Job description

**Job title:** Strategy and Policy Director

**Reports to:** Chief Executive

**Key Contacts**: Chair, Executive Portfolio Holders, Committees and Forums of London Councils

London Councils staff

Senior members and officers in London Boroughs National and London wide bodies in the public, private and voluntary sectors

Senior members and officers in the GLA, Mayor’s Office

Senior civil servants and Government advisers National and London Media

**Job Grade:** CO-A

# Background

# Following an internal restructure of our policy functions, London Councils has created short term Policy and Strategy Director position within our Corporate Management Team. Our aspiration is that every six to twelve months we will appoint an individual with specific expertise to provide targeted leadership capacity and new perspectives as we plot our way through a rapidly changing policy landscape.

# Working with our stakeholders we will identify specific needs and opportunities and recruit a specialist to support us to evolve our offer.

# London’s housing crisis means London Councils need someone who can take a strategic lead on advising Leaders and boroughs on addressing the housing crisis. We are looking for a director with a background in housing, property and planning to advance our work and that of the boroughs in this critical area. Someone who is an innovative thinker willing to explore new investment and delivery models. with experience of working across sectors to shape proposals, secure financing and deliver regeneration and new housing projects.

# Key Purpose of the Role

To provide strategic leadership for London’s boroughs, communities and stakeholders in delivering against London Councils’ Shared Ambitions, leading on London Councils housing and planning policy and strategy as the Director responsible for this priority area.

To bring particular expertise in relation to housing-related matters, such as homelessness, development and viability, planning, property investment, housing standards and/or asset management. This would enable the creation of new ideas and approaches to improve policy and practice in this field, particularly through the system-level work of the London Housing Mission.

To work closely with the strategic leadership at London Councils, including the Elected Officers of London Councils who bring political leadership to the boroughs’ and London councils’ work, and Corporate Management Team.

To play a corporate leadership role for London Councils overall as a member of the Corporate Management Team, form lasting professional relationships to drive change and improvement

To build networks in the heart of the “policy” community of practitioners, Parliamentarians, civil servants, think tanks, academics, journalists and others in order to make the case for London local government on issues in line with London Councils’ priorities for housing policy and for this Parliament.

**Matrix Working**

This role operates within a matrix working structure in our wider Policy team, collaborating across functional and project-based teams to achieve shared goals and deliver results that support our Shared Ambitions for London and Londoners.

Team members are expected to work flexibly across functions and policy areas, contributing their expertise where needed and supporting policy and project related priorities in a collaborative and responsive way.

A key aspect of the role will be developing and enabling links and strategic connections between housing, planning and property and other aspects of London Councils policy work (including, but not limited to devolution, climate, economic growth and skills, health, community engagement, public service reform and finance).

# Principal Accountabilities

1. Act as a point of leadership for all London Council’s work in delivering London borough leaders’ shared ambitions by championing the ambitions, purpose and progress of the work – with a particular focus on housing and planning.
2. Ensure that the values are embedded across all London Council’s work, including recognising and addressing structural inequalities, promoting a fairer and more inclusive London and focusing on the most vulnerable.
3. Provide strategic leadership in relation to policy and practice to develop a clear and evidence-based framework for action to deliver the outcomes and ambitions that have been agreed by Leaders. This should include seeing the bigger picture and particularly ensuring that connections from housing into other strategic matters are picked up and linked to improve broader outcomes for Londoners and London local government.
4. To be a highly trusted adviser to the Chair and senior elected members in creating strategy, in particular supporting and enhancing the policy goals of the relevant Portfolio Holders as they act on behalf of Leaders Committee across all activities including Ministerial and other strategic meetings.
5. Work very closely and effectively with a range of partners, representing the interests of London’s councils in these partnerships but also ensuring a highly collaborative approach to what is a shared endeavor. Ensure strong links with work in other parts of the country, especially the core cities.
6. To represent London Councils, making the case for member authorities and broker agreements across the remit, working effectively with colleagues within London Councils and stakeholders across London to ensure that London local government’s perspective is championed and is influential in shaping local public services and national policy.
7. To create and sustain collaborative work with other agencies and sectors who may share objectives with London Councils and/or whom London Councils may wish to influence.
8. To build and sustain engagement with key officer stakeholders across boroughs – both Chief Executives and Directors – in order both to inform and then champion agreed policy and advisory positions on behalf of London local government and the development of agreed management responses across boroughs.
9. To be a leading ambassador for the organisation and London local government with a range of audiences. Developing and sustaining positive relationships with stakeholders, opinion formers and key contacts in order to advance London Councils’ policies and positions is a key focus of the role. Having the leadership and convening qualities and experience, to bring partners together where necessary to drive system-level change.
10. To encourage the development of service and employment policies and practices which reflect and value the diversity of London’s communities and promote an inclusive society.
11. To take care at all times to uphold health and safety at work for self and others. To observe London Councils Health and Safety policy and related procedures at all times.
12. To uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct in line with the expectations of a local government officer and to lead staff to adhere to such standards in order to uphold the reputation of London Councils and local government in London.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

# Policy and Strategy Director Qualifications and experience

* + Extensive relevant policy experience or relevant related sector experience in housing, property, housing finance, development, and planning policy.
  + Substantial senior level experience of developing public policy and/or supporting service transformation and new ways of working
  + Experience of working effectively in a political environment
  + Demonstrated experience of creativity and impact in policy development
  + Experience of negotiating agreements with multiple partners, including lobbying and engaging with regional and national Government in the context of housing and planning policy and strategy.
  + Experience of contributing to public policy development across at least one key policy area relevant to London local government
  + Experience of operating at a senior level to successfully deliver policy or service projects where there has been responsibility for project outcomes
  + Experience of leading, motivating and developing staff to deliver both high quality outcomes and sustainable improvements in staff effectiveness.

# Knowledge

* + Expert knowledge of at least one of the postholders areas of policy responsibility/ accountability and good to strong knowledge in the remaining areas of policy responsibility
  + Knowledge of local government, preferably the London local government family, its governmental structure and London Councils’ role within it
  + Knowledge of relevant national government policy and departments in the areas of policy responsibility (housing and planning).

# Skills and Abilities

* + Demonstrable ability to anticipate and understand the strategic significance of key policy issues to London local government
  + Ability to lead, manage and deliver in a highly political environment.
  + Highly developed leadership skills, with a track record of bringing together policy and/or service improvement/redesign programmes that influence and create better outcomes for residents.
  + Able to bring together key stakeholders to deliver effective partnership working. Strong influencing & negotiating skills with evidence of success in lobbying, negotiating and concluding deals with multiple stakeholders
  + Highly developed oral and written communication skills; able to present information - including financial information - clearly, credibly and concisely to a range of technical and non-technical audiences at the most senior levels and so to deliver tangible change to opinion
  + Ability to build networks of contacts and maintain effective high trust relationships with civil servants, politicians across parties, London local authorities, public, private and third sector partners and others in London government
  + Ability to manage complex projects, meeting competing deadlines and all other projects constraints
  + Ability to lead, develop and motivate people and teams in a manner that delivers continuous development and high performance
  + Able to represent London Councils and contribute to consultations and negotiations on behalf of London Councils and London local government with a range of organisations
  + Ability to work closely with communications experts to shape effective communications and media activity, and to ensure effective co-ordination of information to member authorities and increase policy influence.
  + Ability to work in complex systems and organisations, understanding ever changing contexts and the need to continuously improve.

# Personal Characteristics

* + Strong orientation to achieve the best possible outcomes through working in collaboration, partnership and across teams and organisations
  + Personal and professional credibility which commands the confidence of members, colleagues, partners and stakeholders
  + Highly developed political management skills, demonstrating political judgement and sensitivity
  + Strong commitment to probity, integrity and openness, treating people consistently, fairly and with respect
  + Resilient in pressured, complex stakeholder environments
  + Personal commitment to the value of diversity, inclusion and the promotion of equality of opportunity
  + Strong personal commitment to improving London as a place and its public services.

# Political Restrictions

1. This is a politically restricted post, under Section 2 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.