Stewart Dickson MLA is seeking to appoint an experienced officer capable of providing support on all matters relating to NI Assembly business. In addition, the incumbent will work with other team members to facilitate external communication and to provide a quality administrative and customer-focused information facility to ensure the efficient operation of his East Antrim Constituency service.

**DEPUTY HEAD OF OPERATIONS EAST ANTRIM CONSTITUENCY**

**Title:** Deputy Head of Operations East Antrim Constituency

**Report to:** Alliance Party MLA for East Antrim & Head of Operations

**Location:** Constituency Office, Carrickfergus & Parliament Buildings, Stormont

**Hours:** 37 hours per week

**Holidays:** 28 days per annum

**Salary:**  £15.74 per hour (£30,284 p.a.)

**Pension:** 10% Employer’s Pension Contribution to Assembly-approved scheme

**Duration:** Permanent (dependant on MLA’s term of office)

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Role:**

*“To main function of this position is to provide support to the MLA on all matters relating to Assembly business. The incumbent will also be required to be proficient in External Communications and be able to provide support for East Antrim residents and stakeholders through the MLA’s Constituency Office.”*

***Assembly Business***

***Research:***

*• Conducting research and providing briefings on issues coming before the Assembly;*

*• Providing rapid, accurate and detailed research on a wide-range of devolved policy issues to deliver written and oral briefings, as required;*

*• Analysing, evaluating and interpreting data to ensure the MLA is accurately informed on key issues; and,*

*• Preparing material for meetings and conferences.*

***Assisting with Assembly Business:***

*• Drafting speeches and briefing papers;*

*• Developing Private Members' Bills;*

*• Supporting the MLA in preparing and developing Motions and Assembly Questions;*

*• Monitoring events in the Assembly and ensuring MLA is fully briefed on potential questions and motions to be put to the House;*

*• Monitoring Assembly legislation and debates; and,*

*• Maintaining up-to-date knowledge of relevant legislation and policy.*

***Engagement with Lobby Groups:***

*• Reviewing professional publications/participating in professional societies;*

*• Liaising with think-tanks, APGs, government departments and agencies, voluntary groups and other external groups; and,*

*• Responding to correspondence and enquiries from lobbyists and pressure groups.*

***Support for the MLA:***

*• Ensure compliance, with all Parliamentary Business, e.g. the Assembly Standing Orders*

*• Managing a calendar, and arranging meetings with stakeholders*

*• Liaise with the Alliance Stormont staff team and employees of other MLAs in relation to Parliamentary business, to avoid duplication;*

*• Other duties as required in support of the MLA in carrying out Assembly duties.*

***External Communication***

***Broadcast and Print Media:***

*• Drafting press releases, monitoring and assisting with the arrangement of media coverage, in collaboration of the Assembly Communications staff team;*

*• Responding to correspondence and enquiries from the media; and,*

*• Identifying media opportunities, including the organisation of press events, if appropriate.*

***Other Media:***

*• Preparing external, printed communication for constituents, including periodic constituency reports, and organising for their dissemination;*

*• Updating and maintaining Internet social networking media.*

***Community Engagement***

*• Liaising with groups within the constituency and the general public on the MLA’s behalf, e.g. on matters regarding the delivery of public services and programmes;*

*• Planning and organising events, as required; and,*

*• Responding to correspondence and enquiries from lobbyists and pressure groups.*

***Support for the MLA***

*• Other duties as required in support of the MLA carrying out their Assembly duties.*

***Support for East Antrim Residents***

***Supporting Constituents:***

*• Managing and monitoring incoming calls and enquiries;*

*• Providing information and advice to constituents on a wide range of issues, ensuring that all enquiries are dealt with sensitively and confidentially;*

*• Gathering relevant information to assist with progressing and resolving cases;*

*• Ensuring all casework is logged; monitoring progress and ensuring all identified actions are taken;*

*• Liaising with Government agencies, voluntary sector and others to resolve constituency matters;*

*• Responding to correspondence and enquiries from constituents.*

***Administration:***

*• Developing and maintaining databases across a range of stakeholder groups;*

*• Retaining records and information confidentially and in line with the Data Protection Act;*

*• Providing general admin support (typing, emails, phone calls, distributing mail, filing, photocopying, etc.);*

***Support for the MLA:***

*• Organising and providing secretarial support for meetings*

*• Management of the MLA’s diary commitments and delegating tasks to others, as appropriate; and,*

**PERSONAL SPECIFICATION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Assembly Business Professional / Technical Qualifications** | * Five GCSE’s / ‘O’ levels / Equivalent, including English and Maths (Grade C or above)
* Proficiency in the use of MICROSOFT packages (e.g. WORD, EXCEL, etc.)
 | * Relevant degree or working towards attainment
 |
| **Experience / Knowledge of Job** | * Working in a legislative setting
* Writing speeches and producing briefing papers
* Carrying out research around public policy
* Possessing a strong knowledge of Parliamentary procedures and processes
* Awareness of political issues and sensitivities
* Liaising with research organisations, government agencies and voluntary groups
 | * Experience of working in the NI Assembly
* Understanding of Assembly Committees work
* Experience of issue-specific campaigning in a range of policy areas
* Knowledge of current affairs across a range of jurisdictions
 |
| **Personal Qualities / Skills**  | * Ability to build a rapport with people from a range of backgrounds
* Ability to work with little supervision
* Flexible approach to work duties
* Ability to work to tight deadlines
 |  |
| **External Communication****Experience / Job Knowledge**  | * Able to producing printed promotional material for dissemination
* Full or shared responsibility for organising events with external stakeholders
* Use of different forms of communication and understanding their effectiveness with different stakeholder groups
 | * Working in a community setting or Constituency Office
* Managing Internet social-media accounts for matters other than personal profiles, e.g. organisational accounts
* Knowledge of the East Antrim constituency, in terms of stakeholder groups and key agencies
 |
| **Personal Qualities / Skills**  | * Excellent communications skills – written and verbal – with close attention to detail
* Can respond quickly to matters unfolding in the media
 | * Ability to predict and analysis the reaction of other stakeholders to matters unfolding in the media
 |
| **Support for East Antrim Residents****Experience / Job Knowledge**  | * Working in an office environment, dealing with admin tasks
* Working in a community setting or Constituency Office, providing information to residents
* Understanding of the Welfare system in Northern Ireland
 | * Taking minutes / providing secretariat support at meetings
* Diary management
* Knowledge of the East Antrim constituency, in terms of stakeholder groups and key agencies
 |
| **Personal Qualities / Skills**  | * Ability to deal with sensitive and confidential information (both verbal and written)
 | * Ability to deal with information in line with GDPR requirements
 |
| **Circumstances** | * Ability to work the occasional evening or weekends if required
 | * Full driving licence, with access to a car or alternative transport
 |

N.B. This post is funded by the Northern Ireland Assembly for the sole purposes of supporting the MLA for East Antrim. No work or tasks relating to the operation of the Alliance Party are permitted, nor will be required, in relation to this appointment

**Further Information**

* **Closing date for applications is Monday 30 August 2021 at 12 noon.**
* Interviews are expected to take place on Tuesday 7 September 2021.
* The successful applicant will be expected to begin employment on Monday 4 October 2021.