

## **Job Description: Director of Data, Insight and Innovation**

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**Reports to:** Chief Executive

**Directorate:** Data, Insight and Innovation

**Grade:** Grade 10

**Responsible for:**

- Data
- Knowledge Management
- RI Programmes
- Sentiment Analysis
- Horizon Scanning
- Scenario planning
- Innovation
- Research & Information

### **Job Purpose:**

As the Director of Data, Insight and Innovation at the Local Government Association (LGA), you will provide strategic leadership for how the LGA harnesses data, evidence, research and innovation to shape local government policy, strengthen sector capability, and enhance the LGA's influence as the national voice of local government. You will drive the LGA's data analytics agenda, ensuring that data is leveraged as a core asset to inform decision-making, improve performance, and deliver innovation across all areas of the organisation.

As a key member of the LGA's Senior Leadership Team, you will design and deliver a coherent strategy that ensures data, research, and foresight directly inform the LGA's priorities, advocacy and improvement programmes. You will lead the development and implementation of a forward-thinking data strategy, integrating advanced analytics, business intelligence, and emerging technologies to generate actionable insights and unlock new opportunities for growth, efficiency, and customer value. You will lead your team to champion a data-driven culture, ensuring that high-quality, trusted data underpins the organisation's decisions and that innovative approaches, including AI, automation, and digital experimentation are embedded in the organisation's business processes and services.

### **Core Accountabilities:**

**As the Director of Data, Insight and Innovation, your responsibilities will be as follows:**

1. Set and implement the LGA's Data and Insight Strategy, ensuring data and evidence underpin decision-making, policy development, and sector improvement.
2. Lead programmes of research, information and innovation that provide high-quality intelligence and foresight to local authorities and LGA members.

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3. Identify emerging trends, risks and opportunities within local government and the wider public service ecosystem.
4. Develop actionable insights to support the LGA's strategic priorities and strengthen the effectiveness, resilience and reputation of local government.
5. Champion innovation, data ethics and knowledge sharing across the organisation and the sector.

**As a member of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) you will:**

1. **Lead with Impact, Integrity & Inclusivity:** As a key player on the Strategic Leadership Team, your influence will shape the LGA's strategic direction, making sure our vision is not just bold, but transformative. You will also embody the LGA's values and behaviours by ensuring every voice is heard and respected. Your leadership sets the tone for a workplace where everyone feels valued, empowered to contribute and focussed on the measurable impact we make for councils. You will manage budgets to maximise value and efficiency, increasing income to benefit those we serve.
2. **Inspire, Energise & Collaborate:** As a Senior Leader, inspire your team to bring their best selves to work every day. You will create an environment of trust where everyone is encouraged to develop their skills and broaden their knowledge. Your energy and passion will ignite the same in others, driving the LGA to new heights. You will actively promote, and embed, collaboration where skills and knowledge are shared freely across the organisation as well as embracing agreed standard operating processes and procedures so we do things once, well, and together, as 'one LGA' to maximise our effectiveness.
3. **Drive Ambition & Excellence:** As a key member of the team, you will uphold the LGA's commitment to excellence by pushing the boundaries of what's possible. You will encourage your team to innovate and take pride in their work, while maintaining a realistic and honest approach to achieving our goals and use your SLT platform to be the voice of local councils, driving policy change with sharp insights that make a real measurable difference. Your insights and leadership will influence national policy, support councils, and drive meaningful outcomes for communities and should be led by data and stories of impact.
4. **Be the Ambassador:** You will represent the LGA with integrity, showcasing our commitment to inclusivity, excellence, and collaboration. Your role as an influencer will amplify the LGA's reputation as a modern, forward-thinking leader in local government, driving positive change across the sector. You will lead by example in fostering external partnerships that not only enhance the LGA's profile with Government but also deliver exceptional measurable value to councils and communities. You will build and maintain strategic relationships that elevate the LGA's profile and deliver substantial measurable value to councils and communities. Your leadership in this area will ensure the LGA remains a trusted and influential partner.

**Key Responsibilities**

**Strategic Leadership**

- Set the overall vision, strategy and roadmap for data, insight, research and innovation across the LGA.
- Ensure alignment of data and evidence work with the LGA's corporate priorities, policy agenda and improvement programmes.
- Provide leadership on data governance, data quality, open data, and analytics, ensuring ethical and compliant use of information.

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- Act as the LGA's senior advisor on data and evidence-based decision-making.
- Represent the LGA externally on data, innovation, AI, and sector intelligence.

### **Research, Foresight and Insight**

- Direct both long-term and short-term research programmes supporting LGA objectives.
- Identify emerging trends and future drivers affecting local government.
- Lead horizon scanning and scenario planning to anticipate change.
- Oversee design of evidence frameworks, benchmarking tools and dashboards.
- Ensure insight is presented in accessible, engaging formats.

### **Innovation and Sector Development**

- Lead the LGA's Innovation function supporting experimentation and digital adoption.
- Build partnerships with academia, startups, and tech providers.
- Develop programmes embedding innovation and data capability.
- Foster a culture of learning, collaboration and improvement.

### **Leadership and Management**

- Provide clear leadership and direction across Data, Knowledge Management, Research & Information, RI Programmes, Sentiment Analysis, Horizon Scanning, Scenario Planning, and Innovation.
- Ensure delivery of high-quality outputs aligned with organisational objectives.
- Manage senior managers and teams to deliver professional excellence.
- Oversee financial stewardship and resource planning.

### **Service Areas**

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Purpose and Focus</b>
Data	Build and manage a trusted data infrastructure to support LGA and local authority needs; develop analytics, dashboards and benchmarking tools.
Knowledge Management	Curate, organise and share intelligence, research and case studies; support evidence-informed policymaking.
Research & Information (RI) Programmes	Deliver quantitative and qualitative research programmes aligned to LGA and sector priorities.
Sentiment Analysis	Monitor public, media and member sentiment to inform communications, reputation management and policy development.
Horizon Scanning	Identify external trends, drivers and risks likely to impact local government over the medium to long term.
Scenario Planning	Develop future scenarios to support strategic planning, resilience and policy foresight.

Innovation	Design and lead programmes that test, pilot and scale innovative approaches to local government challenges.
Research & Information (cross-cutting)	Integrate research, data and insight into a single evidence base to support all LGA policy and improvement work.

### **Relevant Contacts:**

#### **LGA**

LGA Board  
 Executive Advisory Board  
 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee  
 LGA lead members  
 Strategic Leadership Team/Senior Managers  
 HR & Remcom

#### **Joint ventures**

GeoPlace (with Ordnance Survey)  
 Local Partnerships (with HM Treasury and Welsh Government)  
 LGA Digital Services (with Brent Council)

#### **External**

Elected Members and Chief Executive and Senior Officers of Member councils  
 National, regional, and sub-regional organisations and groupings of councils  
 MHCLG and other Government Departments  
 Key partner organisations  
 External Auditors

## Person Specification: Director of Data, Insight and Innovation

### Qualifications

- A relevant degree, MBA, MPA, professional qualification or equivalent experience.
- Proven experience in strategic leadership roles, preferably within the public sector, government, or a similarly complex environment.
- Evidence of continuous professional development in innovation, leadership, or public service transformation.

### Knowledge and Experience

- Proven experience in a senior level strategic leadership role, preferably within the public sector, government, or a similarly complex environment and have current Board Level experience and interaction
- Significant senior leadership experience in data, research, digital innovation or analytics.
- Extensive experience in a senior leadership role within a public sector or local government setting, driving results within a political/change management environment.
- Proven success in delivering data and insight strategies influencing decision-making.
- Experience managing multidisciplinary teams.
- Track record in foresight and scenario planning.
- Good experience of cross-sector partnership building.
- Strong financial and programme management experience.
- Deep understanding of data governance, ethics, and information management.
- Expertise in research methods, evaluation, and data analytics.
- Understanding of local government systems, policy and priorities.
- Strong background in stakeholder engagement, with a track record of building and maintaining strategic partnerships.
- Proven track record of successfully developing and implementing strategic initiatives that drive organisational transformation and performance.
- Deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing local government.
- Strong experience in operational management, with a focus on optimising processes and driving efficiency.
- Leadership and development of business strategy, performance, and financial planning frameworks.
- Demonstrable experience in the use of technology and systems to better serve the customer, find efficiencies and report on outcomes.

### Skills and abilities

- Exceptional leadership and people management skills, with the ability to inspire and motivate teams to achieve ambitious goals. The ability to think big, act boldly, and inspire others to follow.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, capable of engaging with stakeholders at all levels and from diverse backgrounds.
- Strategic thinker with excellent communication and influencing skills.
- High level of resilience and adaptability, with the ability to thrive in a fast-paced and evolving environment.
- High level of political awareness and sensitivity
- Ability to lead, inspire and motivate others.
- Integrity and credibility with politicians, senior managers, key stakeholders and staff.
- Able to deliver and lead others under pressure, prioritising work against competing demands to meet deadlines.

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- Highly developed written and oral presentation skills with ability to present complex ideas in a clear and comprehensible way.
- Ability to create a culture of innovation and enterprise based on trust, fairness and openness.
- Personal drive and commitment to the LGA priorities
- Creative thinker with high intellectual capacity, capable of translating ideas into policy and practice
- Positive, flexible and responsive, with a dynamic and creative approach to problem-solving
- Ability to negotiate with and influence a wide range of stakeholders
- Highly developed business and financial acumen.
- Commitment to personal and professional development.

### **Minimum Capabilities**

- Shapes and delivers cross-organisational vision for data and innovation.
- Embeds experimentation and continuous learning.
- Ensures excellence in research and analytics.
- Builds diverse, high-performing teams.
- Leads partnerships leveraging external expertise.
- Contributes to corporate leadership and champions LGA values.

### **Key Areas to demonstrated proven track record**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Description</b>
Impact	Strategic impact across the LGA and wider local government sector; influences national policy and supports member outcomes.
Decision-Making	Significant autonomy; responsible for strategic direction and operational delivery across multiple disciplines.
Leadership Span	Leads multiple service areas and professional functions; 100–150 staff including partners.
Knowledge and Expertise	Deep expertise in data, research, foresight and innovation.
Financial Responsibility	Accountable for substantial budgets and commissioned programmes.
External Influence	Represents the LGA nationally and internationally; credible with senior government and industry partners.

*This job description is intended to outline the key responsibilities and qualifications of the Director of Data, Insight and Innovation at the LGA. It is not exhaustive and may be subject to change in line with the needs of the organisation.*

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