administration of the West of England Combined Authority and Joint Committee meetings, Audit Committee, Scrutiny, Advisory Boards and LEP Board.
- Management of the committee management solution.
- Ensure effective management and recording of delegations and key decisions made by the West of England Combined Authority in accordance with legislation.
- Ensure Freedom of Information requests and complaints received by the West of England Combined Authority are managed in accordance with legislation.
- Line manage the Democratic Services Officers.
- Manage the West of England Combined Authority Forward Plan, working with the Senior Management Team and Unitary Authorities.
- Provide support to the Chair of Statutory meetings, providing a Chair's script and attending meetings (no evening meetings).
- Work with key contacts across Local Authorities across the West of England region, to ensure the smooth delivery of the Democratic Services function

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Qualified to degree level or equivalent relevant experience
- Demonstrable knowledge of the legal and political framework within which combined authorities and/or local government operates with specific regards to the roles played by officers and politicians
- Understanding of constitutional, governance and standards issues relevant to a Democratic Services function
- An awareness of the political environment and an ability to relate to elected members.
- Excellent IT skills, including Outlook, Word and Excel

Experience

- Demonstrable experience of managing or leading governance and/or democratic and/or scrutiny services in accordance with statutory obligations
- Demonstrable experience of working in a leadership role in a political environment and evidence of the ability to challenge and negotiate with senior stakeholders
- Experience of managing and developing services to improve outcomes for citizens, customers and key stakeholders.
- Experience of using digital technology to deliver and improve services.

Skills and Competencies

- Ability to lead and manage, inspiring and motivating people across the organisation to meaningfully engage with democratic services and the scrutiny function.
- Ability to coach and support the Democratic Services Officer effectively and to promote personal responsibility.
- Ability to actively contribute to innovation and to take analytical approaches to solving complex and challenging problems.
- Highly-developed advocacy, negotiation and presentation skills.
- Ability to cope well with and overcome ambiguity through use of effective change management approaches.
- Ability to work effectively and credibly with diverse and complex stakeholders.

DESIRABLE

- Experience of using the committee management system Modern.gov

REWARDS AND BENEFITS

The West of England Combined Authority staff receive:

- 25 days annual leave, rising to 30 after five years' continuous service, plus bank holidays, pro rata
- Auto-enrolment into the Avon Pension Fund
- Cycle to work scheme and secure bike parking
- Free eye tests for all display screen equipment (DSE) users
- Commuter Travel Club - West of England Combined Authority employees can sign up to receive discounted monthly bus tickets, unlimited bus travel for work or leisure within your chosen zone, automatic ticket renewal and price freeze for 12 months.