

## Job Description

**Department:** LAW AND GOVERNANCE

**Division/Section:** CONSTITUTIONAL SERVICES / DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

**Job Title:** SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER

**Post No:** 006485

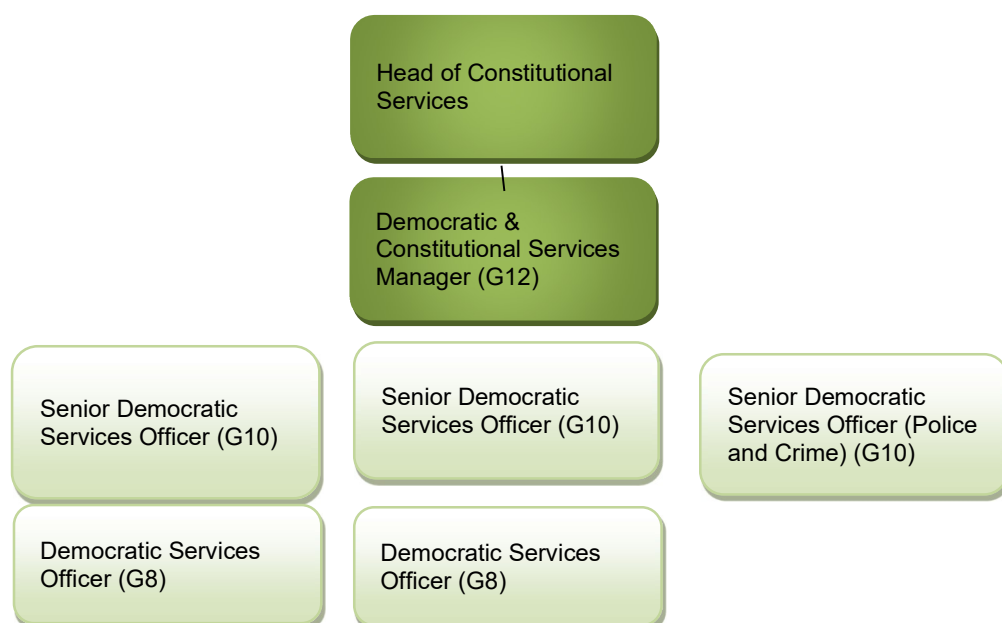
**Grade:** 10

**Reports to:** DEMOCRATIC AND CONSTITUTIONAL SERVICES MANAGER

### Organisation Chart:

Show immediate manager and any jobs reporting to this post, including grades.

CRB Check applicable?



**Is post exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 in respect of declaration of spent convictions?**

Yes ☐ No ☒

**Line Management responsibility for:**

**No. of direct reports:** 1  
**No. of indirect reports:** 0

**Size of budget:**

**None**

### Job Purpose

1. To work on own initiative as part of a team of Senior Democratic Services Officers and other staff managing:
  - a. the Council's Cabinet and Committee decision making structure and to have responsibility for clerking specific Committees/Sub-Committees,
  - b. the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Sub-Committees, and/or the servicing of Council meetings,

on behalf of the Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager, Head of Constitutional Services, and Monitoring Officer in one or more service areas, working closely with the Senior Officers and Committee Chairmen.

2. To assist the Director of Law and Governance in discharging their role of Monitoring Officer in respect of the ethical framework, the governance practice areas of the service and the formal Council decision-making process.
3. To maintain a strong overview of the governance of the Council and ensure effective democratic governance arrangements are in place, including the constitutional propriety of the decision making process.
4. To effectively organise, monitor and/or update key governance areas including the Constitution and other relevant governance protocols and guidance.
5. To provide specialist input and support to the Council and its directorates by the provision of an efficient, effective, and comprehensive service. This will include responsibility for essential Committee and Governance Services, providing governance support, advice, agenda planning, convening meetings, issuing agendas, recording proceedings and decision, and compiling minutes.
6. Liaising with Councillors, Directors and report authors to ensure timetables are met and relevant legislation followed.

**Duties and responsibilities:**

**Main Responsibilities**

1. To arrange meetings of Regulatory Committees, Scrutiny Committees and Sub-Committees, making all the necessary arrangements to compile the agenda and ensuring that all reports are submitted in the correct corporate format according to the appropriate timescales.
2. To attend formal Committee/Sub-Committees decision making meetings, as the representative of the Chief Executive, Director of Law and Governance, Head of Constitutional Services, and Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager and to give appropriate procedural advice, in accordance with statutory requirements and the City Council's Constitution, including to Members in respect of the registration and possible conflicts of interests, take notes, record decisions and prepare minutes and action sheets. This to also include attendance and support of meetings of the Corporate Management Team.
3. Management of the complaints process in relation to the operation of the Constitution and Ethics Sub Committee Code of Conduct Hearings:
  - a) Being responsible for dealing with politically sensitive material and processing this in consultation with the Monitoring Officer.
  - b) Arranging and appointing the panel to hear code of conduct complaints.
  - c) Liaising with external people including the Council's independent person and those charged with carrying out the code of conduct investigation.
  - d) Responsible for liaising with Councillors subject to the complaint and advising them on the procedures.
  - e) Ensuring all legal procedures are followed to ensure fairness and consistency.
  - f) Complete minutes from the hearing and prepare decision letters/notices.

4. To undertake the role of clerk to Licensing Appeals and other quasi-judicial hearings. Advising Senior Officers of the process of hearings, taking detailed minutes from the hearings and writing up the decision notices. To ensure external stakeholders are made aware of the processes and advise accordingly.
5. To manage the Councils petition scheme in line with the Councils constitution. Manage the emotional demands and expectations of the Lead Petitioner which may be a member of the public or an elected member in supporting and facilitating the required responses.
6. To process decisions to be taken by individual Cabinet Members in accordance with the agreed procedures and legal requirements.
7. To support and maintain key relationships with:
  - a. Elected Members
  - b. Director for Law and Governance
  - c. Head of Constitutional Services
  - d. Corporate Leadership Team
  - e. Teams in other directorates and service areas
  - f. Professional bodies
  - g. External & internal partners, customers and stakeholders
8. To liaise with the Corporate Leadership Team and Senior Officers to ensure that Cabinet and Committee decisions are communicated to them for implementation; to brief the Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager and Monitoring Officer as appropriate.
9. Facilitating discussion between Chairmen and Corporate Leadership Team/Senior Officers and to act as a negotiator to provide diplomatic challenge to all parties.
10. To assist Members in order that they are better able to carry out their role as elected representatives efficiently and effectively. To act as a conduit between Elected Members and officers to ensure the business of the Council is conducted in an efficient and effective manner.
11. To promote effective inter-relationships between executive and non-executive components of the Council's democratic governance system.
12. Providing a quality check of all briefing and information provided to Chairmen, including drafting briefing documents for Chairmen based on information supplied by other officers or with specific research input.
13. To produce reports regarding various democratic, governance and constitutional matters for formal consideration by Members and Senior Officers and present to Committee as necessary, interpreting varied and complex information and statutory legislation. This will include co-ordinating high quality briefings, providing research input where necessary and to gather and assess evidence on behalf of Members.
14. To have in-depth knowledge of and to be able to advise on and implement the Constitution, the Code of Conduct, other internal procedures, relevant legislation and Best Practice Guides, etc. and to keep informed of new developments.
15. To provide high quality advice to staff across the Council on governance working practices and arrangements arising out of changes in legislation,

policies and initiatives affecting local authorities and to arrange and discharge training as necessary. To support the Director of Law and Governance, the Head of Constitutional Services, and the Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager in the task of raising organisational awareness of the Council's Governance.

16. To ensure full compliance with all Statutory and Constitutional requirements, to promote and ensure that the correct executive decision making process and regulatory committee procedures are followed and, therefore, that decisions are sound.
17. To be responsible for providing clear, in-depth and accurate advice to elected members on governance, legal constitutional and politically sensitive matters in respect of their executive, representational and community leadership roles, either as individuals or in committee or other bodies. so as to ensure full compliance with these and thus the smooth handling of the political function of the Council. In addition, provide similar guidance and advice to senior officers in relation to the democratic processes to which they are expected to contribute and to ensure that the correct constitutional processes are used effectively.
18. To assist the Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager, the Head of Constitutional Services, and the Director of Law and Governance in the on-going development and monitoring of corporate standards and best practice and in maintaining high standards of governance throughout the organisation and to deliver any training associated with these tasks, including maintaining corporate guidance documents, the Best Practice Guide to Report Writing, etc.
19. To maintain and take responsibility for work programmes for the committees and working groups supported, in consultation with Senior Officers, to ensure coordination between committees and groups and arrange the attendance of appropriate witnesses and advisers. This will include the promotion of effective scrutiny to Members and Senior officers, to ensure a robust decision making process.
20. To take a lead role in the project management of scrutiny task and finish groups and other reviews, ensuring that Members and officers stay on track and within the terms of reference of the review.
21. To demonstrate communication skills across a wide range of settings including managing meetings, facilitating communications between key individuals and groups involved in projects and producing reports to clearly and succinctly reflect Members views and review findings.
22. To be responsible for the care, accuracy, confidentiality, security and maintenance of highly sensitive political information, in line with relevant data protection and governance legislation. including the security of offices and service related stock. This includes understanding how and when to share politically sensitive information, being aware of the confidential nature of information and the reputational risks to the Council.
23. To liaise as necessary with the public, external organisations, other local authorities, officers at all levels and Members of the Council on a variety of governance related matters and to deal effectively with telephone calls and letters.
24. To maintain appropriate records, files and databases relating to the Cabinet/Committees' activities and decisions, including confidential files. This

may include working with new technology and to contribute to the development of new ways of working, using ICT.

25. To maintain an awareness of the issues affecting other Democratic Services colleagues and of the responsibilities of other areas in order to provide cover for, or transfer to, other areas within the team.
26. To research, advise and report on democratic governance issues as required including presenting reports.
27. To be responsible for the management of the Democratic Services Officers in their day-to-day work, liaising with the Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager to ensure compliance with HR statutory functions. To allocate and supervise the work of a Democratic Services Officer checking for quality and being involved with their training and development.
28. To ensure that referrals to other Committees are properly communicated from Committees to Cabinet and Council.
29. To contribute to the delivery of accessible, effective and efficient Democratic Services and compliance with corporate and departmental procedures relating to service planning, quality control, and performance monitoring and employee relations.
30. To undertake other tasks in the democratic remit, including Members' ICT and Members' Training and Development, appointment of the Council's Representatives on Outside Bodies in liaison with Group Leaders and Secretaries, organisation of the Council's Annual Programme of Meetings.
31. Planning and support of aspects of major events including Local Government and Parliamentary Elections, Referenda, Civic and Ceremonial and activities during Local Democracy Week.
32. To attend evening meetings up to six times a month.
33. To assist with the work of the Police and Crime Panel if required.

In addition, the post holder will be expected to participate and support to special areas of responsibility and project work allocated by the Head of Constitutional Services and Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager to enhance personal development of the post holder and manage change within business.

Note: This is designated as a politically restricted post in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989

<b>Generic Responsibilities:</b>	<p>To carry out all responsibilities with regard to the Council's Equalities Policy and Procedures and Customer Care Policy.</p> <p>To comply with all Health &amp; Safety at work requirements as laid down by the employer.</p>
<b>Flexibility Clause:</b>	<p>Other duties and responsibilities express and implied which arise from the nature and character of the post within the department (or section) mentioned above or in a comparable post in any of the Organisation's other sections or departments.</p>
<b>Variation Clause:</b>	<p>This is a description of the job as it is constituted at the date shown. It is the practice of this Authority to periodically examine job descriptions, update them and ensure that they relate to the job performed, or to incorporate any proposed changes. This procedure will be conducted by the appropriate manager in consultation with the post holder.</p>

In these circumstances it will be the aim to reach agreement on reasonable changes, but if agreement is not possible the Head of Service reserves the right to make changes to your job description following consultation.