

Role Title	Democratic Services Officer
Service	Leadership and Democracy, Governance and Law,
Competency Level	Principal Officer/Manager
Pay Scale	PO2

Purpose
To support and promote local democracy, and to be responsible for servicing a range of local authority meetings and carrying out associated work. This includes supporting the scrutiny function of the Council, ensuring scrutiny works effectively in Waltham Forest. The postholder will be responsible for some of the more complex, difficult or high-profile meetings serviced by the Team.

Specific Accountabilities	End Results/Outcomes
1. To maintain a professional approach and high standards of behaviour and service delivery, demonstrating tact and diplomacy on a range of sensitive issues.	Maintaining professional and practice standards. Maintaining and enhancing the reputation of Democratic Services and the Council.
2. To ensure that meetings comply with statutory and best practice requirements and meet the highest service standards.	Sound corporate governance.
3. To gain and maintain, through training, self-development and on-the-job learning, detailed knowledge of all relevant legislation and procedures necessary to carry out the job effectively, including: • The Council's Constitution • The Code of Conduct for Councillors • The Local Government Acts • Relevant licensing and town planning legislation • School Standards and Framework Act • School Admission and Appeals Codes • Other relevant codes, protocols and procedures	Sound corporate governance. Expert opinion, advice, support and interpretation is provided.
4. To ensure the accurate and timely production of agenda, minutes, reports, statutory notices and correspondence.	Official documents that are accurate and produced on time.
5. To support the coordination of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, including: • Following up on actions and recommendations from meetings • Providing Officers with advice and guidance in regard to providing responses. • Maintaining work programmes based on discussions with key stakeholders.	Consistent and effective support to the Council's scrutiny function, including day to day management of queries related to the scrutiny committees. All appropriate documentation related to the committees is kept up to date and is

	user friendly and audience specific.
6. To ensure that decisions made and recorded at meetings are accurate, clear and comprehensive, and meet agreed standards.	Maintaining professional and practice standards.
7. To work effectively with other agencies and partners.	Establishment of relationships and effective exchange of information.
8. To develop good working relationships, develop community links and communicate effectively with internal / external organisations / partners and stakeholders. Represent specialist area internally and / or externally.	Specialist work area reputation is maintained or enhanced. Stakeholders are engaged with activity relevant to them. Positive feedback is received from stakeholders. Best practice is shared.
9. To ensure that the Council complies with statutory obligations in respect of those meetings for which the post holder is responsible.	Statutory compliance and safeguarding the Council's reputation.
10. To provide procedural advice at meetings to Chairs, Councillors and senior managers on the Council's decision-making processes as set out in the Constitution.	Having the confidence of senior figures. Expert opinion, advice, support and interpretation.
11. To act as the first point of contact in advising elected members, senior leaders and external partners regarding the Council's decision making processes, including the scrutiny function.	The scrutiny function is consistently supported and able to demonstrate impact on key decision making across the council. Quality advice is provided to elected members and senior management team with due regard to statutory guidance and best practice in respect to scrutiny. Complex issues and risks are monitored, and escalated to the scrutiny officer or senior management as required.
12. To manage conflicting priorities and deadlines, and ensure that committee reports are published in compliance with statutory requirements.	Effective planning of workloads and efficient service delivery. Statutory compliance.

13. To represent the Director of Governance and Law and Head of Democratic Services at internal meetings, and to represent the Council at other meetings.	Maintaining professional and practice standards. Having the confidence of senior figures. Expert opinion, advice, support and interpretation.
14. To support the promotion and development of new initiatives to improve the performance and quality of services including maximising the use of available and emerging technology.	Service improvement and greater use of relevant technology.
15. To support and clerk education admission and exclusion appeal hearings (see 3 above).	Expert opinion, advice, support and interpretation.
16. To manage room bookings and set up presentation equipment for meetings.	Health & safety and diversity requirements considered and met; rooms and equipment available. Protection of council assets.
17. To maintain an understanding of policy and service issues in national, regional and local context.	Policy developments in agreed areas are researched and monitored, with contribution to the team priorities around developing committee knowledge and expertise. Assistance provided to Scrutiny Officer in carrying out research for the themed review papers/reports for the scrutiny committees.
General Accountabilities	End Results/Outcomes
1. To understand and comply with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.	Maintaining professional and practice standards with no negative indications. Established corporate governance arrangements. Decision-making supported by sound advice with regards to equality and diversity.
2. Deliver a specialist aspect of service delivery, which engages customers / stakeholders and enables them to make effective use of the service.	The service is delivered to the quality, organisational and professional standards required Customer / stakeholder expectations are managed in relation to what can be delivered. The service meets organisational requirements and reflects customer / stakeholder requirements / needs, within organisational constraints.

3. Maintain all required records and information. Analyse and interpret complex information, for input into reports..	Procedures are adhered to and all information is correctly recorded and processed. Accurate, complete and relevant information / records / reports are provided for internal and/or external use.
4. To ensure the necessary standards relating to safeguarding best practices/protocols are effectively communicated, monitored and maintained as relevant within the scope of this post.	Safeguarding standards are monitored and maintained in compliance with Council policy
5. To carry out all duties and responsibilities with reasonable care for the health and safety of self and others and report any potential hazards or unsafe practices to line manager.	Work is carried out in a way that is safe and without risks to health.
6. Work closely with others to clarify changing customer / organisational requirements.	Customer requirements are identified and documented. Improvement opportunities are identified and recommended.

Nature of Contacts

To liaise with Committee Chairs, Members of the Council, the Chief Executive and senior officers across the authority, and external agencies and organisations on matters which fall within the remit of the meetings for which the post holder is responsible.

Procedural Context

Reports to: Democratic Services Team Leader.

Acts within the legislative and constitutional framework with discretion to share and organise work to meet service requirements. Works within laid down procedures but deals with issues pragmatically using judgement based on nous and experience. Deals with day-to-day problems and conflicts without always referring to others. Knows when to involve or warn senior figures.

Contributes to improving the Council's governance including the use of emerging technology and efficient use of resources.

Resourcing

Budget responsibilities: None.

Staff responsibilities: None.

Competency Level: This role will be required to deliver to the Principal Officer's level of competencies as set out in the Council's competency framework.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience			
Attribute	Essential	Desirable	Method of Assessment
1. EXPERIENCE			
1.1 Significant experience of meeting administration and minute taking	✓		AF/I
1.2 Experience of committee and meeting administration in local government		✓	AF/I
1.3 Experience of working with senior figures, for example councillors, Board members and directors	✓		AF/I
2. SPECIAL ABILITIES/APTITUDES			
2.1 Excellent written and spoken communication skills	✓		AF/I
2.2 A good knowledge of decision-making processes		✓	AF/I
2.3 A good knowledge of the legislation concerning local authority governance		✓	AF/I
2.4 A sound understanding of the issues facing local government and the way in which local government operates	✓		AF/I
2.5 Ability to work with minimal supervision under own initiative	✓		AF/T/I
2.6 Ability to write clear, concise reports on complex issues.	✓		AF/T/I
2.7 Ability to write clear and accurate minutes of meetings	✓		AF/I
2.8 Ability to build effective working relationships with a wide range of people including senior managers, politicians and external stakeholders	✓		AF/I AF/T/I
2.9 Highly developed organisational and planning skills	✓		AF/I
2.10 Political sensitivity and awareness	✓		
2.11 Ability to work under pressure and to cope with conflicting and changing demands.	✓		
2.12 Ability to work flexibly in a pressurised political environment.	✓		
2.13 Ability to use appropriate information and communication technology.	✓		
3. OTHER POSITION SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS			
3.1 Commitment to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy, and acceptance of responsibility for its practical application.	✓		AF/I
3.2 Ability to attend evening meetings, which sometimes may take place at short notice, at different venues in the Borough.	✓		AF/I

Knowledge, Skills and Experience			
Attribute	Essential	Desirable	Method of Assessment
3.3 An interest in local democracy and community well-being	✓		AF/I
4 EDUCATION AND TRAINING			
4.1 A degree or relevant governance or democratic services qualification (e.g. ADSO)		✓	AF/I
4.2 Attendance at relevant courses relating to local authority meetings and governance framework		✓	AF/I

* AF = Application Form
 I = Interview
 T = Test

The above profile is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by employees in this role. It is not intended to be a detailed list of all duties and responsibilities which may be required. This role profile will be supplemented and further defined by annual objectives, which will be developed in conjunction with the post holder. It will be subject to regular review and the Council reserves the right to amend or add to the accountabilities listed.