

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	PA to the Director of Business and Skills
MANAGED BY:	PA to the CEO
GRADE:	7

BACKGROUND

Working at the West of England Combined Authority

The West of England is a fantastic place to live and work; a place where ideas flourish and businesses grow, and a diverse population calls home. With a highly-skilled workforce, innovative businesses, rich cultural and natural assets, and excellent connections, the West of England competes on a global scale.

In 2017, the West of England Combined Authority was formed to bring the region together to drive economic growth. Significant powers and funding were transferred to the region to support work to ensure residents have better skills, more job opportunities and a better quality of life. In May 2021, the second Metro Mayor for the West of England was elected, and we're working with our regional partners and with Government to deliver against our ambitious agenda, protect the environment and ensure the West of England continues to be a thriving, successful and innovative place for future generations.

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 continues to build on its success.

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

We are an equal opportunities employer, in line with the Equalities Act 2010, and invite applicants to contact us to identify any additional support needed during the recruitment process.

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

To provide direct, confidential PA support to the Director of Business and Skills. You will support the Director of Business and Skills with a variety of tasks - from diary and inbox management to supporting key directorate meetings with agendas and minute taking. A key part of the role will be intelligently supporting your Director. You will be the first point of contact for citizens, visitors and regional partners for the directorate; both in the office and by phone/ email. You will prepare materials for the Director, working closely with their management teams and staff to ensure that the Director is fully prepared for all meetings and engagements. You will handle telephone calls on behalf of the Director with discretion and tact and will work with members of the Business Support team to ensure a high quality administrative service is provided.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Coordinate large-scale meetings and VIP visits, including venue management, guest lists, liaising closely with communications colleagues to ensure appropriate media coverage
- Be the first point of contact for citizens, visitors and regional partners, especially those who work closely with directorate teams (both in the office and by email/phone)
- Provide full administrative support to the Director of Business and Skills including:
 - Making sure the Director is fully prepared for all upcoming meetings and events
 - Managing the Director's diary, liaising with offices of senior business leaders, local authority partners and government officials
 - Managing correspondence, liaising with officers to ensure responses are sent within required timeframes. Keeping a record of enquiries where appropriate
 - Producing agendas and minutes for directorate meetings
 - Making travel arrangements
 - Booking meetings and making appropriate arrangements (room layout, refreshments)
- Ensure that all communications are appropriately dealt with, where appropriate replying on behalf of the Director. Exercise judgement, initiative and discretion in sorting urgent and non-urgent communications/ correspondence, telephone calls and when dealing with items of a personal or confidential nature
- Ensuring that documents and correspondence meet the high professional presentation standards required and systems are in place to facilitate document retrieval and record progress in relevant matters
- To cross-cover with colleagues in the Corporate Business Support Team and Democratic Services as required
- To contribute to the development and improvement of office administration systems
- To support the PA to the CEO with the management of work experience

placements and other temporary staff where appropriate providing supervision, support and mentoring

- To undertake all other duties as requested by the PA to the CEO, commensurate with the grade and status of the post

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Business administration qualification to NVQ level 3 or equivalent qualification and /or able to demonstrate equivalent knowledge and understanding gained through experience
- A clear understanding of the requirements of a role that directly supports senior management
- Able to demonstrate knowledge and/or experience of equalities and diversity issues
- Excellent keyboard and IT skills, with advanced skills and working knowledge of MS Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint. Have a willingness to learn new applications and technology as appropriate

Experience

Experience of providing administrative support within a busy organisation where accuracy and pace are vital

- Proven ability to prioritise in a dynamic office environment, managing a complex workload
- Experience of dealing with multiple senior stakeholders
- Experience of organising and supporting meetings or events

Skills and Competencies

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, both written and verbal
- Ability to quickly establish strong working relationships with internal and external colleagues and be able to work as part of a team
- High level of accuracy and attention to detail (literacy and numeracy)
- Ability to remain calm under pressure
- Ability to work in a proactive way, anticipating potential issues and using initiative to resolve
- Appreciation of the importance of discretion and confidentiality

DESIRABLE

- Educated to degree level or equivalent
- Experience of working in a complex political organisation or the public sector
- An understanding of the role and priorities for the West of England Combined Authority and an awareness of the context in which the West of England Combined Authority and/ or public sector operates
- Experience of acting as a PA to a senior Director or equivalent
- Proven ability to manage a complex inbox and electronic diary
- Evidence of resolve to own and solve problems

REWARDS AND BENEFITS

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 - all 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.
- The Combined Authority has adopted a Hybrid working approach, which enables employees to split their week between working in the workplace and working remotely. Hybrid Working forms just part of the flexible working options that the Combined Authority is offering as the new way of working. Flexible working is an arrangement that enables employees to have a way of working that suits and employee's and employer's needs whilst maintain a work-life balance.

WE PAY THE LIVING WAGE

We're proud to have been accredited as a Living Wage Employer

Living Wage accreditation means that everyone working at The West of England and Combined Authority receives a minimum hourly wage of £9.50 - significantly higher than the government minimum for over 25s, currently £8.72 per hour

It also means that anyone who provides services to, or has contracts with us, must pay the Living Wage, setting the bar for good employer practices in the region. This includes those who provide services to The West of England and Combined Authority, such cleaning and facilities management contracts, as well as those who have contracts with us - such as IT providers.

