

Kent County Council
Job Description: Chief of Staff

Directorate:	Chief Executives Department
Grade:	KR16
Responsible to:	Chief Executive

Job Purpose

The Chief of Staff will be a key support to the CEO and senior management team in both their management of and direction setting for the organisation. Aware of the significant issues facing Local Authorities and public sector organisations nationally and in Kent, the postholder provides and distils relevant information from a number of sources, both internal and external; assess the pipeline of planned activity to ensure the organisation can deploy the necessary capacity and capability to deliver; and ensure objectives for cross organisation activity set by the CEO are achieved.

The postholder will lead a small team providing support to the CEO, Deputy CEO and Director SPRCA. The postholder will work with senior stakeholders within KCC; partners across the local authority system in Kent; County Councils; and other national organisations and government departments. The Chief of Staff may lead significant projects on behalf of the CEO and the focus will be on key the significant strategic priorities rather than business as usual topics.

Responsibilities

Identify examples of national and international best practice to ensure that KCC benefits from relevant innovations in service provision or organisational systems.

Develop effective strategy and operational approaches for promoting delivery across the organisation, spotting areas of poor performance; duplication and/or unclear accountability and either dealing with it or bringing it to the attention of the CEO.

Acting as first line arbiter if there are differing priorities or disagreements between any services across KCC in order to secure best outcomes for the authority as a whole.

Work on behalf of the CEO with a wide range of senior stakeholders, attending meetings on their behalf when appropriate and leading engagement locally and nationally when required.

Oversee development and sign off of all briefing and publication products required by the CEO

Using authority delegated by the CEO, follow up on significant matters delegated to others by or of interest to the CEO and ensure timelines are met and quality responses are received/delivered. Support the CEO in holding people to account by ensuring clarity of actions required.

Visibly support change and uptake of initiatives that drive excellence.

Analyse on behalf of the CEO and Deputy CEO correspondence and information from external bodies, primarily government departments, to understand the impact on and requirement for response from KCC. Ensure responses are well informed, co-ordinated if a cross organisational view is required and timely.

Represent views of the CEO to ensure their key priorities are clearly formulated, understood by all stakeholders, and delivered efficiently and effectively

Act as the front door for queries from KCC Members and key partners to the CEO, putting appropriate systems in place to ensure timely and appropriate responses are sent on their behalf.

Synthesise information from a wide range of internal and external sources to provide high quality advice and support to the CEO and Deputy CEO and their teams. Ensure the flow of information necessary for the CEO's decision making is timely and appropriate.

Develop a close working relationship with the Leader and their office to ensure awareness of and proactive advice and information on topics of interest to the Leader, including in advance of external meetings in which the Leader is personally involved.

Build and support positive working relationships between the CEO's office and other teams across the Council to ensure their output is aligned to CEO's requirements, decision-making processes, and timelines.

Direct, plan, and delegate activities ensuring the smooth running of the CEO office. Promote Diversity & Inclusion and wellbeing across KCC.

Support the CEO in managing high profile agendas that require engagement across the whole organisation or significant parts of it.

Develop and champion new initiatives or projects as necessary.

All corporate directors, directors and senior managers have an explicit responsibility to deliver the collective agenda of the Council. These are fundamental elements of their role not an addition and are summarised as follows:

Whole Council

- Seek to improve the lives of all residents in Kent and economy of Kent
- Act as corporate parent to the Council's looked after children
- Take an active role in promoting and ensuring the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding are met.
- Understand, communicate and contribute to the delivery of KCC's strategic aims
- Meet statutory obligations and promote and ensure compliance with policies and procedures and the Council's Code of Conduct (Kent Code).
- Advise elected members and support the democratic process
- Promote the Council brand and enhance the overall reputation of the Council
- Understand and monitor the measures of performance, including customer insight, which define successful outcomes for KCC services
- Maintain and ensure a relentless focus on the customer
- Act to support the Council-wide need to deliver services within budget, thereby avoiding an overspend that could damage the financial viability of the Council
- Overcome professional and service silos to achieve the County Council's objectives.

Integration of Services

- Focus resources where they have the biggest impact
- Deliver services that are flexible and adaptable
- Integrate services within KCC and work with partner agencies to ensure a seamless customer experience
- Fully and inclusively engage all staff in the delivery of services, demonstrating the Council's leadership values and competencies.

Embedding Commissioning and Engaging relevant markets

- Establish an outcome focused organisation
- Meet the financial regulations and standing orders of KCC
- Challenge the status quo and engage with the market to constantly improve
- Ensure all services are delivered effectively and efficiently
- Proactively and continuously seek to improve service delivery
- Proactively manage risk to avoid inertia whilst not exposing the Council to needless and avoidable challenge or loss

Managing Change

- Understand and support the Authority's overall change agenda

- Deliver required outcomes of service specific change on time and to budget
- Understand the quality of staff, support their development, nurture those with talent
- Identify the skills for the future and the level of staff through robust workforce planning
- Identify and deal with underperformance.
- Deliver to agreed budget and income targets.

	CRITERIA
QUALIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified to degree level or equivalent with a relevant management or professional qualification and/or demonstrable management experience at a high level • Evidence of continuing professional development.
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven extensive experience of working at a senior management level in local government and/or other relevant large and complex organisation. • Extensive experience and track record in delivery of a range of services in partnership with other agencies and stakeholders, both internal and external. • Experience of analysing complex documents and data
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to establish strong positive relationships across the organisation at all levels including a relationship of both personal and professional credibility and trust with senior leaders and elected Members. • Able to establish strong positive relationships across partner and other external organisations • Able to influence and negotiate at a strategic professional and political level both locally and nationally in order to ensure the best interests of the Council are met. • Able to demonstrate a high level of personal resilience, persistence and focus to ensure the delivery of outcomes • Highly developed communication and presentation skills, including the ability to write well organised and clear reports with good use of evidence, supported by data • Good strategic thinker and problem analyst • Able to demonstrate well-honed project management skills • Organised with strong attention to detail • Able to challenge appropriately at all levels in the organisation • Proactive – spot where time pressures are for the CEO and alleviate. Anticipate and avert problems • Able to ensure the culture the CEO wants to build is modelled by their office in all interactions across KCC and with partners • Able to manage the process of idea to execution • Able, and keen, to simplify complexity

<p>KNOWLEDGE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong understanding of local government, its statutory responsibilities and the challenges being faced by the public sector. • Organisational and political intelligence. • Knowledge of the complex political and democratic processes within local government, together with an understanding of the relationships with other local authorities and statutory bodies
<p>OUR VALUES AND CULTURE</p>	<p>Kent Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · We are brave. We do the right thing, we accept and offer challenge · We are curious to innovate and improve · We are compassionate, understanding and respectful to all · We are strong together by sharing knowledge · We are all responsible for the difference we make <p>Our values enable us to build a culture that is:</p> <p>Flexible/agile - willing to take (calculated) risks and want people that are flexible and agile</p> <p>Curious - constantly learning and evolving</p> <p>Compassionate and Inclusive - compassionate, understanding and respectful to all</p> <p>Working Together - building and delivering for the best interests of Kent</p> <p>Empowering - Our people take accountability for their decisions and actions</p> <p>Externally Focused - Residents, families and communities at the heart of decision making</p>