

Job description

Job title:	Head of Service
Grade:	Level 1 – Grade 17 Level 2 – Grade 18
Job evaluation reference:	BA101a,b
Job family:	Business, Policy and Administration

This job description comprises generic core duties applicable to all designated Head of Service posts within Dorset Council. In addition, duties specific to the post are included in a context statement.

The duties allocated may be changed from time to time to reflect the changing needs of council.

The post may be filled at Grade 17 or Grade 18 level as appropriate to the level of contacts and relationships and decision taking required. This may typically reflect size and/or complexity of service(s) being managed and the level of support/direction provided.

Purpose and impact

This role plays a pivotal part in shaping the strategic direction of the council, contributing to the effective management and delivery of key services that support the council's overarching aims. By leading the development and performance of an allocated service, the role ensures high standards are met through collaborative working with Elected Members, the Leadership Team, and external partners. The impact of this role is seen in driving continuous improvement, fostering strong inter-agency partnerships, and promoting accountability to achieve measurable outcomes aligned with corporate priorities.

Key responsibilities

1. Lead, manage and develop services to drive organisational performance in delivering current and future priorities.
2. Promoting an integrated approach to the management and delivery of a defined service area and fostering a culture of collaboration and excellence.
3. Managing, shaping and controlling allocated budgets to ensure that the council delivers a balanced budget and achieves savings across services.
4. Ensuring robust and effective corporate governance with financial, performance and risk assurance systems and processes in place.
5. Driving a customer-focused and innovative service culture, ensuring feedback and complaints are addressed promptly and effectively through agreed procedures.
6. Representing and promoting the Authority at local, regional and national levels, raising the profile of Dorset and sharing best practice.
7. Promoting the delivery of a strong digital agenda and encouraging the use of new and emerging technologies.
8. Gathering, analysing and evaluating information across the organisation and areas of work to identify, understand and consider fresh approaches to service delivery.
9. Contribute to the design of arrangements for services in Dorset which reflect local needs, and circumstances, involving the development of appropriate commissioning, management and governance arrangements, establishing appropriate organisation structures / designs to support effective service delivery and change.



10. Build on the outcomes of Statutory Inspections and other external evaluations, so as to secure continuing improvements in performance and promote a culture of continuous improvement, and the active management of performance.
11. Provide guidance and professional advice to the Chief Executive, Directors and elected members, ensuring clear communication, and delivery of council objectives.
12. Support the council's community leadership role by effective contribution to local strategic partnerships.
13. Work with and consult members of the public and partners, to ensure the provision of appropriate, effective and integrated services and to effectively represent the Service and wider Council.
14. Undertake continued professional development and ensure understanding and communication of best working practices.
15. Act as Information Asset Owner for the service, in accordance with the Information Governance Framework to embed a strong culture that values, protects and uses information for the public good.
16. Lead, manage and be accountable for all aspects of service delivery and strategic development within an allocated Service, including leading the employee groups.
17. Initiate, lead and contribute to corporate developments and initiatives so as to assist the council to achieve its objectives.
18. Ensure the provision and delivery of high quality and cost-effective services.
19. Promote and support radical and innovative ways of achieving council and service aims and objectives through the delivery and review of business plans and strategies.
20. Lead projects as required, ensuring they are managed to the council's standards.

NB: The duties and responsibilities of this post are not restrictive, and the post holder may be required on occasion to undertake other duties. This will not substantially change the nature of the post.

Supervision and management

Reporting to: Executive Director or Corporate Director (as specified on the context statement)

Responsibility for: Management responsibility for relevant service (as specified on the context statement)

In addition to the key responsibilities, as a people manager you will:

- Lead and manage team dynamics and performance by setting clear expectations, providing regular feedback, and ensuring high-quality delivery through effective quality assurance practices.
- Create an inclusive and supportive team environment that ensures continuous learning, professional development and good wellbeing, aligning to the council plan priorities, people and culture strategy, and responsibilities set out within our people management policies and requirements.
- Lead and champion opportunities for service improvement, innovation and change by taking accountability for its successful implementation, ensuring team members are engaged, motivated, and supported throughout transitions, whilst role modelling new ways of thinking and working.

Other factors

21. Maintain and improve effective planning, performance and budgetary frameworks, so as to ensure that performance is demonstrably effective against national, regional, and



local indicators that objectives are achieved, and that high standards of probity are met.

22. Ensure that health and safety policies and procedures are effectively implemented and to lead on implementation of emergency response arrangements within the Service.

Our values

Our values act as guiding principles, defining what we believe is important in the ways we work together. Our values are Respect, Together, Accountability, Openness and Curiosity. You will need to be able to demonstrate these values in action through the way you work, regardless of your role within the organisation. Information about our values can be found on our website.



Person specification

Your application will be assessed based on your demonstration of how you fulfil the following criteria; you should include clear examples of how you meet these criteria within your application form and during the assessment process.

Essential

Essential criteria are the minimum requirement for the above post and will be assessed through a combination of your application form, assessment and interview (as specified below). We'll also use references to confirm that you meet the criteria for this role. We will require evidence of the qualifications, training or registrations listed below.

Qualifications, training or registrations Required by law or essential to the performance of the role or both	Assessed through:
1. Degree level education	Application form
2. Appropriate leadership/management and/or professional/post graduate qualification (see context statement)	Application form
3. Project management qualification or equivalent experience	Application form
4. Membership of relevant professional institute where appropriate (see context statement)	Application form
Experience	
5. Significant demonstrable relevant experience	Application form
6. Experience of strategic planning	Application form
7. Proven experience of managing projects and budget	Application form
8. Managing or supervising staff	Application form
9. Development of structures and strategies relating to specific service area	Application form
10. Previous experience of working in a large organisation or local authority	Application form
11. Undertaking partnership working at an appropriate level	Application form
12. Proven experience of developing procedures and protocols to comply with internal and external standards	Application form
Knowledge	
13. In-depth understanding of policy, legislation and developments in the field of work relevant to the function	Application form Interview Assessment
14. In-depth knowledge of service requirements and developments regarding the specific service group	Application form Interview Assessment
15. In-depth knowledge of the work of local authorities	Application form Interview Assessment
16. In-depth knowledge of financial management principles	Application form Interview Assessment
17. Understanding and commitment to the importance of diversity in both service delivery and employment contexts	Application form Interview Assessment
18. Knowledge of project management	Application form Interview Assessment
Skills and abilities	
19. Ability to act as an expert in a relevant area of work	Interview Assessment



20. Ability to lead, manage, motivate and co-ordinate the workload of a team or teams	Interview Assessment
21. Ability to develop and/or contribute to appropriate strategic policies and special projects	Interview Assessment
22. Proven project management skills	Interview Assessment
23. Business analysis and change management skills	Interview Assessment
24. Ability to build and sustain good working relationships with people at all levels with an aptitude for networking with internal and external key stakeholders	Interview Assessment
25. Ability to negotiate and present complex arguments both orally and in writing	Interview Assessment
Our values	
26. Respect	Interview Assessment
27. Together	Interview Assessment
28. Accountability	Interview Assessment
29. Openness	Interview Assessment
30. Curiosity	Interview Assessment
Other	
31. Able to fulfil the travel requirements of the post	Application form
32. Committed to the development of the service and related service provision	Application form

Desirable

Desirable criteria will be used in the event of multiple applicants meeting the minimum essential requirements and if applicable, will be assessed through a combination of your application form, assessment and interview (as specified below). We'll also use references to confirm that you meet the criteria for this role. We will require evidence of the qualifications, training or registrations listed below.

Experience	Assessed through:
33. Leadership and management of at least one substantial relevant service area	Application form
34. Introducing new ways of working/change management	Application form
Knowledge	
35. In-depth knowledge of central government performance management strategies	Application form Interview Assessment
36. Clear understanding of Performance Management Systems and their application in the relevant service	Application form Interview Assessment
37. Knowledge of IT systems and their application within a large organisation	Application form Interview Assessment

Approval

Manager's job title: SLT

Date: Updated February 2025

