

Director of Law, Assurance and Strategy

Join us – make a difference in our communities

The context for West Sussex County Council is changing. Increasing demographic pressures, continuing challenges to provide residents and communities with greater levels of choice and control over services, and the tighter financial constraints placed on the authority mean that the Council needs to change the way it operates. Working with elected Members the leadership team will develop, implement and track programmes that will ensure better outcomes for individuals and communities across the priorities of 'giving children the best start in life', 'a strong & diverse economy' and 'independent for longer in later life'.

The Directorate of Corporate Resources & Services develops and delivers support services and corporate management of shared "resources" to enable the County Council to operate as an effective and efficient organisation. The Directorate operates within a complex, multi-provider environment with a wide range of partners to ensure the necessary corporate capabilities are available and delivered (e.g. HR/OD, change, IT, finance planning and management, legal and democratic services). There is a strong focus on performance, driving efficiencies and providing best value for money for residents.

The Director of Law, Assurance & Strategy is the main legal and constitutional adviser to Cabinet, the County Council, its committees and individual members and all decision makers. The person also acts as Monitoring Officer to the Council and, in that role, has personal accountability for the lawfulness of all of the Council's governance and in providing assurance of its decisions and operations in discharging its statutory responsibilities. The role also oversees the management of the resources and guidance to support the Council's development of strategy.

About the job

To develop and deliver effective corporate and cabinet support services which provide legal and constitutional and strategic advice to the Council and all of its operations. The post holder acts as Monitoring Officer to the Council in being accountable for the lawful and proper discharge of its statutory responsibilities, maintaining, and applying the County Council's constitution and ensuring its effective use. The job holder is responsible for policy and strategy development working with Cabinet and Senior Management. In addition, there is a responsibility for all of the Council's democratic systems including those that support partnerships such as CLCs, the PCP and the LEP.



Job Description & Person Specification



This role is the Monitoring Officer for the Council under the local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Returning Officer for the county and responsible for election management. The role also has responsibility for the induction, training and development of elected members.

What you'll need to succeed

You will have a proven track record of delivering and leading a complex service, with extensive experience of operating successfully within a senior leadership team, shaping and influencing innovative and high-quality practice in high performing teams. You will need to provide strategic leadership and work collaboratively to lead and embed a performance focused culture to deliver high quality outcomes. You will have a thorough understanding of the relationships and culture of organisations that impact on the wider Council.

Job details

Grade: Senior Management Group (SMG)
Directorate Group: Law, Assurance and Strategy
Location: County Hall, Chichester

Required experience and skills

(These will be used as the shortlisting criteria)

Key Skills:

1. Excellent communication skills with the ability to influence, negotiate and establish credibility to represent the County Council and enhance its reputation and form positive relationships with external partners and elected members.
2. Ability to work proactively with fully delegated authority to use principles and seasoned judgement to deal with complex issues without referral, for example resolution of complex service issues.
3. Ability to recognise where change is needed, to embrace and create an enthusiasm for change and to work effectively with others to develop creative, innovative and customer-focused solutions.
4. Ability to maintain a customer-focused approach, building working partnerships with others to foster effective joint working, based on collaboration and cooperation to deliver "joined up" services or programmes.
5. Proven people management skills with the ability to inspire and provide direction and support promoting a "can do" attitude and an environment of creativity and innovation.
6. Ability to delegate responsibility and provide constructive feedback and coaching to individuals in roles where there is a high degree of discretion in decision making.



Qualifications and/or experience:

- Relevant Management or Professional qualification and membership of a relevant professional body.
- Evidence of continuing professional development in leadership and business management.
- Educated to post-graduate degree level or equivalent by experience.
- Detailed knowledge and experience of at least one of the key areas of responsibility, alongside the confidence & experience to quickly become adept in other areas.
- Broad knowledge of public sector services, the macro social and economic context within which local authorities work and the implications of this for delivery of County Council's aims.
- Broad understanding of service delivery models, concepts and principles gained through extensive business exposure in a diverse range of organisations or services.
- Significant experience of operating in leadership roles, translating strategy into effective operational plans.
- Recent experience of successfully leading the delivery of strategic objectives and business plans.
- Experience of having worked at a senior level in a political environment.
- Business acumen from creating a commercial environment where the management of cost and customer satisfaction is paramount.

Key responsibilities

Responsible for advising and ensuring the discharge of the responsibilities of the Cabinet, County Council, all committees and decision-making bodies or persons and for monitoring Member behaviour and enforcing the Code of Member Conduct.

Providing executive support to the Leader and Cabinet, maintenance of scrutiny, non-executive and local committee arrangements, support to Council, the Chairman and Members and Member development.

Provide legal guidance policy and strategy advice to Cabinet and Members in translating their political objectives and priorities into coherent initiatives that will deliver their intended outcomes for West Sussex.

Work with Cabinet and senior management in the development of policy and strategy ensuring that political priorities and statutory accountabilities are turned into strategic outcomes, plans and that, in collaboration with other Directors, appropriate resources are allocated and managed.

Provide assurance that the Council's policies, processes and business plans are defined and implemented in accordance with corporate priorities, commitments and governance arrangements, relevant legislation and statutory and constitutional requirements.

Provide strong, visible, and collective leadership for staff and partners across the Council which builds a culture of high performance, inspires people, and drives the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives across law, assurance and strategy.



Job Description & Person Specification



Ensure that there is a clear and consistent focus across the Council and its partners on delivering an inclusive and outstanding customer experience to all of the citizens and communities of West Sussex.

Provide respected professional leadership for the legal function to ensure that the Council accesses national best practice and ensure on-going professional development.

Develop plans across the Legal, Assurance and Strategy area to implement the agreed business strategies for the Council and its partners which are focused on delivering the political objectives and priorities of West Sussex and which mitigate all identified risks.

Be responsible for annual financial budgets and resources for the areas under remit, ensuring that they are allocated effectively for the delivery of intended outcomes in a manner which demonstrates value for money and compliance with relevant policies and guidelines.

Lead the development of policies which support the delivery of corporate objectives and comply with all relevant legislation and statutory requirements within an acceptable level of risk.

Our Values

You will lead, promote and demonstrate the values of our organisation.

- Trust and Support
- Listen and Act Upon
- Customer Centred
- Honest and Realistic
- Genuinely Valued

You will lead, promote and demonstrate the cultural ambition of our organisation:

"We have an inclusive and supportive culture, work in partnership and reward individual and team contribution."

JD Code: SMG

Date: February 2021

