

# Job Description

<b>Job Title</b>	Head of Policy, Partnerships and Scrutiny
<b>Grade</b>	EPO21
<b>Reporting To</b>	Assistant Director for Governance and Corporate Support
<b>JD Ref</b>	CSTRAT0098P

## Purpose

This is a key strategic leadership role at the heart of the Council's corporate direction, with responsibility for shaping and coordinating corporate policy, partnerships and scrutiny. The post holder will play a central role in driving delivery of the Council Plan, ensuring that corporate priorities are translated into clear strategies, robust plans and effective partnership activity that improve outcomes for residents. The role will also provide strategic leadership for the Council's corporate performance framework, ensuring that progress against priorities is monitored effectively, performance information is used to drive improvement, and Members and senior officers have clear oversight of delivery, risk and impact. The role will also lead and strengthen strategic partnership working across the borough and city region, while providing high-quality support to the Statutory Scrutiny Officer to ensure the Council's scrutiny function is well managed, forward-looking and impactful.

## Main Duties And Responsibilities

### **Behavioural:**

- Demonstrate the Council's values and behaviours, making a positive impact and enabling others to thrive.
- Lead by example through inclusive, collaborative and values-driven leadership.

### **Team Leadership and Management:**

- Provide strong leadership, strengthening engagement, growth, culture, innovation, collaboration and performance.
- Assign responsibilities, set clear expectations and deliverables for team members, and empower them to excel in their roles.
- Through continuous improvement strengthen the tools, practices and impact of the service.

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- Manage, support, and develop direct reports in order that their teams add value to the Council's operations and the pursuit of continual improvement.
- Be a vocal and visible leader who champions best practice in governance and gives an informed opinion on responses to emerging risks and proposed developments.
- Responsible for the appointment of staff, development of terms of reference and policies and procedure that will affect operations across the Council.
- Identify the training needs of all staff so that effective training plans and budgets can be prepared, monitored and managed.
- Be responsible for the function's budget, ensuring that financial monitoring is undertaken in line with the organisation's requirements and reporting timelines.
- Deliver a highly professional, well-resourced and high-performing service that meets internal and external expectations in relation to policy development, strategic planning, partnership working and scrutiny support.
- Sets clear objectives linked to both corporate and service strategies and priorities.

### **Communication, Engagement and Training:**

- Responsible for the preparation and presentation of Committee reports.
- Be the first point of contact for colleagues across the City region on policy and related matters/enquiries
- Co-ordinate Leader of the Council and wider Group Leader Briefings.
- Responsible for the preparation and presentation of results and findings, in a format suitable for the intended audience, which will influence the corporate governance of the Council.

### **Stakeholder Management:**

- Provide effective advice to the Leader of the Council, Group Leaders, the Chief Executive and the Executive Leadership Team on local, regional and national policy matters.
- Responsible for member engagement and questions as the lead senior officer for the service.
- Act as a trusted advisor to the Assistant Director for Governance and Corporate Support and other senior leaders, providing clear and actionable advice and guidance.
- Deputise for the Assistant Director for Governance and Corporate Support when required.
- Engage in appropriate professional networks to ensure the function and wider Council learns from others, developing new ideas from this engagement that will benefit the organisation.
- Lead Officer responsible for co-ordinating the work and activities of the Wirral Strategic Partnership ensuring shared priorities and effective collaboration amongst and alongside public sector partners.
- Lead and coordinate other strategic partnership meetings across public, private, voluntary and community sectors to advance shared priorities and improve outcomes for residents.
- Represent the Council in regional and national forums, ensuring Wirral has a strong and credible voice, influence and contribution to cross-cutting policy initiatives.



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## Strategic Policy Leadership:

- Lead the development, implementation and review of the Council Plan.
- Lead and co-ordinate the annual business planning cycle across the Council, ensuring consistent standards across Directorate and clear alignment with the Council Plan, including effective monitoring of delivery.
- Provide high-quality analysis, strategic insight and forward-looking advice to Members and Senior Officers on regional and national policy matters informing decision making and strategic positioning.
- On an annual basis produce for approval the Annual Governance Statement and Governance & Assurance Framework.
- Co-ordinate and lead on the Council's policy engagement and strategic interface with the Liverpool City Region and other key partners
- Provide professional advice to senior officers in producing those documents which form the Policy Framework ensuring coherence, compliance and alignment with the Council Plan and any statutory obligations.

## Scrutiny and Governance Support

- Provide strategic leadership, direction and advice to Members and Officers in the delivery of the Council's scrutiny work programme.
- Ensure that all Scrutiny Reviews and Policy Task and Finish Groups are effectively supported and outcome focused.
- Oversee the production of, and present to Council, the Annual Scrutiny Report.
- Provide professional advice to Members and senior officers on governance, scrutiny standards, and the statutory responsibilities of the authority.

## Performance Management:

- Be responsible for an independent assessment of how the review of governance effectiveness has been undertaken across the Council, what issues and improvements have been identified and that effective actions have been identified and delivered.
- Lead the development, implementation and continuous improvement of the Council's corporate performance framework, ensuring that it provides a clear, consistent and robust basis for monitoring delivery of the Council Plan and wider corporate priorities. Ensure that meaningful performance measures, reporting arrangements and governance processes are in place so that Members and senior officers have timely insight into progress, emerging issues, risks and areas requiring intervention or improvement.
- Ensure that strategic priorities, partnership activity and scrutiny recommendations are monitored effectively, with clear follow-up and reporting arrangements to support improvement and accountability.



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- In instances of poor performance within the function, implement necessary review and improvement arrangements.
- Use performance information, evidence and insight to identify opportunities for improvement and to support effective corporate decision-making.
- Ensure that performance outcomes align with the Council's strategic goals and statutory responsibilities.

### Compliance:

- Ensure that all service initiatives adhere to relevant policies and practices and application is consistent.
- Act as the lead officer responsible for ensuring that the Council operates in a manner that is commensurate with and mindful of the need to comply with all relevant corporate policies and procedures.
- Adhere to and comply with all relevant corporate policies and procedures including Health & Safety, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Corporate Governance and Code of Conduct.
- Comply with statutory legislation and best professional practice.
- Be the senior responsible officer for ensuring the Council's policies and procedures are up to date, compliant, robust and fit for purpose.

### Other:

- Any other duties commensurate with the grade.

## Role Specific Knowledge, Experience And Skills

### Qualifications:

- Degree-level qualification in a relevant discipline or equivalent.
- Evidence of continued professional development in areas such as policy development, governance, strategic planning, leadership, or public sector management.
- *Desirable - Management or Leadership Qualification.*
- *Desirable - Professional Membership of a relevant body.*

### Knowledge & Skills:

- Lead a cross-Directorate team of colleagues whilst operating and influencing complex, cross cutting agendas in a fast-paced local government environment.



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- Excellent communication skills to engage with a broad range of stakeholders, including but not limited to report writing and identifying key themes from multiple sources.
- The ability to influence, negotiate and build trust and credibility with Members, senior officers and key partners.
- Comprehensive understanding of national and regional policy landscapes and the impact on local authorities.
- Proactive and adaptable, with a demonstrated ability to lead and motivate teams.
- Proactive nature with the ability to work independently and as a member of a team.
- Long term planning skills to address organisational resilience both in relation to the service and organisation wide.
- Strong understanding of public sector governance and scrutiny.
- Politically astute and aware.
- Evidence of supporting or advising elected members in a politically complex or sensitive environment.
- An understanding of the constitutional frameworks within local authorities, including decision-making pathways and statutory responsibilities.
- Familiarity with performance management frameworks, data analysis and interpreting key performance indicators
- Ability to champion and promote innovation across policy, partnership and governance arrangements
- Strong facilitation, engagement and workshop skills, enabling constructive debate and collaborative policy development.
- Ability to represent the Council at regional and national forums.
- Understanding of local government finance and commissioning.

### Experience:

- Experience operating at Head of Service or equivalent level.
- Significant experience of writing and presenting to Members for approval key documents such as the Council Plan, Scrutiny Reviews and Annual Scrutiny report.
- *Desirable - extensive experience of working in a political environment providing high quality advice and support to elected Members*
- *Desirable - experience working within or alongside regional partnerships, such as combined authorities or integrated care systems.*
- *Desirable - experience in using data and digital solutions to support insight, reporting and decision-making.*

## Additional Information

- Ability to travel across the Borough and work from various locations.
- Work in a hybrid way, with a flexible approach to accommodate service needs.
- Expected to work from a fixed location (subject to change).
- On occasion, be able to work outside traditional hours, including evenings and weekends, as required, adopting a flexible approach in response to service requirements.
- All Senior Leaders are requested to participate in the Council's Senior Duty Officer rota on a limited number of occasions each year.



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- This post is politically restricted.

### **Health & Safety Considerations:**

- Work with VDUs (Video Display Unit) (>5hrs per week).
- Exposure to persons with challenging or aggressive behaviour.
- Lone Working.

**Approved By: Steve Fox (Assistant Director of Governance and Corporate Support)**

**Date Of Approval: June 2026**



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