

Job Description	
Post title	Deputy Clerk / Governance and Compliance Officer
Post No	SVCC DCGCO 1
Grade	SCP 31 to 36 (indicative, subject to job evaluation and final scope)
Salary	To be confirmed following job evaluation and grading
Hours	Part-time, 0.6 FTE (approximately 22 hours per week), working pattern to be agreed
Reporting to	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Works closely with	Chair of Council, relevant committee chairs, Services Officer, Engagement and Development Officer, and Executive Assistant (Business Support)
Responsible for	Day-to-day task allocation and oversight of the Executive Assistant (Business Support) (subject to final structure)
Location	The normal place of work will be the Council Offices, 20-22 Astley Road, Seaton Delaval, but the post holder may occasionally be required to work at other locations to support Council activities.
DBS	This post is subject to a Basic disclosure.

Description of role

The Deputy Clerk / Governance and Compliance Officer provides senior governance and compliance capacity within the Council, working closely with and deputising for the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. The role strengthens organisational resilience and succession arrangements, supports financial governance and internal controls, and leads and coordinates the Council's compliance frameworks.

The postholder holds joint ownership of all Council policies alongside the Clerk, and holds overall responsibility for coordinating health and safety across the Council. The postholder also plays an important part in the wider leadership of the organisation, working closely with the Clerk, fellow officers and elected Members to turn Council priorities and decisions into effective action. The post supports delivery and compliance; it does not remove Member authority, and the Council retains decision-making responsibility at all times.

The role is anchored in the principles of due diligence, sound governance and the Council's statutory obligations. Within that anchor, the postholder is expected to exercise sound professional judgement and apply procedure flexibly and proportionately, so that governance enables the Council's work in the interests of residents rather than becoming an obstacle to it. This includes offering clear professional advice and constructive challenge, accepting that decisions will not always follow the recommended course, and then finding another workable, compliant route that keeps the Council's objectives on track while protecting its wellbeing and safety.

Duties and responsibilities

Deputy Clerk and governance continuity

- Act as a formal deputy to the Clerk within the Council's approved scheme of delegation and standing orders, supporting business continuity and resilience.
- Support the preparation and administration of Council and committee meetings, including agenda planning support, report collation, and meeting clerking or minute support as required, including during Clerk absence where authorised.
- Maintain a governance timetable covering statutory and cyclical requirements such as the audit cycle, budget timetable, policy review programme and key publication deadlines, and ensure forward planning.

Financial governance, internal controls and audit readiness (support to RFO)

- Under the direction of the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, support day-to-day financial administration and strengthen internal controls, including segregation of duties, process discipline and supporting documentation.
- Coordinate preparation for internal and external audit, including evidence collation, audit response tracking and monitoring implementation of agreed recommendations.
- Support budget preparation and monitoring through draft modelling, variance reporting support and maintaining a structured financial planning timetable.
- Support the implementation and effective use of financial systems to reduce duplication and strengthen reporting. Statutory RFO accountability remains with the Clerk unless formally reassigned in line with the Council's governance framework.

Governance compliance, policy and risk management

- Hold joint ownership of the Council's policy framework alongside the Clerk, leading day-to-day coordination, including maintaining the policy register, scheduling reviews, drafting and approving updates for adoption, and tracking implementation.
- Apply governance and procedure with judgement and proportion, distinguishing genuine statutory and governance requirements from matters of practice, and finding compliant, pragmatic solutions in the interests of residents rather than simply identifying obstacles.
- Maintain and coordinate the corporate risk register, including review timetables, action tracking and committee reporting.
- Establish and maintain a governance action tracker for Council decisions, audit actions, compliance tasks and deadlines.
- Support procurement and contract governance compliance by ensuring process alignment with Financial Regulations, proper documentation of quotes and tenders, and maintenance of a compliance audit trail in support of operational leads.

Health and safety

- Hold overall responsibility for coordinating health and safety across the Council, including maintaining and reviewing health and safety policies, ensuring risk assessments are carried out and kept up to date, monitoring compliance, and reporting to the Clerk and Members as required.

- Work with the Services Officer on operational health and safety matters, ensuring day-to-day safety tasks and documentation are completed and recorded.

Information governance

- Coordinate and monitor compliance activity relating to Freedom of Information requests, including logging, tracking deadlines and supporting responses for Clerk sign-off.
- Support data protection compliance through records management, secure handling processes and support for subject access request coordination where required.
- Coordinate transparency and publication requirements and support improvement of records management systems and practices.

HR process support and organisational development

- Support HR compliance through process coordination, such as recruitment administration, maintenance of core HR records, training logs, policy implementation support and standard documentation, under Clerk direction.
- Support the introduction and embedding of structured performance and workload review processes, including templates, schedules and follow-up tracking. Formal HR decision-making remains with the Clerk and/or relevant Member bodies as applicable.

Internal coordination and support to the wider team

- Provide day-to-day governance and process guidance to officers and support staff to promote clarity of responsibilities and consistent application of agreed procedures.
- Work closely with the Services Officer on operational compliance, health and safety documentation and procurement processes, and with the Engagement and Development Officer on website publication, transparency and communications governance.
- Where agreed, direct the day-to-day workflow and tasking of the Executive Assistant (Business Support), including the editing and version control of policy and corporate documents to what the Clerk and Deputy agree, so that administrative capacity is aligned to governance priorities.

Role boundaries and delegated authority

This post is designed to strengthen governance capacity and resilience while maintaining clear statutory accountability. The Clerk remains the Council's Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer unless the Council formally appoints or authorises alternative arrangements via resolution and documented delegation. The Deputy Clerk supports and leads designated compliance activity but does not independently assume statutory functions unless explicitly authorised. If the scope is expanded into higher-authority decision-making, for example full RFO accountability, senior HR authority or extensive line management, the post should be formally reviewed and re-evaluated.

Common duties and responsibilities

Quality Assurance

To understand and adhere to standards at individual, team performance and service quality so that the customer and the Council's requirements are met and that the highest standards are maintained.

Communication

To participate in and adhere to the team's communication processes and take responsibility for keeping up to date with all relevant procedures, policies and objectives associated with the role.

Professional Practice

To take responsibility for behaving professionally at all times, ensuring that work is carried out to the highest standards and in line with the team's and Council's stated policies or procedures. This includes adhering to the Council's Code of Conduct.

Health and Safety

Take responsibility for understanding and adhering to health and safety requirements for their service area, in line with the Council's Health and Safety Policy.

Appraisal

All members of staff will receive appraisals and it is the responsibility of each member of staff to follow guidance on the appraisal process.

Equality and Diversity

As an organisation we are committed to promoting a just society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live free from discrimination and prejudice. To ensure our commitment is put into practice we have an established Equality and Diversity Policy.

Confidentiality

All members of staff are required to undertake that they will not divulge to anyone personal and/or confidential information to which they may have access during the course of their work. All members of staff must be aware that they have explicit responsibility for the confidentiality and security of information received and imparted in the course of work and using Council information assets.

Induction

The Council has in place an induction programme designed to help new employees to become effective in their roles and to find their way in the organisation.

The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by your manager.

Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	A willingness to undertake relevant professional development, including working towards CiLCA if not already held.	CiLCA or another relevant governance, public administration or professional qualification. Membership of a relevant professional body.
Experience	Experience in a governance, compliance, finance administration or	Local council sector experience and familiarity with audit expectations,

	Essential	Desirable
	committee administration role within a public sector or similarly regulated environment. Experience of developing or operating structured processes such as calendars, trackers, compliance logs, audit preparation or policy registers. Experience of applying rules or procedures with judgement to reach practical, compliant outcomes.	transparency duties and information governance requirements. Experience supporting budget preparation, internal audit coordination and/or procurement compliance administration.
Skills and Knowledge	A broad appreciation of the Council's procedures, policies and statutory obligations, anchored in the principles of due diligence and sound governance. Sound professional judgement and the ability to develop practical, proportionate and compliant solutions rather than simply identify problems. The judgement to apply rules and procedures flexibly and proportionately, distinguishing genuine statutory and governance requirements from matters of practice. Strong understanding of governance processes, procedural compliance and the importance of audit trails and internal controls. Strong organisational skills and the ability to manage deadlines and protect high-risk priorities. Strong written communication skills, including drafting reports, procedures, policy updates and governance notes. Strong IT skills, including document management and spreadsheets, with the ability to support systems implementation.	Familiarity with FOI and data protection requirements in a public body.
Personal Qualities	A positive and solutions-focused approach, with the creativity and confidence to explore alternative ways of achieving an objective where the obvious route is not available. Professional resilience and adaptability, including the ability to give clear advice, accept that recommendations may not always be adopted, and remain constructive and focused on delivery.	

	Essential	Desirable
	The ability to remain calm, organised and pragmatic when working under pressure or dealing with competing priorities. A collaborative and accountable approach, taking shared responsibility for resolving problems and learning from them. The confidence and interpersonal skills to contribute effectively as part of the Council's developing officer leadership team and to build constructive working relationships with Members, colleagues and partners. An understanding that good governance sometimes means weighing a decision that benefits the community against a degree of risk or impact to the Council, and finding a balanced, compliant way forward that protects the Council's wellbeing and safety. High integrity, discretion and the ability to handle confidential information appropriately. Willingness to attend evening meetings occasionally where required and provide flexible cover in line with business continuity needs. Commitment to training and continuous professional development.	