



## **Job Description: Assistant Director of Policy**

**Reports to:** Director of Strategy and Policy

**Directorate/Team:** Policy

**Grade:** Grade 9

**Responsible for:** Principal Policy Advisers.

### **Job Purpose:**

Working at national level, to lead the Local Government Association's (LGA) policy work on People issues and representing the LGA and the sector across the range of those issues.

### **Core Accountabilities:**

1. Contribute to the leadership and strategic direction of the LGA, ensuring all activity is focused on delivering the LGA's business plan, and on delivering the political priorities set by the LGA's leadership.
2. Establish strategic networks and partnerships that are of value to the LGA and work to maintain a positive reputation for the LGA with Whitehall, local authorities, partners, stakeholders and the public.
3. Participate in national and regional events to ensure the LGA is engaged in relevant national policy debates and well connected to the concerns of our membership.
4. Ensure effective budget and risk management is in place, including the production of team/programme budgets, accurate monthly monitoring and year-end outturns in accordance with the LGA's financial regulations.
5. Maintain a culture of continuous improvement across the Directorate, underpinned by effective performance management and monitoring. Model the LGA's values and work in accordance with health and safety, equality, diversity and inclusion and environmental policies.

**Post number:**

6. Contribute to the overall development and success of the LGA, in line with its vision and purpose, to make the LGA a continuously improving membership body.
7. Hold a departmental or corporate responsibility – for example, reporting on business planning, departmental-wide budget management and leading a change agenda for the corporate centre.
8. Undertake any other duties and responsibilities appropriate to the post, including deputising for the Director of Strategy and Policy at corporate and other meetings.

### **Specific Accountabilities:**

1. With leading Members and other senior officers, ensure that relevant policy committees function effectively and Members are supported and developed to provide effective oversight of LGA activity and to advocate effectively inside and outside the sector.
2. Represent the LGA and be the principal officer point of contact for Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives, Mayors, government officials, Ministers, Parliamentarians, Civil Servants and other interested parties at national level (and European as necessary) and be seen by them as the senior authoritative officer voice for the sector on the issues in their portfolio.
3. Build and maintain networks of expert advisers from member authorities and other organisations to support improvement and shape the LGA's lobbying and negotiating position. Work with Principal Policy Advisors to commission work from a range of sources inside and outside the sector, including research and intelligence to establish the strongest possible evidence base to further the LGA's priorities.
4. Identify, anticipate and respond to policy developments and new strategic issues, generating innovative approaches to inform the LGA's thinking and lead public sector improvement.
5. Maintain understanding of the performance challenges facing councils collectively, and of those councils facing most severe performance challenges in designated areas of responsibility, working with colleagues across the LGA to shape appropriate improvement and support activities.
6. Maintain awareness of presentational and media opportunities and risks in area of responsibility, and work with the LGA Communications professionals and elected Members to shape presentational strategies, and project LGA and sector positions in media and public.
7. Ensure the political and managerial leadership of the LGA is kept fully and effectively briefed and is engaged appropriately in strategically important issues.
8. Commission and/or participate in regional, national and international events, conferences and seminars to promote and improve knowledge of the policy and improvement agenda in local government; represent the LGA on relevant national officer boards.

## **Relevant Contacts:**

### **Local Authorities**

- Elected Members
- Member councils
- Senior officers

### **Central government**

- Government departments
- Ministers
- Senior civil servants

### **Other**

- Mayors
- Combined Authorities
- National organisations
- Regulatory bodies
- Voluntary sector bodies
- Academics and Think Tanks

## Person Specification: Assistant Director of Policy

### Knowledge and experience

- Significant and demonstrable understanding of local and central government, their roles, structures, relationships and policy framework.
- Significant and in-depth experience of leading policy development and managing complex projects.
- Detailed understanding of key government policies and the policy making/legislative process.
- Strong and varied record of achievement at a senior, strategic level in a complex political environment in local or central government.
- Significant senior level experience of:
  - building and maintaining strategic relationships and partnerships
  - creating strategies, interventions and innovative solutions to complex issues
  - leading teams, providing direction and managing performance
  - operating as part of a senior team

### Skills and abilities

- Significant level of political awareness and sensitivity to develop and sustain consensus and ensure credibility with politicians, senior managers, key stakeholders and staff.
- Personal credibility and integrity to engage confidently, sensitively and knowledgeably with Chief Executives and Leaders.
- Highly developed leadership skills able to lead diverse teams to deliver under pressure, prioritising work against competing demands to meet deadlines.
- 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 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.
- Proven ability to negotiate with and influence a wide range of stakeholders.
- High level awareness of media and presentational issues, and ability to work with politicians and media professionals to shape and project credible public positions.
- Ability to anticipate and understand the needs of local authorities and translate them into solutions and outcomes.
- Highly developed business and financial acumen.
- Commitment to personal and professional development.