

Principal Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer Grade 12 £37,890 – £39,880 (Temporary for 18 months)

At Kirklees we want to be innovative and creative in the way we work with our citizens. The landmark work of the Kirklees Democracy Commission reflects our ambition. This role is part of the Governance and Democratic Engagement function which is responsible for the breadth of activities that support our 69 councillors individually and collectively and co-ordinates and supports the councils governance and decision making structures.

As a Principal Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer you will be responsible for the provision of professional advice and support to ensure that the council's governance activities are engaging, transparent, robust, understood and comply with legislative and audit requirements.

This role is based within the Democracy Service. To find out more about working for Kirklees please click here ●

The Job

You will be a specialist in one of the following areas of governance activity although you will be expected to operate across the breadth of functions as required by the Governance and Democratic Engagement Manager:

- Executive business, which includes Cabinet;
- Overview and Scrutiny business;
- Council, its Committees and Sub Committees.

You will be responsible for planning the work programme and meetings for your area of specialism.

You will be responsible for contributing to the wider agenda planning processes, ensuring that all meetings are planned and supported in accordance with legislative requirements and organisational needs.

You will ensure that effective communication links are made to all councillors in order to ensure that there is comprehensive awareness of the decisions taken and actions agreed by governance bodies.

Your thorough knowledge of the law and practice of meetings and of the national codes controlling the conduct of councillors will enable you to provide effective advice to officers and councillors alike to support them in advance and during governance episodes.

You will contribute to promoting democracy and democratic engagement within the council, across our partners and with local communities.

You will work closely with the Governance and Democratic Engagement Officers and formally contribute to their professional development.

Job Checklist

- Significant experience of operating across the breadth of local government governance areas;
- Knowledge of the law and practice governing local government meetings, governance and decision making;
- Ability to make and maintain records of meetings and decisions, track progress in implementing recommendations and awareness of legislation requirements relating to local government meetings;
- Ability to think strategically, carry out research, analyse findings and produce reports;
- Takes a proactive approach to ensure that work is planned to meet targets, standards and deadlines;
- Ability to work flexible hours, including occasional evenings and weekends. Requirement to travel to various locations to carry out the duties of the post.
- Ability to work effectively in a political environment and manage the interface / relationships with councillors;
- Work closely with councillors and senior officers to provide advice, briefings and guidance on strategic and operational issues relating to the function;
- Project management skills to be part of cross council projects;
- Knowledge of issues affecting local government and their implications for service delivery;
- Experience of supporting the personal and professional development of staff;

Please click here to see your responsibilities related to safeguarding ●

The Person

We need our employees to be driven to achieve the best, to be hard working, respectful and thoughtful to each other and our customers and to be creative, wherever they work.

Professionally qualified or experienced in governance and democratic practice, you will have a passion for local democracy and robust governance and accountability.

You will have practical experience of supporting a breadth of governance episodes and advising councillors and senior officers on their roles and responsibilities in this context.

You will enjoy working in a political environment and have the confidence to do so in a way that supports others.

You will enjoy working as part of a team and with others inside and outside the service on specific projects.

You will be highly motivated to contribute to a citizen-focussed approach to governance and decision making. This will involve excellent communication and engagement skills.

The right behaviours and attitudes are as important to us as the skills you bring to the job. We expect all our employees to demonstrate the following behaviours:

- Positive,
- Honest,
- Respectful,
- Flexible,
- Communicative
- Supportive.

This role is at level 2.

Person Checklist

The post requires the experience and skills to work effectively in a political environment with councillors, senior managers, partners and the public.

Key skills are:

- Excellent written communication skills to produce a range of documents including reports, minutes and briefing notes.
- Excellent oral communication skills to provide advice and technical explanations in an appropriate manner
- The ability to provide training to a range of internal and external audiences on governance issues and working effectively in a political environment
- The ability to work as part of a small team, positively contributing to achieving objectives and delivering outcomes
- Good customer service and interpersonal skills to support the public and others to access democratic processes
- The ability to manage a varied workload and respond in a timely and professional way to unplanned issues as they arise.
- Good IT skills and a willingness to continue to develop to use other technologies and media to support engagement and the understanding of democratic issues.

This Role Profile is intended to provide an understanding and appreciation of the responsibilities of this particular job. It is not possible to specify every detail and we expect you to work flexibly within your skills, knowledge, experience and grade of this job.

For Recruitment Purposes: In order to be considered for this role you will need to demonstrate how you meet the Person Checklist