

Job Description: Principal Policy Adviser

Reports to: Designated Head of Policy

Directorate/Team: Policy

Grade: Grade 8

Responsible for: Designated Senior Advisers, PSOs and business support staff.

Job Purpose:

To provide leadership across specific policy areas, acting as the LGA lead officer for member-led work including Boards and Task and Finish Groups, and representing the Local Government Association (LGA) to external bodies, with the objective of supporting and promoting local government and shaping national policy on behalf of councils.

Core Accountabilities:

1. Act as the lead officer for a number of member-led fora (including Boards and Task and Finish Groups) and clear all reports.
2. With the Head of Policy, ensure that LGA members are supported to provide an advocacy and leadership role for councils through proactive and coherent policy development.
3. Lead a multi-disciplinary team and oversee a range of policy programmes including, for example, commissions from the LGA Executive Board across more than one Board or policy area.
4. Maintain a culture of continuous improvement across the division, underpinned by effective performance management and monitoring. Model the LGA's values and work in accordance with health and safety, equal opportunities and environmental policies.
5. Prioritise the use of staff and financial resources, including resources for improvement, in consultation with Boards and Heads of Policy.
6. Lead and maintain relationships on behalf of the LGA to advocate and promote the needs of the sector and maintain a positive reputation for the LGA with local authorities, central government, EU, partners and stakeholders.
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 Head of Policy at corporate and other meetings.

Specific Accountabilities:

Post number: LGG0372, LGG0373, LGG0374 and LGG0375

1. With the Heads of Policy, ensure that Members are supported to provide political oversight of LGA activity and to advocate inside and outside the sector.
2. Lead the development of new policy across a range of issues, and ensure it is aligned across different parts of the LGA. Oversee the development of innovative approaches to inform the LGA's thinking and lead public sector improvement including the commissioning of research, horizon scanning and intelligence gathering to establish a strong evidence base.
3. Manage a team of senior advisers and advisers, and an agreed programme budget, to ensure that agreed priorities are delivered.
4. Ensure that the reputation of the LGA and the sector is enhanced through policy work and advocacy.
5. Oversee the preparation of reports, policy papers and briefings for lead LGA Members and managers on sensitive and complex issues relating to the LGA's position on policy issues; external briefings, publicity and marketing materials on behalf of the LGA.
6. Work with Senior Advisers to ensure events are developed that support improvement in local government; represent the LGA at regional, national and international events, including conferences, seminars and sounding boards of national improvement projects, to promote and improve knowledge of the policy and improvement agenda in local government.
7. Maintain an up to date understanding of the performance challenges facing councils collectively, working with colleagues across the LGA to contribute to shaping and delivering appropriate improvement and support activities.
8. Maintain awareness of presentational and media opportunities and risks in area of responsibility, and contribute to the shaping of presentational strategies and sector positions in media and public.

Relevant Contacts:

Local Authorities

Portfolio holders and other lead members

Senior Officers

Sector experts/professional bodies

National, regional and sub-regional organisations and groupings of councils

Central Government Departments

Senior Civil Servants

Parliamentarians

EU

Senior officials and MEPs in the Commission, Council and Parliament.

LGA

Programme Board Members

LGA Office Holders

LGA Strategic Managers

Other

As appropriate according to work area

Person Specification: Principal Policy Adviser

Qualifications	Degree or equivalent
Knowledge and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable understanding of local and central government, their roles structures and relationships. • In depth understanding of key government policies and the policy making/ legislative process • Record of achievement in complex political environments, preferably in local or central government. • Understanding of the local government policy and improvement agenda • Experience of leading policy development and managing complex projects • Experience of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - building and maintaining effective relationships and partnerships. - contributing to the development of strategies, interventions and innovative solutions to complex issues - managing people effectively, including managing performance - project management, demonstrating the ability to meet targets in respect of deadlines and resources.
Skills & abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound political awareness and sensitivity to develop and sustain consensus and ensure credibility with politicians, senior managers, key stakeholders and staff. • Strong analytical skills including the ability to interpret evidence and identify trends • Ability to lead and motivate others • Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to influence and negotiate with a wide range of stakeholders effectively • A team player, willing to work flexibly to meet changing priorities • Able to deliver, sometimes through others, under pressure, prioritising work against competing demands to meet deadlines. • Highly developed written and oral communication skills, including the ability to speak confidently in public and to present complex ideas in a clear and comprehensible way. • Self-motivated and self-supporting • Intellectually agile and innovative, capable of translating ideas into policy and practice • High level awareness of media and presentational issues, and ability to work with politicians and media professionals to shape and project credible public positions. • Demonstrable skills in leadership of project teams consisting of a diverse range of participants with a variety of skills/backgrounds • Commitment to personal and professional development.