

Role Profile

SECTION 1 Brief Description

Role Title: Senior Democratic Services Officer

Reports to: Head of Governance and Corporate Services

Team / Service: Governance Team

Grade: G

Profile updated: September 2025

SECTION 2 Job Family Description

Senior Practitioners – Roles which undertake more complex production activities, and/or which provide support and training to practitioners. These roles may be the organisation's lead expert in a particular area and may undertake some supervisory responsibilities. In relevant areas there will be a qualification requirement to undertake such roles.

The role profile describes the general nature of the work performed at this level. It is not intended to be a detailed list of all duties and responsibilities that may be required. The role will be further defined by annual objectives, which will be developed with the role holder. SYPA reserves the right to review and amend the job families on a regular basis.

SECTION 3 Role Purpose Including Key Outputs

To lead on the provision of high-quality democratic support services, facilitating the effective and efficient operation of the decision-making arrangements and scrutiny processes of the Authority.

To manage the business of the formal Authority and its established committees, the Local Pension Board and our partnership body; the Joint Committee of the Border to Coast Pensions Partnership. This includes, among other things, preparation of forward plans, work programmes and calendars, the preparation and publishing of agendas, the writing and publishing of minutes (using a variety of styles as appropriate) and the recording of decisions taken by those bodies, as well as the recording and publishing of decisions delegated to officers.

To maintain a sound knowledge and understanding of the Authority's Constitution and the legislative framework within which local authorities operate, with the ability and confidence to provide advice on this to colleagues, managers and members as appropriate.

To undertake planning, co-ordination and administration of training and development for Authority and Local Pension Board members and to provide support to all these members. This will include being responsible for liaison and collaboration with democratic services teams in the four constituent councils in South Yorkshire: Barnsley MBC, City of Doncaster Council, Rotherham MBC and Sheffield City Council.

To be responsible for the use and continual development of the Authority's meeting management software system (*Modern.Gov*), including providing guidance and training to officers and members as required. Ensuring that the Authority are able to maximise the benefits from this system to its full potential.

As part of fulfilling the above role purpose, some of the key outputs / responsibilities specific to this role include:

- The management of the annual municipal year-end closure activity and supporting the onboarding of new members of the Authority and Local Pension Board. Ensuring registers of interests are kept up-

to-date and co-ordinating the annual declarations process required for the Authority's reporting responsibilities.

- The annual update of the members' handbook and co-ordinating the production and circulation of a monthly Member Newsletter.
- Oversight and administration of the online reading room provided for members of the Authority and Local Pension Board to ensure that it meets their needs.
- Reports production – ensuring all reports for meeting agendas are provided in a timely manner, and undertaking proof-reading of reports as required to ensure these are high quality and professionally presented.
- Maintenance of member training and development records.
- Dealing with relevant e-mail, telephone and face to face enquiries as needed, providing advice and information as appropriate, assisting other officers and outside bodies as necessary to resolve issues.

SECTION 4 Team Context

The Governance team is responsible for the effective operation of the Authority's governance arrangements, including the servicing of the Authority and its Committees and other formal meetings, as well as providing administrative support to the Senior Management Team. Also responsible for the promotion and management of learning and development activity as well as member support for Authority and Local Pension Board members.

The team also provide corporate communications, ensure the effective operation of the Authority's procurement arrangements, information governance framework, Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure, the maintenance of the Constitution, the policy framework, and corporate support for project management and performance measurement.

The provision of this corporate service allows senior managers and the operational teams to focus on their core functions as well as ensuring compliance with statutory obligations.

SECTION 5 Line Management

None.

SECTION 6 Role Summary

Roles at this level may manage a straightforward operational activity or provide specialist support services. They have in-depth knowledge of methods, usage of software systems and procedures and possess practical understanding in one or more disciplines, for example, Democratic Services, Finance, HR, Communications, ICT, Facilities, Procurement.

They are often 'experts' seeking to deliver maximum efficiency within a defined process, and they require understanding of complex procedures and the ability to allocate workload and react to changing priorities.

A thorough knowledge of their own area or discipline is required, although overall supervision from a more experienced professional is in place. They will need to use their initiative to handle processes and resolve problems and queries based on experience and judgement, mainly without reference to others. They may provide supervision of some work activities undertaken by business support officers and will work collaboratively with customers, staff, elected members, partner organisations, agencies and/or contractors, and play a role in maintaining quality standards.

SECTION 7 Budget Responsibility

This role is not a budget holder but will be responsible for administering arrangements and providing information to the finance team relating to payment of members allowances and expenses. Will also have responsibility for raising purchase orders and payment requests in relation to training course bookings and travel for example. All of which will need to be carried out in accordance with the organisation's financial regulations and internal controls and procedures.

SECTION 8 Representative Accountabilities

Analysis, Reporting & Documentation

- Prepare and analyse management information, including reports / project plans, recommending actions as appropriate.
- Maintain, develop and review business support and governance systems, processes and procedures to secure a quality, cost effective service and continuous improvement.
- Analyse and make recommendations for improvement or development of existing systems, processes or policy.

Service Delivery

- Prepare and despatch a range of correspondence to ensure an efficient response to enquiries and timely conclusion of any process connected with the defined area of activity.
- Deliver a range of specialist services advising and assisting customers (including Authority and Board members) in area of expertise, to maximise service quality, efficiency and continuity.
- Maintain knowledge of, and provide guidance for others on, the organisation's current systems, policies and procedures.
- Resolve issues/queries independently, recommend alternative solutions if unable to assist, and ensure efficient, day-to-day customer service / democratic member support is delivered.

Planning & Organising

- Monitor service objectives and standards within own area of work to ensure effective service delivery.
- Plan and prioritise own work activities for the months ahead, to ensure operational efficiency. Respond effectively to changing demands, adjusting priorities as needed.

Work with others

- Liaise, communicate and build relationships with other internal departments, elected members, customers, partner organisations, agencies and/or contractors to support and represent the team/service. Key external relationships relevant to this role will be with members of the senior management team, Authority and Local Pension Board members, Border to Coast Pensions Partnership Joint Committee members and support staff, and democratic services teams in the four South Yorkshire Councils.
- Undertake and co-ordinate projects and reviews in a defined area of activity to support and enhance service delivery.

People Management

- Oversee the delivery of a range of support services to a service or function.
- Act as a source of expert advice and information for staff across the organisation in relation to the specialism of the role.
- Operate as an individual responsible for the delivery of a high level service.

Organisational

- **Values** – To uphold the values and behaviours of the organisation in self and others.

- **Equality & Diversity** – To work inclusively, with a diverse range of stakeholders, and promote equality of opportunity.
- **Health, Safety & Wellbeing** – To maintain high standards of Health, Safety and Wellbeing at work and take reasonable care for the health and safety of self and others. To have regard to and comply with the safeguarding policy and procedures as appropriate.

SECTION 9 Education, Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

1. Educated to Level 5 qualification standard, **or** relevant vocational experience showing development in a series of progressively more demanding relevant work/ roles.
2. Proven written and oral communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to work collaboratively with internal colleagues, elected members, and external partners/ professionals.
3. Well-developed skills in taking minutes of formal meetings.
4. Excellent organisational and time management skills with strong attention to detail.
5. Knowledge and experience of a relevant range of information systems and technologies to ensure effective service delivery. Previous experience of using meeting management software such as *Modern.Gov* or similar is desirable.
6. Understanding of the principles and application of good governance in a public sector organisation.
7. Ability to influence others at all levels of the organisation on governance and democratic representation matters.
8. Ability and interest in promoting and co-ordinating learning and development activity for elected members.
9. An understanding of the regulatory environment for Local Government and/or the Local Government Pension Scheme is desirable.

SECTION 10 Specific Qualifications and/or Experience

1. Must have considerable experience working in a democratic services function in a public sector environment.
2. Specific experience in democratic support within Local Government would be a distinct advantage.
3. Must hold, or be willing and able to undertake, relevant qualifications / accredited training – such as Association of Democratic Services Officers certificate and diploma courses.
4. Must have proven experience of working with highly confidential and/or sensitive information.

SECTION 11 Values expected to be demonstrated at all times

HONEST & ACCOUNTABLE:

Telling it like it is and taking responsibility for our actions even when we have made a mistake.

PROFESSIONAL:

Being highly skilled and competent and managerially applying rationality to decision making processes.

PROGRESSIVE:

Welcoming of change, while taking sensible risks and learning from our mistakes and from others.

EMPOWERING:

Providing the freedom for individuals to identify and implement solutions to problems.

South Yorkshire Pensions Authority is an equal opportunity employer and values diversity.
