

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Executive Assistant to the Mayor	Service Area: Mayor's Office	
Directorate: Resources	Post Number: 10024495	Evaluation Number: JE7146
Grade: PO3	Date last updated: September 2024	
<p>Building a Fairer Newham</p> <p>We are committed to investing in our people and our borough to make it the best place to live. We are addressing poverty and inequality, tackling the housing crisis, health inequality and food insecurity. Our commitment starts within the workplace where we strive to ensure the Building a Fairer Newham Corporate Delivery Plan is our number one priority to deliver better and fairer outcomes for our residents.</p> <p>Equality and diversity</p> <p>We are committed to and champion equality and diversity in all aspects of employment with the London Borough of Newham. All employees are expected to understand and promote our Equality and Diversity policy in the course of their work.</p> <p>Protecting our staff and services</p> <p>Adherence to health and safety requirements and proper risk management is required from all employees in so far as is relevant to their role. All employees are expected to understand and promote good health and safety practices and manage risks appropriately.</p> <p>Corporate parent</p> <p>We believe that every member of staff working for Newham Council should understand and fulfil our corporate parenting responsibilities for our looked after children that we have under the Children and Social Work Act 2017.</p>		

Overall Purpose of Job

The Executive Assistant to the Mayor is a vital role within the council supporting the Mayor so that she can undertake her executive and community leadership functions effectively. The role will involve:

- Working with minimal supervision, but as an integral cog in the Mayor's Office team, to provide high-level administrative support service to the Mayor.
- Enabling the Mayor to make best use of her time and maximise her impact by managing her complex and changing diary accurately and in a way that reflects her priorities and her preferred ways of working, ensuring all the relevant arrangements are in place for any work meeting or event and that the Mayor is appropriately accompanied and briefed.
- Supporting the Mayor with other administrative tasks, eg managing inboxes, recording gifts and hospitality, managing sign-off of key decisions, drafting short letters, applying for annual parking permits, etc.
- Liaising with other members of the Mayor's Office team to ensure that collectively we provide seamless support, including by keeping them abreast of the Mayor's schedule and

forward plans, and by triaging and highlighting issues coming into the office, including through the MayorPA inbox.

- Working closely with the Cabinet, Chief Executive, Corporate Leadership Team, Chief Executive & CLT Support and others within the organisation, to co-ordinate diaries and plans efficiently to support the effective running of the council's business.
- Presenting a professional, helpful and positive point of contact on behalf of the Mayor and her office at all times to colleagues, residents and community groups, and a wide range of senior stakeholders/partners and their offices, including regional national leaders, in person when they come for meetings and on the phone or in emails.

Job Context

- You will report to the Head of the Mayor's Office.
- You will work closely on a daily basis with the political and officer leadership of a local authority with a Democratically Elected Mayor governance model, as well as with other councillors, officers, stakeholders, residents and community organisations. Building strong relationships of trust, being politically aware and understanding the respective responsibilities of politicians and officers are key, as is being sensitive to the interests and perspectives of residents and partners.
- You will be part of a Mayor's Office team collectively responsible for providing excellent support to the Mayor and Cabinet and supporting the effective delivery of the council's business through close working with officer leadership and wider teams, reflecting a 'one council' approach.
- Generating trust, maintaining confidentiality, managing complex issues and disagreements sensitively, and operating to – and supporting others to operate to – the highest ethical standards of public service, are underpinning requirements.
- You should thrive in a high-pressured, fluid environment, be comfortable taking responsibility and initiative within established systems and processes, and be able to manage your own resilience and support those around you to do so too.
- You will not have any line management.
- You will be expected to be in the office at least 3 days a week or more if business requires it. You will be required to work flexibly including some evenings, weekends and occasional public holidays in order to meet service requirements and in order to ensure appropriate representation of the Council with residents, the Mayor and elected members, and external bodies.

Key Tasks and Accountabilities

Key tasks and accountabilities are intended to be a guide to the range and level of work expected of the post holder. This is not an exhaustive list of all tasks that may fall to the post holder and employees will be expected to carry out such other reasonable duties which may be required from time to time.

To undertake all responsibilities listed below:

1. Managing the Mayor's diary, to enable her to make best use of her time on competing demands, including:
 - Maintaining a clear, accurate electronic diary in line with the Mayor's preferred ways of working, that she and other members of the team can refer to and easily understand at any time.
 - Scheduling meetings, including ensuring appropriate attendance, booking rooms or venues, arranging travel or refreshments, parking and security passes, and other practical arrangements as required.
 - Handling all external invitations – bringing them, together with clear advice on responses, to weekly diary meetings for decision and acting on them accordingly, managing communications with residents, community groups, partners and others with sensitivity and respect at all times.
 - Working with the Majority Labour Group Political Assistant and Mayor's Assistant to ensure political meetings are appropriately scheduled and incorporated into the Mayor's diary.
 - Working with other colleagues in the Mayor's Office and more widely to ensure strategic planning of the Mayor's community and partner engagement to help her maintain her visibility and engagement across the borough and support strategic stakeholder relationships.
 - Working with the Events Team to plan the Mayor's involvement in council events.
 - Ensuring that the annual cycles of various meetings that are the responsibility of the Mayor's Office are set up in good time to enable all to plan their time effectively around them eg Cabinet Accountability Forum, the Mayor's monthly 1:1s with Portfolio Leads and Cabinet Accountability Portfolio Meetings, monthly meetings with the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny, Cabinet pre-meets for Cabinet and Full Council, etc.
 - Liaising with other organisations about their schedules of regular meetings that require the Mayor's attendance to ensure these fit with her other responsibilities.
 - Keeping track of all aspects of the Mayor's diary management to ensure nothing gets lost, overlooked or left to the last minute.
2. Ensuring that the Mayor is appropriately prepared for meetings or events, with guidance from senior members of the team as necessary, including by liaising with relevant teams across the council to:
 - Commission and quality assure relevant, timely written briefings and speaking notes or speeches, in established templates and formats, with sufficient time for the Mayor to review ahead of the event.
 - Identifying where briefings, pre-meets or other preparations may be required and making suitable arrangements.
 - Ensuring that, where relevant, the Mayor has the appropriate hard copies of papers, speaking notes, tickets, etc.
3. Ensuring consideration of the Mayor's security is built into her external events and that, if necessary, appropriate arrangements are made in response to any identified potential risks.
4. Taking primary responsibility for the MayorPA inbox as a main route for officers and external contacts to contact the Mayor, including:

- triaging information to other members of the team to enable them to deal or maintain awareness of key issues appropriately;
 - maintaining an established system of categorisation and filing to ensure clarity for other team members and the ability for others to pick up issues in cases of absence etc;
 - identifying issues for sign-off and ensuring they are suitably flagged with all the relevant information to be included in the weekly sign-off folder.
5. Maintaining oversight of the Mayor’s personal inbox and picking up issues that can be dealt with by others, on which she may require advice or of which members of the team or other senior officers should be made aware.
6. Providing an at-all-times professional, courteous and friendly point of access to the Mayor, promoting both her and the Council’s reputation in all interactions, including:
- responding to in-person, phone, email and other enquiries and requests politely and helpfully;
 - responding to emails and post swiftly and appropriately, using acknowledgements and holding replies if necessary but ensuring these are followed up with a substantive response as quickly as possible;
 - meeting and greeting visitors and guests.
7. Undertaking other administrative tasks to support the Mayor as may be required, such as:
- ensuring gifts and hospitality are recorded and declared in a timely manner
 - renewing the Mayor’s annual parking permit, subscriptions etc
 - preparing forms, returns or other papers that the Mayor is required to submit in relation to her role or appointment to external bodies so that these can be signed-off and returned within deadlines

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We are committed to and champion equality and diversity in all aspects of employment with the London Borough of Newham. All employees are expected to understand and promote our Equality and Diversity Policy in the course of their work.

PROTECTING OUR STAFF AND SERVICES

Adherence to Health and Safety requirements and proper risk management is required from all employees in so far as is relevant to their role. All employees are expected to understand and promote good Health and Safety practices and manage risks appropriately.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

Newham Council supports flexible working for its staff, subject to meeting business needs. As part of the Mayor’s Office and due to the nature of the work, the post holder will be expected to work a minimum of 3 days per week in the officer or at meetings or events with the Mayor.

Person Specification

Job Title: Executive Assistant to the Mayor	Service Area: Mayor's Office	
Directorate: Resources	Post Number: 10024495	Evaluation Number: JE7164
Grade: PO3	Date last updated: September 2023	
<p>IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS</p> <p>The criteria listed in this Person Specification are all essential to the job. Where the Method of Assessment is stated to be the Application Form, your application needs to demonstrate clearly and concisely how you meet each of the criteria, even if other methods of assessment are also shown. If you do not address these criteria fully, or if we do not consider that you meet them, you will not be shortlisted. Please give specific examples wherever possible.</p>		
CRITERIA		METHOD OF ASSESSMENT
<p>KNOWLEDGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasonable knowledge and understanding of local government including the directly elected mayoral model. Good understanding of customer care and quality standards. Awareness of the functions and services of local authorities and the issues facing them, together with the legal, financial and political context of public sector management 		Application / Interview
<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educated to A level or equivalent work experience. 		Application
<p>EXPERIENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of providing senior level executive support Experience of working with or having had some engagement with politicians Experience of operating in a busy, demanding and pressurised environment Experience of dealing with a busy and complex diary and inbox Experience of handling confidential information sensitively Experience of dealing with residents in a front-facing manner and of negotiating satisfactory resolutions to difficult problems Expertise and experience in working with Microsoft Office suite and experience of learning to use other IT systems competently swiftly 		Application / Interview

<p>PERSONAL STYLE AND BEHAVIOUR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustworthy, honest and sensitive - able to work in a confidential environment, using a high level of discretion • Flexible, pro-active and responsive in your approach to work • Committed, resilient and reliable under pressure • Outgoing, professional manner, able to interact confidently with politicians and senior officers and work to a high standard to very tight deadlines • A committed team player, valuing and recognising the need to work together to achieve collectively • Reflecting and embodying our HEART values: Honesty, Equality, Ambition, Respect, Together 	<p>Application / Interview</p>
<p>SKILLS AND ABILITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First-class organisational skills with a good eye for detail, proactive and resourceful in anticipating issues and planning ahead, able ensure delivery by deadlines and not lose track when juggling many things • Great interpersonal skills, able to build and maintain effective relationships and trust with very senior people (political and officer) internally and externally, and able to demonstrate tact and diplomacy when dealing with difficult or sensitive issues • Excellent customer service skills • Practical problem-solving skills, able to deal with issues constructively and effectively to find acceptable resolutions • Clear, persuasive written and verbal communication skills, able to act with sensitivity and tact, to inform, advise and persuade in ways that are appropriate to the circumstances • Ability to work on own initiative, prioritise own work and manage a significant and varied workload, often with competing demands – while recognising the need to co-ordinate with managers and other team members to contribute to a seamless office function • Broad range of ICT and digital skills. 	<p>Application / Interview</p>