

Stockport Council

**CSS Strategic Head of Service (Legal,
Democratic Governance, Estates &
Asset Management)**

**Candidate Brief
(June 2018)**

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Council

Stockport is one of ten local authorities in Greater Manchester and is located to the south of the city region, stretching from the borders of the Peak District National Park to central Manchester.

With the fastest growing economy in the North West, a highly skilled workforce and great transport connections, Stockport is uniquely positioned to maximise the range of opportunities for business growth. Our excellent schools, parks and greenspaces, varied housing and heritage buildings make Stockport a great place to live, but also presents challenges such as congestion and housing affordability. Stockport is also a place of contrast, with areas of significant deprivation along with more affluent areas.

The Council is made up of 21 wards, each with three elected councillors. After the 2018 Local Elections, no political party has overall control. Labour, as the largest group, continues to lead the Council and form the Cabinet.

Delivering our priorities and ambitions

Regeneration and revival of Stockport Town Centre is gathering pace as part of a radical and exciting £1 billion investment programme. The Council has made tangible and visible progress in delivering its ambitions around inclusive growth and reform, evidenced by the new business district at Stockport Exchange, which has surpassed all expectations, the next phase of which is already underway. The opening of Redrock at the heart of the town puts Stockport firmly on the map as a major leisure destination, along with investment in improving access to our thriving Town Centre. In addition, exciting plans for renovation of Merseyway and improvements to Stockport Market are already in development. The creation of the Viaduct Housing Partnership with Stockport Homes is also helping us to build much-needed affordable housing in the borough. There is a particular focus on brownfield site development creating new residential development and open spaces in and around our Town Centre.

These improvements are not just physical but will also benefit the financial position of the Council, with more visitors, businesses and new homes bringing more economic activity, jobs and council revenue. Alongside this, major progress has been made transforming our services to meet the challenges of reduced funding and increasing demand. Stockport Neighbourhood Care is leading integration of Stockport's health and social care services at a local level, whilst OfSTED has acknowledged the quality of our children's services and leading role in establishing a NW Adoption Agency. Our digital innovations are helping reduce costs and improve access to information and services, with our Digital by Design programme achieving national recognition.

Meeting future challenges

Throughout these efforts to maintain and improve services, our focus on achieving a sustainable financial future for the Council remains firm, as we move towards a self-

financing funding model by 2020. There remains a great deal of uncertainty around the future funding of Local Authorities in addition to a range of factors outside our immediate control. As we approach a decade of austerity, the Council has already achieved savings of £100m, with a further £47m to be found in the next five years. Without careful planning and a continuing programme of service reforms to make our funding stretch as far as it can, the impact of these cuts would be devastating. We must be under no illusions; this represents the biggest financial challenge in the history of Stockport Council.

Whilst the Government has provided additional funding such as the improved Better Care Fund and Adult Social Care Grants to support the increasing demand pressures particularly in relation to social care services, this is only temporary one-off resource and only goes some way to address the problems faced. Like many other Local Authorities across the country, the Council continues to face significant costs because of increased demand and demographic trends in both its Children's and Adult Social Care services. With no immediate prospect of additional government funding, and in order to minimise the impact of Council Tax on our residents, we are looking to balance increasing our income with spending reductions, whilst also aiming to protect and enhance front-line services upon which our most vulnerable residents rely. We will adopt a more commercial approach to investing in and marketing our assets and services in order to generate more income to support this approach.

Alongside these new delivery models and commissioning arrangements, robust management and governance arrangements are in place to ensure that the Council continues to retain oversight, maintain accountability and manage risk. We remain committed to extensive, meaningful and transparent public consultation as part of this process.

Inclusive Growth

We have long acknowledged the stark inequalities in the Borough and know that the benefits of growth have not always been shared equally. Ensuring that all residents can benefit from Stockport's economic growth, and providing job opportunities and better access to employment for local people is central to our vision and plans to tackle poverty and inequality. For these reasons, we are placing Inclusive Growth at the heart of our Council Plan and shared plans with local businesses and partners. Our aim is to foster inclusive growth so that all communities enjoy quality life chances, and reap the benefits of a growing economy in terms of jobs, prosperity and access to public services, which meet the needs of Stockport residents now and in future. We are committed to making this a reality and will report regularly on progress on these issues.

A strong voice within Greater Manchester

Since the establishment of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and election of Andy Burnham as the GM Mayor, devolved powers and plans are rapidly taking shape across our city region. Through this, we are ensuring Stockport's voice is heard and amplified, whilst holding the Combined Authority to account. As part of this, we have incorporated the key priorities set out within the Greater Manchester Strategy into our Council Plan, enabling

us to align these with local priorities and monitor delivery and outcomes in future. We will continue to work closely with the Mayor to bring improvements to public transport and develop long-term plans for future housing development in the borough.

Stockport Council Plan

Stockport Council agreed its priorities for 2018/19 at the Council's budget meeting in February 2018, alongside its Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). These are guided by the following key principles;

- Addressing, together, the need to become financially self-reliant by 2020, as well as how we will need to reduce spending in the medium term.
- Being open about what service performance standards are acceptable, resourcing accordingly and being clear about the impact.
- Focusing on inclusion, particularly in our more deprived neighbourhoods.
- Growing our local economy and supporting people so they can get good jobs is the best way to promote individual and community independence.
- Maximising income to protect vital services.
- Integrating service delivery, management and back-office – across the Council, places and sectors.
- Designing in digital solutions and self-service wherever possible.

The current Council Plan can be found [here](#) and the Budget [here](#).

Alongside the Council Plan, we have a five-year Partnership Plan. The [Borough Plan 2015-20](#) sets out how we are working together with public services, local communities and business to make sure that:

- people are able to make informed choices and look after themselves
- people who need support get it
- Stockport benefits from a thriving economy
- communities in Stockport are safe and resilient
- Stockport is a place people want to live

ADVERT

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£77,825-81,072, plus £12,000 Monitoring Officer allowance

Stockport is an ambitious Borough implementing a complex and exciting transformational programme to radically reshape service delivery, collaborating with Partners and utilising Digital to provide exceptional services to all our communities. We are determined to reshape Stockport to reposition ourselves as an international Borough, which is evidenced by our commitment to a multifaceted regeneration programme including the dedication of £900 million to Town Centre redevelopment, as well as significant transport infrastructure renewal. In addition, we seek to maximise our assets and trade services in order to be completely self-financing by 2020.

This is your opportunity to contribute to and shape our inspiring vision, and improve opportunities and outcomes for the Borough's residents. You will lead a new department to deliver innovative solutions in order to meet the Council's ambitious programme of reform. You will be a highly credible and exceptional leader with a consistent record of achievement, you'll be working with the Cabinet and senior leadership team and with significant financial budgets and resources. A qualified solicitor or barrister you will have the creativity, confidence and legal acumen to propose radical and innovative solutions, whilst ensuring legal compliance.

You will undertake the role of the Council's Monitoring Officer under the provision of Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and you'll ensure that all our decisions, decision making processes and any other actions are both lawful and lawfully undertaken. You will also bring a practical, intelligent and forward thinking approach to the delivery of our estates and asset management strategy.

For an informal discussion about this opportunity please contact Laureen Donnan, Deputy Chief Executive on 0161 474 3180 laureen.donnan@stockport.gov.uk

For more information about the role please click [here](#) to read the Job Description and Person Specification

For more information about living and working in Stockport please click [here](#)

The closing date is: Monday 2nd July 2018

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted by: 6th July 2018

The Assessment Centre will take place on: 9/10th July 2018

The successful applicant's appointment will be subject to satisfactory pre-employment clearances including a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

To apply for this role, please send your CV and a supporting statement to recruitment@stockport.gov.uk

[Privacy Notice](#)

Stockport Council – Valuing Diversity

ROLE PROFILE

CSS Strategic Head of Service (Legal, Democratic Governance, Estates & Asset Management)

Responsible to: Deputy Chief Executive

Responsible for: Legal, Democratic Governance, Estate and Asset Management

Main Purpose of the Job:

- The management and delivery of Corporate and Support Services with specific responsibility for Legal Services, Democratic Governance and Estates and Asset Management.
- To provide clear and visible leadership in the corporate and strategic leadership of the Authority by providing high quality, cost effective support services to customers (external and internal).
- To work with the Corporate leadership Team (CLT) in the co-ordination and delivery of major change processes ensuring that the support required from CSS is in place, flexible, responsive and value for money.
- To facilitate service redesign, modernisation and transformation, delivering on the Councils priorities and decisions.
- To work with Elected Members, supporting the democratic processes ensuring high standards of conduct and probity and providing advice to the corporate core of the organisation.
- To ensure that the Council manages its resources effectively, delivering value for money, exploiting opportunities to drive out inefficiencies and generating income where appropriate.
- Liaising with: Chief Executive, Elected Members, and CLT, key partners, AGMA Authorities, communities, partner agencies, private sector providers, public agencies, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities.

Statutory Officer Supplement

- Undertake the role of Monitoring Officer for the Council in accordance with statutory requirements
- To support elections activity and providing appropriate legal advice throughout the process and acting as the Deputy Returning Officer when required.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND PERSONAL DUTIES:

KEY AREAS

1. To support the Deputy Chief Executive in developing strategies and plans for improving corporate and support services, so that the CSS offer both drives innovation and contributes to and is consistent with the Council's overall aims and business objectives.
2. To be accountable for specific function (namely Legal Services, Democratic Governance and Estates and Asset Management) lead the production and development of strategic planning, delivery service and business plans for areas of responsibility that support the achievement of Council objectives.

3. To work as part of the new CSS management team, alongside the post of Borough Treasurer and Strategic Heads of Service and provide cohesive leadership within a specialist area to develop the range of services required and maximise the use of resources and achieve budget targets
4. To work closely with Elected Members to provide relevant, sound, professional and technical advice to ensure that the Council's objectives are promoted and underpinned by sound decision making. As well as ensuring that confidence in the service among CLT, officers and members is maintained at a high level.
5. To engage in the wider public services reform agenda through network meetings with colleagues across GM, demonstrating leadership on behalf of Stockport in developing new ways of working and collaboration building partnerships with neighbouring councils and across AGMA
6. Deliver outstanding customer service and effective client management in order to protect the Council's interest, ensure good governance whilst reflecting and managing client expectations and the reputation of CSS
7. To engage on behalf of the Council in the work at a GM level on devolution; ensuring that our support services take account of changes and opportunities to be active influencers and well as offering a Stockport contribution to deliver the plan.
8. Principal responsibility will be to innovate and implement; leading the service, making things happen and getting things done within the specialist area.
9. Represent the Directorate at appropriate Council, member, officer, partner and community meetings as required.
10. To ensure that appropriate Council policies and decisions are communicated consistently and effectively.
11. To embed the performance management culture, driving continuous improvement and playing a key role in ensuring that we enable and encourage organic networks to form – emphasising the importance of relationships, influence and connecting people.
12. To maximise the contribution of employees by ensuring that the Council's Human Resources, Equalities, Developmental and Appraisal policies are applied fairly and consistently.
13. Management of significant budgets including delivery under pressure but within our means.
14. Recognise and respond to the political environment and expectations, addressing any sensitivity and taking a holistic view of Council requirements in a Politically Restricted post.

15. To provide specialise support in an identified area, giving professional advice and guidance to the organisation in order to meet statutory requirements and mitigate any risks.

Additional Duties:

- To lead by example, conducting all aspects of the role in a way which demonstrates the Council's Values
- To work flexibly in the interests of the service, carrying out the duties in the most effective and efficient manner including undertaking other appropriate duties.
- To work positively and inclusively with colleagues and customers so that the Council provides a workplace and delivers services that do not discriminate against people on the ground of their age, sexuality, religion or belief, race, gender or disabilities.
- To fulfil personal requirements, where appropriate, with regard to Council policies and procedures, health, safety and welfare, customer care, emergency, evacuation, security and promotion of the Council's priorities.