Democratic Participation Officer

JE Code: JE2366

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| **Values – We are dedicated, respectful, collaborative, we are Milton Keynes Council** |
| **Service:** | Democratic Services |
| **Reports to:** | Electoral Services Manager |
| **Job Family:** | Professional and Technical  |
| **Grade:** | G | **Politically restricted:** | Y |
| **Date:** | April 2022 |

**Key Deliverables**

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| **1.** | Drawing on an appropriate evidence base, to formulate and deliver a Democratic Engagement Plan for the Council, which is evaluated and refreshed annually. To collaborate with colleagues to deliver tailored communication plans to support electoral registration, voter turnout and election integrity messages on an ongoing basis. |
| **2.** | Support and lead (working collaboratively with youth workers, democratic service colleagues and volunteers) the Council’s young people led democracy project (currently the MK Youth Cabinet) to: * establish and promote processes that allow decision makers to understand their views;
* help to identify and support appropriate ‘campaign priorities’; and
* organising elections as directed / appropriate.
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| **3.** | Develop and support active interest and participation from key groups in decision making processes and democratic processes at a local, regional and national level. Attend democratic engagement forums and events where required. |
| **4.** | Formulate a programme of work in schools and MK College, directly leading sessions which are specifically aimed at increasing young people’s understanding of local democracy and the importance of their engagement in the work of the council and of elections. |
| **5.** | Plan and deliver Borough-wide initiatives to increase democratic engagement, targeting groups who are most disengaged from local democracy, for example ethnic groups and adults with learning disability. |
| **6.** | Support the delivery of voter identification requirements and the Council’s engagement with people who could find this presents obstacles to their involvement. |
| **7.** | Establish community outreach networks in areas where participation is lower, working with, and through, established local organisations like parish and town councils, places of worship and the voluntary and community sector to reach and engage with residents to specifically promote voter registration. |

*Within reason these key deliverables may evolve to meet service need and it is expected that you will be flexible and adaptable in your delivery to meet both service and council wide needs*

**Essential Requirements (key skills & qualifications)**

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| **1.** | Appropriate qualification (Certificate in Electoral administration, Certificate in Democratic Services, Youth and Community work qualification) or a commitment / demonstrable ability to achieve such qualification. |
| **2.** | Experience of developing and delivering complex project and / or delivery plans, including measurement and assessment of targets, including the management of an associated budget (£10,000 p.a.). |
| **3.** | Ability to plan and monitor the work of others to achieve agreed outcomes. |
| **4.** | Ability to communicate persuasively, in a range of settings and to a range of stakeholders, and to enthuse others of the principles and values of democratic engagement and participation. |
| **5.** | Awareness and understanding of safeguarding and health and safety implications when developing projects involving vulnerable groups. |
| **6.** | Experience of having worked with youth or other vulnerable groups and volunteers, to deliver an agreed set of objectives. |

Job Family

Professional/Technical

Grade G

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| **Colleagues Expectations*** Be professional at all times
* Work together for the good of the team, council and local people
* Promote a supportive culture
* Challenge assumptions
* Take ownership
* Be willing to change and do things differently
* Always work in a safe manner
 | **Managers expectations*** Be a role model by displaying positive behaviours at all times
* Make well-considered decisions
* Support, coach and communicate with my team
* Be accountable for my team’s performance
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Professional/Technical job holders rely upon their deep knowledge of the specialism or discipline in which they work to carry out vital tasks and provide authoritative advice to others. Often developing within recognised career paths, their evolving expertise sees them bear increasing responsibility for managing Council assets, the development of policies and procedures and the strategic direction of the functions they support.

### Role characteristics

At this level roles require an in depth, theoretical understanding of their particular discipline to solve complex problems, offer evidence based, provide authoritative advice to colleagues / service users and manage teams and/or other resource assets.

### The knowledge and skills required

The broad knowledge requirement needed to deal with the technical and business challenges of roles is usually underpinned by an appreciation of the theoretical basis of the particular discipline, such that job holders can fall back on the first principles of their specialism to make decisions and offer advice.

This level of knowledge is often indicated by the need for a degree level education in the relevant field, but for some roles this is substituted by a significant level of on the job training and focussed experience such that the level of expertise confers a similar level of authority.

Roles will have demands for manual dexterity in relation to typing and similar functions, other jobs will use a range of equipment requiring precision in their use and handling.

### Thinking, planning and communication

The situations and problems dealt with at this level will be increasingly complex, involving several information streams where analytical and judgemental skills will be needed to interpret information correctly and determine optimum solutions.

Job holders will have plenty of day to day issues to contend with, they will also need to plan some months ahead to achieve medium-term objectives in such areas as project support or service development.

At this level, the information exchanged with internal and external colleagues, and members of the public will call for developed communication skills on the part of the job holders. Matters will be technically complicated, requiring careful explanation, or sensitive, requiring significant listening skills to interpret information and provide appropriate advice.

**Decision making and innovation**

Job holders will have the autonomy to adapt specific approaches to better meet medium term objectives. They will be bound by the recognised procedural framework of their specialism as it is managed by the Council but will decide when and precisely how duties are to be carried out. They will also deal with problems (often escalated to this level) for which there are no set-down routes to a solution other than broad service practice guidelines.

### Areas of responsibility

With a diverse range of jobs being represented at this level, the precise blend of responsibilities for which the job holder is accountable will depend upon the service in which they operate.

External facing roles will focus on the needs of people whether external service users or partners, and will be responsible for high impact decision making and the implementation of appropriate programmes on behalf of individuals or groups of people or enforcement of regulations which have direct and significant consequences upon those served. Such roles are likely to have only modest levels of responsibility for finance, information assets, equipment and/or premises.

Internal roles are likely to have this pattern reversed, with weightier responsibility for significant financial and non-financial assets, but less for the assessment of needs of individuals and groups.

Jobs will have supervisory responsibility for the work of others and will be accountable for the quality and timeliness of outputs, whether related to the work of internal teams or temporary external contractors, volunteers or others.

### Impacts and demands

Tasks and duties will be generally carried out in a sedentary position but there will always be a requirement for standing and walking from time to time, and the occasional need to lift or carry items.

The problem solving and decision-making elements of these jobs mean that job holders require lengthy periods of enhanced mental attention to attend to duties, while also dealing with deadlines, interruptions and conflicting demands.

Duties of jobs at this level will not require job holders to develop and maintain working relationships with people who, through their circumstances or behaviour, place particular emotional demands on the job holder.

Many Professional / Technical job holders find themselves exposed to some disagreeable, unpleasant or hazardous working conditions. Particularly when the needs of their specialism require them to work on external sites exposed to the weather, in or around refuse and waste plant, close to particularly noisy machinery and in similar environments.

Other jobs, such as enforcement roles, may also see job holders exposed to verbal abuse and threatening environments. In all cases, job holders will minimise risk and conform to health and safety regulations to mitigate any negative effects of such exposure.