Northern Ireland Assembly

Head of IT

Job Specification

Job Title: Head of IT

Salary range: £76,946 - £79,269

Grade: Assembly Grade 3

Directorate: Parliamentary Services

Business Area: Information Systems Office

Accountable to: Director of Parliamentary Services

Accountable for: Information Systems Office / 2 direct reports

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Overview

As a key element of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, the Northern Ireland Assembly ('the Assembly') exercises executive and legislative authority on devolved matters. Comprising 90 Members, the Assembly has three main functions – making legislation, scrutinising the Executive and representing constituents.

The staff, services and facilities which are needed to support the work of the Assembly are provided by the Assembly Commission, a corporate body comprising the Speaker and five Members of the Assembly.

The Assembly operates in a dynamic and fast moving political, executive and legislative environment – the IS Office plays a critical role in ensuring that the services required by the Assembly and the Assembly Commission are modern, effective and leading edge.

Job Purpose

The Head of IT is a key senior position, with responsibility for providing strategic leadership on the effective, efficient and secure delivery and use of information technology to support the business of the Assembly and of the Assembly Commission.

As Head of IT you will be responsible for the delivery of a wide range of IT services to approximately 1,000 users. You will have the opportunity to shape and deliver modern technology solutions to support users through the provision of secure, resilient and fit for purpose technology. You will lead the IT function and will work with the Senior Management Team to align technology-related decisions with the Corporate Strategy, ensuring that systems are secure, stable and robust.

This is an exciting opportunity to join a leading and high profile organisation and apply your dynamic leadership skills and professional knowledge to a challenging and rewarding position.

We are seeking an experienced, highly motivated, impactful leader who will lead a customer-focussed function that will contribute positively to the delivery of high-quality services. You will need to have a well-developed knowledge of technology solutions, a strong customer ethos and a proven ability to work both at a strategic and operational level.

You will hold or have held significant, high-level accountability for mission critical IT systems in a large and complex organisation.

Job Description:

The main duties and responsibilities of the post are:
Strategic
- Developing the IT vision, strategy and accompanying action plan and delivering it through a robust programme and project management framework, in line with best practice, to support the continuing digital transformation of Assembly and Assembly Commission business.

- Identifying future challenges in the IT landscape and developing relevant mitigation strategies.
- Researching and evaluating existing and emerging technologies, products and services, particularly cloud computing, to identify potential areas of improvement and support new ways of working.
- Providing advice to the Director of Parliamentary Services, Senior Management Team and the Assembly Commission on IT-related matters.
- Representing the Assembly at external forums and events, building and maintaining effective and constructive external relationships.

Operational

- Managing a small and diverse team of IT staff.
- Directing and organising IT-related projects.
- Ensuring the availability of the network, services and data.
- Managing application (software) development and production of customised IT solutions including the Assembly Information Management System (AIMS) Programme.
- Managing day-to-day helpdesk and business relationship management activities.
- Overseeing IT budgeting and forecasting.
- Formulating implementing and reviewing IT-related aspects of business continuity and disaster recovery plans.
- Ensuring compliance with relevant delivery, security and risk management standards.
- Ensuring that the IT team have the knowledge, skills and experience to fulfil individual and organisational needs and ambitions.
- Managing and mitigating IT security and cyber risks and ensuring the Assembly Commission's data and systems remain secure by keeping up to date on the latest cyber security threats.
- Managing the procurement and implementation of new software and hardware, ensuring alignment with requirements while demonstrating value for money.
- Manage information and records in accordance with established policies and statutory requirements.

- Comply with all of the Assembly Commission's staff policies and procedures including Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work policies and procedures.

You may also be required to carry out other duties that the Assembly Commission reasonably requires of you.

The Person

You will have had high-level accountability for mission critical IT systems in a large and complex organisation and have demonstrable experience of delivering improvements in service, efficiency, and the security of mission-critical IT systems. An enthusing people leader, you will have the proven ability to inspire IT teams and to build a high-performance, service-focused culture. You should demonstrate clear experience in helping teams embrace contemporary IT industry disciplines and new ways of working.

Essential Criteria:

At the closing date for applications, applicants must have:

EITHER

1. At least a degree in a computing or information management related discipline. (Applications will be considered from applicants with formal qualifications of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated).

AND

Experience in each of the following areas:

a) At least **5 years'** experience as a senior leader* in IT service delivery or IT operations in a significant and complex organisation**.

b) Demonstrable experience of successfully delivering a significant customer centric IT project or programme*** within the last 3 years.

c) Demonstrable experience of successfully managing substantial**** IT operational contracts.

d) Demonstrable experience of developing, implementing and managing and frameworks for managing organisation-wide IT security and cyber risks.

OR

2. Experience in each of the following areas:

a) At least **8 years'** experience as a senior leader* in IT service delivery or IT operations in a significant and complex organisation**.

b) Demonstrable experience of successfully delivering a significant customer centric IT project or programme*** within the last 3 years.

c) Demonstrable experience of successfully managing substantial**** IT operational contracts.

d) Demonstrable experience of developing, implementing and managing frameworks for managing organisation-wide IT security and cyber risks.

The following clarification is provided:

* **Senior leader** means a level at which you were responsible for providing strategic advice or taking decisions on strategic issues concerning the organisation with which you worked either as a member of staff or advisor.

** **A significant and complex organisation** is defined as having in excess of 500 users and a range of diverse business functions.

*** **Significant IT project or programme** means a project or programme provided to at least 500 users.

**** **A substantial contract** means a contract that supports the delivery of an IT project or service with an overall value in excess of £0.5 million.

Shortlisting Criteria

Should shortlisting be required, the following shortlisting criteria will be applied: Experience of delivering IT projects that could be subject to high levels of external scrutiny (eg. press, audit, shareholders etc).

Skills & Behaviours

The following Assembly Skills and Behaviours will be assessed during the selection process:

Building relationships and effective communication
...is creating and maintaining positive, professional and respectful internal and external working relationships through effective and appropriate communications.

Delivering a quality service
...is about providing a high-quality and efficient service to our customers. It is thinking ahead, managing resources effectively and delivering work on time and to a high standard. It is also using professional or technical expertise to enhance service delivery.

Initiating improvement and delivering change
...is looking for and being open to new and innovative ideas and improvements to the service provided. It is being flexible and adapting positively and professionally to sustain performance when the situation changes, workloads increase or priorities change. It is about forming sound, evidence-based decisions and being accountable for results.

Managing & Leading Self and Others
... is setting high standards for ourselves. It is about guiding, motivating and developing others to achieve high performance. It is about engaging others in delivering a corporate vision of excellence, expertise and innovation in support of the Assembly as a legislature.