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| New RDC Logo colour.JPG | **Job Description and Person Specification** |

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| **Job Title** | Democratic and Legal Services Manager |
| **Section** | Democratic and Legal Services |
| **Reporting to** | Programme Director, Place and Resources, for all non-electoral matters. For electoral matters: Chief Executive as Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer |
| **Responsible for** | Direct reports: 3 employees |
| **Grade** | TBC | **Politically Restricted** |

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| **Job Purpose** |
| The post holder will be the Council’s Monitoring Officer and lead the management of effective and efficient: * democratic processes including elections, members support, overview and scrutiny support, and support to Committees, Council and Elected Members.
* commissioned services which relate to the postholder’s remit, ensuring that they meet organisational needs, deliver against agreed specifications and represent value for money.

The postholder will also have responsibility for championing, promoting and embedding all aspects of good governance within the practice and conduct of Elected Members and Council officers. |

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| **Job Context** |
| The section supports and promotes effective and efficient democratic and legal arrangements across the Council. Comprising of commissioned and directly delivered services, all of which must operate to the highest standards to include:* Delivery of voter registration, elections and referendums, to the required legal standards and timescales, making best use of technology, adopting good practice and a customer focused approach.
* Providing support and advice to senior managers, Committee Chairs, Full Council and its committees, sub-committees and working parties.
* Supporting and equipping Elected Members and officers in carrying out their roles through support and training and enforcement of standards.
* Providing support to the Council’s overview and scrutiny processes.
* Promoting high standards of information governance and ensuring that Freedom of Information, Data Subject Access requests and corporate complaints are dealt with in a correct and timely manner, driving forward organisational improvements for the Council’s customers.

The section also spans legal, procurement and monitoring officer functions through proactively working with a wide range of officers, Elected Members and partners at all levels, providing strategic advice and guidance, and also enabling the Council to fully acquit its responsibilities and deliver its priorities in key areas of Council business such as planning and enforcement.  |

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| **Responsibilities** |
| The post holder is responsible for:* Working directly with the Chief Executive and other senior officers to ensure that legal and monitoring officer implications are taken into account, and providing constitutional and legal rigour around decision-making.
* Acting as the Council’s Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), ensuring there is compliance with all information governance requirements, leading the Corporate Information Governance Group (CIGG) and acting as the key point of liaison with the statutory Data Protection Officer (DPO).
* Provision of appropriate “scrutiny officer” support to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee so that scrutiny reviews are appropriately resourced and professionally conducted.
* Commissioning the delivery of corporate services where this represents best value, ensuring that proportionate governance and performance arrangements are in place and reported on.
* Promoting and enforcing the highest standards of conduct across the organisation and taking appropriate action to resolve issues that arise, including invoking procedures for independent investigations with respect to standards and constitutional matters.
* Ensuring that Elected Members and Council officers can access advice and guidance on complex matters relating to the Council’s Constitution and decision-making procedure and good practice.
* Ensuring the provision of Elected Members support, including a high quality induction, learning and development programme, and information and briefing materials relating to all aspects of Council business. Ensuring compliance with key legislation including the production of the Forward Plan, committee work programmes and a timetable of meetings.
* Leading the regular reviews of the Council’s Constitution, in liaison with the Chief Finance Officer (s151) and the Council’s legal advisors.
* Managing the commissioning of Legal Services for the Council and performance against any service level and contractual arrangements so that they meet the needs of services, and ensuring that statutory obligations are fulfilled.
* Ensuring the provision of high quality, committee support service for Committees, Council, the Strategic Management Board and other significant meetings as required.
* Leading on contracting, tendering and procurement matters for the Council
* Fulfilling accountabilities associated with key policies of the Council including equalities, safeguarding, health and safety and risk management.

**As the Council’s Monitoring Officer (as per the Constitution):*** Maintaining the Constitution
* Ensuring lawfulness and fairness of decision making
* Supporting and advising the Overview and Scrutiny Committee acting as the Corporate Governance Standards Committee
* Promoting and taking action to enforce standards
* Providing advice on the scope of powers and authority to take decisions, maladministration, financial impropriety and probity to all Elected Members.

As Deputy Returning Officer, liaising with the Returning Officer and overseeing the production and review of the project plan, risk register and management of other project tasks for elections, including: * Project team and Elections Working Group meetings including post-election evaluation exercises.
* Nominations process, postal vote opening sessions and election counts.
* Briefing of candidates and agents on the elections process.
* Liaison with the Electoral Commission, Cabinet Office, Association of Electoral Administrators and other bodies, as required, including lobbying for policy changes.
* Liaison with cross-boundary partners at parliamentary elections.
* Leading plans for implementation of significant changes to legislation / regulations for elections and voter registration.

As the Council’s Deputy Electoral Registration Officer:* Overseeing the voter registration service, including the annual canvass and publication of the electoral register, and liaising with the Electoral Registration Officer.
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The above list of duties is neither exclusive nor exhaustive. The post holder will be expected to undertake other duties commensurate with the responsibility level of this post. References to elections also applies to referendums.

The Council is a dynamic organisation, which recognises the need to respond flexibly to changing demands and circumstances. Whilst the job description provides a summary of the post, it may need to be amended to meet changing circumstances.

The Council takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and to protect adults at risk. There is an expectation that all staff will positively demonstrate their awareness and support to this commitment.

* **Requirements of the Post**

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|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Qualifications / Training** | * Educated to degree level or equivalent.
* Evidence of continuing professional development in areas relevant to role.
 | * Legally qualified
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| **Knowledge** | * Extensive knowledge and understanding of local government and of the areas of responsibility
* Current and in-depth knowledge of governance and related national policy and strategies.
* Extensive knowledge and commitment to quality customer focussed services and the benefits that flow from a corporate approach to service delivery and organisational growth
* In depth awareness, knowledge and adherence to Information Governance/Data Protection principles.
* Awareness and knowledge and commitment to Equality and Diversity and Health and Safety legislation and of safeguarding responsibilities.
* Current and in-depth knowledge of national policy and strategies around elections and voter registration.
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| **Experience** | * Experience of developing innovative policies that align with and support the corporate plan and strategies.
* Extensive experience of working collaboratively across all services, and with Elected Members and partners to develop strategically aligned and future focussed policies.
* Successful development of partnership and collaborative working, to enhance service delivery and maximise best value benefits
* Track record of managing conflict and complaints, informally and formally, using any lessons learned to drive forward organisational change and improvement
* Experience of managing commissioned and procured arrangements so they achieve business objectives and best value
* Track record of positively influencing and developing corporate culture and identity
* Experience of policy formation, implementation and tracking compliance.
 | * Experience of working closely or directly with key national regional and local organisations and authorities with regards to elections and voter registration.
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| **Occupational Skills** | * Enhanced problem solving, strategic and analytical thinking skills to provide creative and fit for purpose solutions to problems and make a corporate impact.
* Excellent understanding of the political context at a local, regional and national level and the ability to operate sensitively and efficiently within a political environment.
* Ability to deliver clear advice on governance matters to other senior managers, Elected Members and partners.
* A demonstrative record of achieving and delivering services judged to be good or outstanding.
* Ability to work collaboratively, as part of a wider senior leadership group, driving forward organisational performance.
* Ability to build, maintain and influence effective working relationships and at a strategic level both internally and externally with key stakeholders and partners.
* Ability to develop, assess and plan for future need with a focus on continuous improvement and securing links to corporate priorities/objectives.
* Budget and staff management.
* Enhanced ability to prioritise and manage competing priorities
* Highly developed written, presentation and interpersonal skills.
* Ability to lead, manage and motivate services/teams in a challenging and changing environment
* Highly developed programme and project management skills
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| **Other** | * Ability to attend meetings outside of normal business hours
* Ability to work additional hours outside of normal business hours at election time
* Highest professional integrity
* Politically restricted post
* Ability to travel to different locations to meet business needs
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