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|  | JOB DESCRIPTION | FormJD1 |
| **JOB TITLE:** Access Officer | **POST NUMBER**:  |
| **REPORTS TO:**  | Assistant Director (Customer & Communities) |
| **DEPARTMENT:** Customer & Communities | GRADE: 10 |
| **JE REF:** | 0009 0422 | PANEL DATE: | 12/04/2022 |
| **1.** | **MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB**  * To act as the Council’s expert senior advisor on all matters relating to access and disability issues in relation to meeting public sector equalities duties, and requirements under Equalities and Human Rights legislation.
* To support and directly influence the development and implementation of policies, initiatives and projects that open up opportunities for disabled people to enable them to access services and facilities.
* To provide expert comprehensive design and specialist access advice on major capital projects including capital developments, highway schemes, regeneration initiatives and wider Corporate plans across the council.
* To develop and monitor the Council’s policies in relation to accessible transport, and develop new accessible transport solutions.
* Provision of specialist expertise and access advice to enhance and embed the council’s approach to Equalities Impact Assessments in respect of capital and other schemes.
* To work in close partnership with local groups to identify stake holder interests, and secure those interests in Equality Impact Assessments in relation to policy development and decision making.
* To research and interpret national policy, legislation and good practice. To provide strategic and policy advice to directorate and corporate management teams, Members and external partners/stakeholders on welfare related areas of work including the implications for local policy, strategic planning, service development and improvement.
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| **2.** | **CORE RESPONSIBILITIES, TASKS & DUTIES:** |
|  | i | To advise the council, its partner organisations and local businesses on statutory duties around the disability provisions in the Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1988 and other legislation, policies etc. which affect disabled and older people, in particular on the duty to make reasonable adjustments as required under the legislation.  |
|  | ii | To provide expert specialist advice on access for disabled people, inclusive design and specifically Part M and Approved Document M of the Building Regulations. |
|  | iii | To provide accurate expert inclusive access/design guidance on legislation and best practice to Elected Members, officers, developers, designers, architects, builders and others, to support construction and development projects, including coordinating with the York-based disability groups to ensure that disabled people and their representative organisations have an input into the design of new developments, policies, and access issues.  |
|  | iv | To support in the preparation of masterplans and development frameworks to ensure that Council capital projects/developments, services and facilities are accessible to disabled and older residents and visitors. |
|  | v | To have direct involvement or in guiding officers across a range of services to deliver robust Equality Impact Assessments in significant design projects and in relation to associated policy development and decision making. |
|  | vi | To prepare good practice design guidance and standards including the York City Centre Access Standard to be applied by all council services. |
|  | vii | To undertake Access Audits on council-owned buildings and open spaces to ensure corporate compliance with legislation and codes of practice. |
|  | viii | To support the development and monitoring of the Council’s policies in relation to accessible transport. To help develop other initiatives to create accessible transport systems, in liaison with partners. Including for example:* Work with Bus Quality Partnership
* City centre shuttle service feasibility
* Continue to explore options for cycling as a mobility aid in the footstreets.
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|  | ix | To support the commissioning of access-related services, for example work with Shopmobility, Dial-&-Ride and Tier to improve service offer. |
|  | x | To lead on the development and implementation of appropriate training and information inside and outside the Council to promote access and disability issues. Where appropriate commission specialist external training support. |
|  | xi | To work in partnership with local disabled and older people and their representative organisations, including engagement and consultation, to inform the development of Council policy with a specific emphasis on the development and implementation of initiatives to tackle issues faced by disabled people. |
|  | xii | To initiate and take the lead role in promoting key accessible facilities such as Changing Places, activities and services and increasing general public awareness of the needs of disabled and older people, including producing Access Guides and liaison with the media.  |
|  | xiii | To liaise with appropriate access and disability organisations, locally, regionally and nationally in order to keep abreast of national policy as it affects disabled people and older people, and to develop and use a network of relevant internal and external professionals, residents and groups. |
|  | xiv | To act as a point of contact for requests for information and complaints relating to disability/access matters, and to work with relevant services and organisations to develop appropriate responses and solutions. |
|  | xv | To write reports, develop guidance, give presentations, and attend Council Committees and other appropriate external bodies, as and when required. |
|  | xvi | Attendance at national, regional, sub-regional and local forums will be required acting as the council’s representative, gathering information on best practice and developing partnerships.  |
|  | xvii | The postholder will act as an expert in respect of evaluating and advsing on the implications of goverment legislation proving information to Councillors. Managers, staff and external partners and stakeholders. |
| **3.** | **SUPERVISION / MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE**Direct - 0 Indirect - multiple (supporting groups, fora and stakeholders)* Support co-ordination of the activity of a wide range of partner and stakeholder engagement activity especially with groups representing disabled people.
* Management and delegation of tasks as project manager, or lead officer in task groups.
* Expert direction across all council services on all access matters.
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| **4.** | CREATIVITY & INNOVATION* The postholder as a cross council expert is required to significantly influence changes in modelling of service delivery and be an effective ‘change agent’ by identifying and promoting innovative solutions to meet required standards and meet disabled residents needs,
* A high level of creativity and innovation is required in supporting creative, innovative, sustainable local responses to aspirations and needs.
	+ The postholder will need to be creative and innovative in the development of increased engagement and involvement through codesign and coproduction of solutions.
	+ The postholder will identify, interpret and understand the issues and challenges of accessibility across the city working with communities and partners to support the development of innovative solutions whilst ensuring compliance with national and legislative standards.
	+ The postholder will need to be able to deal with specific sectors of York’s communities devising different engagement tools which will work for them and are sensitive to their needs.
	+ The postholder will sensitively facilitate individuals, organisations and partners with potentially differing opinions, service needs and pressures, creatively developing and maintaining partner relationships to deliver the desired engagement and involvement outcomes for disabled and older people.
	+ They need the ability to creatively adapt their work in the light of presenting circumstances, which may include a degree of misunderstanding or challenge from others.
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| **5.** | CONTACTS & RELATIONSHIPSInternal * Key internal relationships will be with the Assistant Director of Customer & Communities,Directors of Place and other members of the Corporate Management Team
* Regular contact with colleagues and peers within the council in delivering expert advice and support at a senior level.
* Specific contact with those with policy, planning, contracting, information, data collection, monitoring, financial and funding responsibilities.
* Deliver or commission inclusive/accessible design training and ongoing support to specialist council officers such as planning teams.
* Regular contact with elected members requiring strong political awareness. Must be able to balance the needs of the service and the requirements of elected members in a sensitive manner which is a difficult and complex skill.
* Regular contact with the Communications team to contribute to council publications to ensure accurate and timely information is conveyed to residents and partners.

**External** The post holder will be responsible for the development and maintenance of strong, positive working relationships with the following: * A wide and diverse range of disabled people and people with mental health needs (children and adults), older people, families and carers.
* With a wide range of public, private, statutory and voluntary sector organisations at a senior level. The postholder will provide the main engagement point between the council and external organisations with respect to Access.
* Key local community activists.
* Regular liaison with key local partners and national partners through meetings and events.
* The post holder will be required to represent CYC at partnership meetings at a local, regional or national level and deal with community leaders, representatives and local organisations.
* The postholder will sensitively facilitate individuals, organisations and partners with potentially differing opinions, service needs and pressures, creatively developing and maintaining partner relationships to deliver the desired engagement and involvement outcomes for disabled and older communities.
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|  **6.** | **DECISIONS – discretion & consequences*** The decisions made by the post holder and consequences for all services receiving the expert advice of the postholder will have a direct impact on the perception of the quality of the service provided with public and political scrutiny.
* The consequences of their actions and decision making has a significant effect on both the reputation of the council and the well-being of disabled people, older people and their carers.
* The Access Officer has to work independently of the management of for example the capital projects they will be reviewing and contribute to inorder to secure adherence to Access Standards and compliance with legislative requirements.
* The success of any project will have a direct impact on the availability and range of support for local residents.
* Able to set goals, manage own work and competing priorities, using initiative and exercising judgment.
* Understands limits and boundaries of own responsibilities and decision making. Seeks advice and support as required from line manager and service partners.
* Able to constructively challenge existing processes and practice.
* Able to work closely and effectively with a wide range of professionals, agencies, communities and people from diverse backgrounds.
* The postholder will support the wider communities team and corporate team in developing new methods and practices for increasing engagement and involvement of disabled and older people taking account of the need to ensure inclusivity and maintain the reputation of CYC as an inclusive council.
* Although this work takes place in the context of the line management structure, and major decisions are subject to the appropriate endorsement, the post is essentially a specialist manager one, and the Assistant Director and capital project managers will be reliant on the expert advice of the Access Officer in relation to most aspects of within the remit of the role
* The post holder, whilst working within the framework of the council’s constitution and relevant processes and procedures, will have significant discretion in terms of the work delivered.
* The post holder will have responsibility in evaluating and developing the Access service offer.
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| **7.** | **RESOURCES – financial & equipment***(Not budget, and not including desktop equipment.)*Description Value £2,000* Has office equipment including mobile phone and laptop
* Could have financial responsibility for monitoring of external grants/commissions projects and funding to external organisations.
* Appropriate use of lone working aids.
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| **8.** | **WORK ENVIRONMENT – work demands, physical demands, Working conditions & work context**Work demands* The work covers a wide range of activities (with often conflicting or short notice demands) the Access Officer must ensure that the service objectives are still met by rearranging and reprioritising work to accommodate this.
* Responding on a timely basis to advising on and supporting the delivery of the Equalities Impact Assessments relating to capital projects.
* Diplomatically justify decisions made to Partners and communities with reference to the Council’s Constitution, Financial Regulations, locally approved standards, national standards and regulatory/professional requirements.

Physical demands* Occasionally based in the community, this will involve the use of computer equipment including laptop throughout the working day.
* Setting up of community events and necessary adjustments. Where some of the equipment requires an above normal level of effort to set up, reasonable adjustments will be put in place to support the postholder.

Working conditions* The working environment is a hybrid of home and office based, and will involve offsite visits and attendance at evening meetings, and on occasional weekends, at venues, including outside, in communities with the public or with partners.

Work context* Normal business operating hours, however, the post holder will be expected to attend, facilitate and support officers and groups for evening, and on occasional weekend, meetings and events.
* In delivering some of the tasks the postholder will be lone working.
* The nature of engagement focuses on contact with communities and partners as such they may be subjected to confrontational and/or aggressive behaviour.
* Present reports to the public, community and voluntary sector.
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| **9.** | Knowledge and Skills* The post holder will have lived experience of disability or excellent proven experience and understanding of the access barriers faced by people with disabilities, along with strategies to overcome them using the social model of disability.
* Specialist expert training in access issues to degree or equivalent level and evidence of related continuous professional development.
* Expert, up-to-date detailed working skills and knowledge of relevant disability legislation and guidance including:
	+ The Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1988 and implications for disabled people, particularly the Public Sector Equality Duty and reasonable adjustments
	+ Building Regulations Approved Document M
	+ British Standards 8300.
* Significant experience and expertise ideally including the design, construction or delivery of physical projects.
* Significant experience of providing access and equalities impact assessment advice to capital project leads across a range of services.
* Extensive experience at manager level of developing and implementing access policies and initiatives in a large organisation and across a range of services.
* Experience of using statistics, data management and financial management.
* Practised community engagement and involvement approaches with specific experience with disabled, older people and representative groups.
* Able to work with a high degree of autonomy to set goals and manage a variety of tasks and competing priorities.
* Able to think strategically, analysing issues & supporting others to reach creative solutions.
* The skills to interpret and communicate the meaning of legislation, and to contribute to the formulation and recommend policy, guidance, research and information on best practice
* Ability to plan and manage own workload.
* Strong leadership, influencing and negotiation skills.
* Strong training and development skills.
* Excellent ability to communicate clearly and effectively, using a range of methods, with a variety of customers, officers, elected members and stakeholders. This should include understanding the communication needs of different disability groups

(partially sighted and blind,  deaf, neurodiverse, learning disability etc).* Understanding of local government structures, operations and decision-making processes.
* An ability to understand and make strategic links between how the detailed work fits into the strategic and corporate direction of the authority.
* Experience of successful partnership working with public, private and voluntary sectors and experience of networking at a local, regional and national level.
* Excellent project management skills with the ability to drive innovative work both within the staff base of the Council and with other partners.
* Experience of budget/financial management expected at a service manager level.
* Knowledge and experience of utilising a variety of promotional methods e.g., social media.
* Knowledge of external funding mechanisms.
* Ability to assess situations effectively and develop solutions.
* Experience of commissioning/contract management.
* Ability to manage a range of competing projects and achieve successful outcomes within fixed timescales.
* Ability to work collaboratively with team members and other colleagues.
* A proactive self-starter with the ability to work using own initiative.
* Ability to establish procedures to monitor the result of policies.
* Project planning skills, especially allocating resources, devising milestones and developing contingency plans

**Ability to converse and provide advice and guidance to members of the public, in spoken English, to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) - level C1** - Effective operational proficiency or advanced - Can express themselves fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language. Public authorities have a duty towards disabled members of staff under the Equality Act 2010 to provide such adjustments as are reasonable to remove a disadvantage caused by the application of a particular provision, criterion or practice. For a public sector worker whose first language is a signed language, the fluency duty will be met by the provision of a sign language interpreter who speaks English or Welsh to the necessary standard of fluency for that role. |
| **10.** | **Position of Job in Organisation Structure**Job reports to: Assistant Director Customer & Communities**THIS JOB**:Access OfficerJobs reporting up to this one: None  |