

**Job Description:** Political Officer

**Reports to:** Head of Political Group Office

**Directorate/Team: Assistant Chief Executive / Political Group Offices**

**Grade: Grade 4**

**Job Purpose:**

To provide communications support, political research and advice within the Liberal Democrat Group

To provide research and administrative support to elected Members and other staff in the relevant political party group office and contribute to wider Local Government Association (LGA) projects and campaigns.

**Core Accountabilities:**

1. Contribute to the delivery of assigned projects and programmes within resource and budget allocations that deliver the LGA’s business plan and help councils meet their challenges and priority outcomes.
2. Contribute to the development of networks and partnerships that are of value to the LGA and work to maintain a positive reputation for the LGA with local authorities, central government, partners and stakeholders.
3. Arrange meetings and produce papers and follow up actions as required.
4. Work as part of a team, contributing towards a culture of flexible and collaborative team working to ensure that the LGA meets its business objectives and responds effectively to new or changing requirements.
5. Model the LGA’s values and work in accordance with health and safety, equal opportunities and environmental policies.
6. Undertake any other duties and responsibilities appropriate to the post.

**Specific Accountabilities:**

1. To take a leading role in driving forward the Liberal Democrat Group Office’s media relations and communications activity.
2. Undertake research to provide support to the Group Leader, Group Executive and LGA member representatives and identify issues that will help gather support for the Group’s position on local government issues.
3. Assist in the development of a communications network between the LGA Liberal Group, Liberal Democrat councillors, shadow spokespersons and parliamentary colleagues. Maintain and deliver the LGA Liberal Democrat Communication plan, and with the Head of Office oversee the group social media presence.
4. Draft articles, edit newsletters and commission pamphlets under the direction of Head of Office, Group Leader and lead members.
5. Develop and maintain close and effective relationships with a network of councils, key external contacts and LGA staff.
6. Represent the Group office at internal and external meetings; provide support for members by producing agendas and papers for meetings and undertaking any necessary follow-up.
7. Contribute to the planning, organising and delivery of Political Group events at conferences and seminars.
8. Work with the National Lead Peer in sourcing and selecting experienced and relevant councillors to deliver the LGA’s improvement offer to member councils, including helping to maintain and develop a pool of suitable peers and maintaining a database to monitor this process.
9. Respond to all enquiries as the first point of contact, determining whether to respond direct or to refer to either a Member in member authorities or Members of Parliament or other appropriate people.
10. Assist in the briefing of councillors of the relevant political group appointed to Executive roles and those in the other bodies of the LGA.
11. Organise meetings and functions (including receptions or conferences), ensuring that room bookings, layouts and catering are planned appropriately. Ensure substitute members for committees are arranged as appropriate.
12. Prepare communication material and other documents and arrange their distribution. Input and retrieve data from the IT system for use in preparing reports and other documents.
13. 15. Prioritise and monitor incoming post, e-mails, phone calls, etc and chase up outstanding action. Personally, deal with routine issues to ensure responses.
14. 16. Provide support and contribute to projects within the LGA as required, for example organising receptions and dinners and helping at annual and other conferences.
15. 17. Maintain office databases/records, ensuring that the LGA CRM system relating to the Liberal Democrat group is up to date and relevant
16. 17. Attendance at conferences and other events is expected but is to be agreed on a case by

**Relevant Contacts:**

Local Authorities

Elected Members

Leaders/Group leaders

Central government

Special advisers

Ministers/shadow team

LGA

Lead members

Media and public affairs

Events team

Policy Teams

Special interest groups

SMT

Other

Political parties

National and Regional Organisations

# Person Specification:

## Qualifications

Degree not essential

## Knowledge and experience

In depth understanding of local and/or central government and how they work.

In depth understanding of the main political parties and how they operate.

Previous in communications experience Skills and abilities

## Skills and abilities

1. Excellent written skills, with the ability to accurately summarise and convey complex information.
2. Excellent oral and influencing skills, with the ability to give clear advice on issues.
3. Political sensitivity, with the ability to exercise discretion, judgement and confidentiality when dealing with politicians and officers at every level.
4. Good interpersonal skills, with the ability to deal with members, other clients and colleagues with courtesy, tact and sensitivity.
5. A demonstrable commitment to customer care.
6. Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to prioritise work to meet deadlines, and a concern for order and accuracy
7. Excellent IT skills, including Word, Excel and PowerPoint with the ability quickly to learn new packages as required.
8. Ability to work as part of a team and to support others.
9. Flexible approach to work, with a keenness to adapt to meet changing work requirements
10. A positive, “can do” attitude