

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE: Policy & Research Officer

GRADE: 9

DIVISION / UNIT: Policy, Partnerships and Performance

DEPARTMENT: Strategy & Communities

REPORTS TO: Senior Strategy & Policy Officer

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

- To **work within a multi-disciplinary team of Strategy and Policy officers** that will draw on research, data and evidence-based intelligence to develop innovative approaches to some of the most pressing challenges facing the borough, ensuring residents and communities' needs are at the centre of shaping activities and stronger collaborative working with strategic partners.
- To **facilitate the design of evidence-based innovative strategy and policy, primarily through the planning and delivery of targeted quantitative and qualitative research and insight analysis (both in-house and commissioned out).**
- To ensure that council-wide strategies, policies and plans under their remit are consistent, aligned and creates a coherent framework to council goals and priorities.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. **Project manage high-quality research, including analysis of data and qualitative research, which strengthens the organisation's understanding and informs policy and strategy development.**
2. **Procure external research services and manage contracts according to the Council's procurement guidelines.**
3. Facilitate the design of evidence-based strategy and policy, using participatory methods to involve a range of stakeholders, developing evidence packs capturing emerging ideas, innovative and best practice in policy development.
4. Prepare high-quality reports, briefing papers and project documentation, ensuring that material is presented in easily understandable and engaging ways.
5. **Monitor wider regional and national policy developments of relevance to the council, to feed into strategy and policy-making.**
6. **Work across directorates and disciplines, coordinate activities across council, to ensure that research projects are delivered on time and on budget and the development of strategic documents, including strategies, policies and campaigns.**
7. Develop and sustain effective partnerships with colleagues as well as public and private sector stakeholders locally and nationally.

JOB CONTEXT / REPORTING

The Policy, Partnerships and Performance service brings together the teams which drives and promote coherent corporate strategy, policy and plan development aligned to council priorities, business intelligence and performance data that enables transparency and continuous improvements through building of evidence-base and external lens, and strategic partnerships management that co-ordinates, aligns and embeds Southwark's strong organisational, place and political leadership through common partnership goals.

The Strategy and Policy team generates strategy and policy responses to the changing political landscape in Southwark. They will use expertise which exists across the council and beyond to help shape our response in a way that will have greatest impact on meeting residents and communities' needs. They will hold the organisation's strategy framework and enable it to focus on delivery of its key strategic priorities.

Reporting: N/A

Financial responsibilities: N/A

GRADE/CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Grade: 9

The employment is subject to a probationary period of twenty six weeks from your start date of employment with Southwark Council, during which time you will be required to demonstrate to the council's satisfaction your suitability for the position in which you are employed.

Attendance at some evening meetings may be required.

This post is politically restricted under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person specification is a picture of skills, knowledge and experience required to carry out the job.

	Essential (E)	How assessed (S/ I/ T)
Knowledge, including educational qualifications:		
Educated to degree standard or equivalent by experience	E	S
Qualification in relevant area or working towards it or demonstrable appropriate experience, e.g. project management &/or research qualification	E	S
Working knowledge of current social, political and economic issues relating to the work of the public sector, especially local government and what this means for Southwark Council.	E	S/I
Expert knowledge of the full range of quantitative and qualitative social research methodologies with proven application within projects.	E	S/I
Experience:		
Experience of leading own social research and evaluation projects, including developing suitable methodology, conducting the research, analysing the data and producing a report.	E	S/I
Experience of producing effective research and evaluation reports, which succinctly highlight the key findings in order to inform decision makers effectively.	E	I
Experience of communicating technical and statistical social research and impact information and ideas to a non-expert audience.	E	I
Experience of survey and data analysis software e.g. Survey Monkey, SPSS.	E	I
Aptitudes, Skills & Competencies:		
The ability to work effectively on tight deadlines, to prioritise and manage deadlines and demonstrate sound judgement and political awareness	E	I
Excellent analytical skills - especially of survey data and qualitative data from focus groups and depth interviews with an eye for detail, and the ability to develop insights and provide evidence-based findings.	E	I

Ability to use social research and insight to improve corporate decision making.	E	I
Excellent communication skills (written and verbal) to engage and influence stakeholders, working to build consensus	E	S/I
Strong numeracy and data analysis skills.	E	I
Excellent ICT skills including the ability to fully utilise Microsoft Office; PowerPoint and Excel.	E	I
Excellent project management, organisation and administrative skills.	E	I
Positive attitude, organised and able to manage conflicting priorities and deadlines, and regularly use initiative to make decisions	E	I
Special Conditions of Recruitment:		
Comply with and promote the Council's Equal opportunities policy.		

Key:

E	Essential	S	Shortlisting criteria
		I	Evaluated at interview
		T	Subject to test