

**Job summary**

**Role title: Research Officer**

**Department: Data & Insight**

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**General description of role**

This role forms part of the corporate Data & Insight team which aims to shape the way the Council uses data and research to drive transformation, inform policy, support service improvement, increase income and achieve better outcomes for our residents and customers. You’ll take part in discovery work, innovative analysis and insight generation on high-profile projects within an energetic, experimental and responsible environment.

This role will appeal to those with a natural curiosity and enquiring mind, who thrive on finding out what people think and how they behave. Your work will help the Council fulfil its corporate plan aspirations *to listen and learn from residents* and *plan & shape services using data & local insights*. The diversity of skills and expertise within the team (inc data science and geospatial) will provide you with opportunities to collaborate and explore innovative new research possibilities.

You will be responsible for conducting thematic research, working with subject-matter experts across a fascinating range of public service areas, providing day-to-day variety as well as an empowering opportunity to make a tangible difference to the lives of people living or working in our Borough. Your work will span research study design, testing, delivery, analysis, evaluation and advisory activities and will offer space for autonomy, creativity and professional development.

It’s all about helping the council carry on delivering high quality core services. We need to know what works, for whom, to what extent, in what contexts, how and why/why not, to ensure our services are relevant and tailored to people’s lives. The work of our Research Officer helps us better understand our audiences and inform decisions with expert advice and evidence of what’s important to residents, service users and our staff.

**Duties & responsibilities of role**

1. Gather requirements from a range of stakeholders within and beyond the organisation, develop optimal research approaches and evaluation methods. Project management of work covering all stages of the social research spectrum, often comprising a mixture of hands-on and out-sourced deliverables.
2. Carry out and manage primary and secondary research on our community, customers, staff and marketplaces. Embrace a range of quantitative and qualitative methods, employing the most appropriate, whether surveys, focus groups, interviews, social listening, evidence reviews, impact evaluations and working with agencies and partners.
3. Uphold robust research ethics and challenge proposals that may be biased, pose risks or yield poor quality results. Ensure public engagement activities are accessible, proportionate and generally representative.
4. To prepare reports and present research appropriately tailored to a wide range of audiences including senior officers, political leaders, and service users, helping to ensure that research findings influence service delivery, policy decisions and public perception of the council.
5. Provide advice and support to colleagues to define research/consultation objectives, determine appropriate solutions, capture & analyse data and identify actionable insights.
6. Maintain the team’s self-service resources for staff (e.g. consultation toolkit, web pages).
7. Data management, analysis, insight generation and reporting/presentation/publication. Working with an array of research, survey/engagement, data processing, analysis and visualisation software
8. Maintain current knowledge of industry best practice and new methodologies; seek to implement these within the council when appropriate, empowering teams to embrace an evidence-based culture founded on good research practise. Participate in regional and national communities of practise.
9. Promote the work of the team, deliver training and share insights across the council - with the aim of enabling effective knowledge sharing and generating a shared awareness of the latest research and intelligence.
10. Support the Council’s journey towards more participatory approaches that engage the local community in decision making.

**Person specification and interview assessment form**

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| **Candidate name** |  | | |
| **Contact number** |  | | |
| **Role title** | Research Officer | | |
| **Date of interview** |  | **Signed by recruiting manager** |  |

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| **Selection and Interview Criteria** | | **Scoring** | |
| **Criteria** | **Criteria importance**  E = Essential  P = Preferred | **Score**  3 = Met with full example  2 = Partly met with example  1 = Partly met no example  0 = Not demonstrated | **Score rationale/interview notes** |
| **Qualifications** | | | |
| Maths and English at GCSE level A\*-C grade or an equivalent qualification | **E** |  |  |
| Degree level qualification in relevant subject (e.g. social science) or equivalent industry experience | **E** |  |  |
| Postgraduate qualification in relevant subject (e.g. research, social science) | P |  |  |
| Membership of relevant industry body and/or evidence of continual professional development (CPD) | P |  |  |
| **Experience and achievements** | | | |
| Experience of conducting qualitative research projects (esp interviews/focus groups), both in-house and/or commissioned externally | **E** |  |  |
| Experience of conducting quantitative research projects (esp survey/consultations), both in-house and/or commissioned externally | **E** |  |  |
| Confidence with developing research that includes literature reviews, sampling/stakeholder mapping, accessibility, questionnaire design, quality control, data management, reporting, evaluation and best practise principles. | **E** |  |  |
| Ability to produce, interpret and present research findings, identifying key trends, recommendations, issues/risks and offer conclusions that encourage actionable improvements. | **E** |  |  |
| Familiarity with a selection of the following: impact evaluation, AI assisted text analysis, weightings, triangulation, web scraping, regression analysis, participatory/ deliberative methods, mixed methods and case study methods. | P |  |  |
| Experience with research/survey and data visualisation tools and structured/unstructured data. Ideally including Smart Survey, Nvivo, PowerBI, Google Analytics, Mosaic segmentation (or similar tools) and typical CRM data. | P |  |  |
| Familiarity with popular sources of secondary data from sources such as the UK Census, ONS, NHS, UK Gov, Experian and DWP data. | P |  |  |
| Confidence with relevant regulation, legal, governance and ethical obligations associated with social research activities | P |  |  |
| Strong understanding of the principles of data management, including collection, processing, linking, sharing and archiving | P |  |  |
| Experience working in a complex political organisation or structure, ideally from exposure to central or local government duties | P |  |  |
| **Role required competencies and behaviours** | | | |
| Willingness to learn new skills and approaches necessary dependent on research and audience needs | **E** |  |  |
| Excellent interpersonal skills. Able to prepare communications material to suit a range of audience groups. | **E** |  |  |
| Experience of building and managing relationships of trust with a range of stakeholders | **E** |  |  |
| Share knowledge and deliver training to help guide staff in service areas to independently conduct good research | **E** |  |  |
| Confidence to challenge proposals that may impact on good research practise. Influencing skills to equitably improve outcomes. | **E** |  |  |
| Comfortable numerically and working directly with raw data | **E** |  |  |
| Strong general IT knowledge, including spreadsheets, databases, reporting, Microsoft Office | **E** |  |  |
| Ability to work independently, exercising good initiative, judgement and time management, often across multiple concurrent tasks, including administrative work | **E** |  |  |
| **Corporately required personal qualities and behaviours** | | | |
| Innovative | **E** |  |  |
| Supportive | **E** |  |  |
| Flexible | **E** |  |  |
| Positive | **E** |  |  |
| **Total Criteria Score** | |  | **Feedback to be given to candidate:** |
| Essential Criteria Score | |  |
| Preferred Criteria Score | |  |
| **Appointment choice number** | | 1st / 2nd / 3rd |

**Summary of employment package**

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| **Place of work** | The role will be primarily based at **Town Hall, Reigate** but accommodates hybrid/remote working.  We may require you to work from another place of work within the Borough or a neighbouring Borough or District, or further afield by prior agreement. |
| **Salary** | Graded **Professional** the salary will be in the region of **£34,245 - £41,925** per annum dependent upon experience. Cost of living awards are reviewed annually on 1April. Incremental progression and bonuses may be payable in line with the appraisal scheme. |
| **Duration of contract** | Permanent, Full Time |
| **Probationary period** | Upon joining the Council, all staff are required to satisfactorily complete a six month probationary period. |
| **Hours of work** | Hours of work are nominally 36 per week. |
| **Employment Benefits** | |
| **Flexible working hours** | Flexible working allows for the alteration of start/leave times and length of lunchtime break, time off in lieu for longer hours worked and a flexible working system.  Whilst staff are expected to manage their time and keep working hours within acceptable limits, flexible working arrangements are always subject to sufficient office cover and the particular needs of the service at that time. |
| **Annual leave** | The basic leave entitlement is 259.2 hours per annum pro rata (equivalent to 36 standard days), rising to 295.2 hours per annum (equivalent to 41 standard days) pro rata after five years continuous local government service, inclusive of Bank Holidays.  Annual leave must be taken on the Council’s discretionary day off around Christmas and New Year period. |
| **Pension** | You will be auto enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) to which the Council contributes 15% of your earnings each year.  You are able to transfer funds into the LGPS within the first twelve months of employment. However, you can also choose not to join the scheme and make your own arrangements. If you wish to opt out of the scheme you will not be able to do so until after your first day.  Your pension contribution rate will depend on your full time equivalent annual salary. The salary and rates are reviewed annually on 1 April each year. The current rates can be found on the Surrey Pension Fund website: <http://www.surreypensionfund.org/surrey-pension-fund/paying-in/membership-and-contributions/#contribution-rates> |
| **Training and development** | The Council actively encourages continued professional development and talent development.  Learning facilities are available in-house, including a dedicated Training Room for both individual and group learning. The Council also has access to a broad range of self-directed, online training opportunities. The Data & Insight team also maintains a separate training budget. |
| **Professional subscriptions** | If you are required to be a member of a professional organisation(s) for your role, we will pay the subscription fee(s) each year directly by invoice. |
| **Car parking / Travel loan scheme** | The Council offers interest free loans to encourage staff to travel by alternative methods to solo car use. Loans are available to purchase bicycles and accessories to the value of £1000, for quarterly/yearly rail season or bus tickets or a season car park pass. |
| **Cycle purchase scheme** | The Council offers staff who have passed the probation period and are employed for 18 months or more, the opportunity to lease/purchase bikes and related safety equipment up to £1000, reducing tax and National Insurance deductions. Staff are required to use the bike mainly for journeys between home and work. |
| **Employee discounts** | All staff have access to special offers and discounts on national and local high street shops, restaurants, motoring benefits, discount cinema and theatre tickets, holidays, insurance and much more.  Full annual discounted membership is available for the ‘Better’ run leisure centres at Tadworth, Donyngs and Horley. |

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| **Other Conditions** | |
| **Pre-employment checks** | Appointments are offered subject to several pre-employment checks to comply with the Home Office’s Baseline Personnel Security Standards (BPSS):   * at least two satisfactory references * eligibility to work within the UK, and proof of your identity * evidence of relevant qualifications |
| **Paid work with another employer** | If you are appointed, your contract with the Council should normally be classed as your main employment.  You will devote your whole-time service to our work and not be involved in any other business or take up any other appointment without getting written permission from your manager or the Chief Executive. |
| **Disclaimer** | Please note that this document outlines the likely employment package for this role but does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment if you are subsequently employed by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council. These will be outlined in any contractual documents addressed to you directly. |

**Great People at Reigate & Banstead**

Our great working environment and the values and behaviours of every

individual and team in the Council, help to evolve the culture of our organisation

to become more commercial, innovative and embracing of change.

Successful applicants to our career opportunities will be able to demonstrate they share

the values and behaviours we seek in our organisation.

**Our Vision**

Working together to make a great place to live, work and enjoy.

**Our Values**

Making a difference, doing the right thing, being bold and confident.

**Our Behaviours**

We should demonstrate our values by being positive, supportive, flexible, and innovative.

**Positive: I maintain a “can do” attitude and a smile**

Create an encouraging and optimistic environment and bring others with me

Approach others in a pleasant, happy and upbeat manner

Maintain enthusiasm in difficult times

Demonstrate commitment to my own service and to the Council

Demonstrate an "I care" attitude

**Supportive: I create an environment where the people I work with feel valued and respected and have confidence to develop**

Understand the council’s priorities and work towards a common goal

Work across boundaries to develop relationships, share information and keep others informed

Listen to the views of others allowing the best way forward to be found

Communicate in a courteous and respectful manner

Behave in ways that promote the fair and equal treatment of all

**Flexible: Adapting the way I work, I can deal confidently with change and accept new and different ideas and approaches**

Accept that change is an integral part of working at Reigate & Banstead

Demonstrate an open mind to new ideas and proposals

Display a willingness to do things differently

View change in working practices as an opportunity for improving and developing

Adopt a flexible approach to meet the team’s requirements

**Innovative: I work to develop new ideas and workable solutions to drive the Council forward**

Question currently accepted ways of doing things

Implement good ideas, learn from others, both internally and externally

Identify novel ways of resolving issues using own initiative

Suggest and trying out new approaches

Challenge the status quo in a constructive way