

# KENT GRADUATE PROGRAMME

## YOUR APPLICATION PACK

TO AN  
EXCITING  
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Closing date: **31st January 2023**

Your **GET Portfolio Management  
Office Stream** application pack  
includes:

Introduction to  
Kent County Council

Job description

Recruitment selection criteria

Vacancy timetable

Working for Kent County Council



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January 2023



## APPLICANT INFORMATION PACK

Dear Candidate

### Application for the post of Portfolio Management Office Graduate

Thank you for your interest in this challenging but rewarding role. The successful candidate will be offered a position, ensuring the right skills, experience and knowledge mix exist in the team.

**IMPORTANT NOTE** to candidates **BEFORE** making an application:

- You must provide all relevant information in the online application itself; a CV is not required for this position and will not be reviewed as part of the selection process.
- You must list a full employment history and explain all gaps in employment.
- Please list your qualifications, listing the highest first: provide the level of qualification; name of subject; the grade and year of achievement. For example, BSc (Hons) Forensic Science (2:1); HND Bio-medical Science (distinction) (2017); GCSE (O-level) English Literature (C) (2017)
- When making your application, refer to the **person specification** contained in this application pack and use the 'reason for application' to demonstrate how your past experience, knowledge or skills and achievements will transfer to the position you are applying for (please provide examples). You may also want to use this section to describe why the role appeals to you and how this role fits with your long-term career aspirations. Your application form (and CV if you uploaded one) will be used by the Graduate Team to decide whether to shortlist you for the next stage of the selection process.

## First Sift Recruitment Exercise/Shortlisting

Following the closing date, applicants will be invited to participate in a first sift activity. Please make a note of the dates of the first sift recruitment activity in your diary.

Application forms and the first sift exercise will be reviewed by the graduate team and a scoring matrix will be used to identify those candidates that demonstrate through the online application form and first sift exercise how they meet the selection criteria for the role.

## The Interview

Candidates that are successful following the first sift recruitment exercise will be informed as soon as possible and invited for interview by telephone and in writing. Please make a diary note of the interview date(s).

The successful candidates will be advised in writing as soon as possible after the last interview. You may ask for feedback **after** the decision has been made.

# Introduction to Kent County Council

Visit our website at [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk)

We are the UK's largest local authority, with a workforce in excess of 30,000 people, including maintained schools, serving a population of 1.6 million. We have various offices in central locations and a large number of service establishments throughout Kent; our corporate office is based in Maidstone.

More than two thirds of our workforce provide services directly to the public – such as domiciliary Care Workers, Classroom Assistants, Social Workers, Teachers, and Occupational Therapists etc.

Our annual budget covers a huge range of services. This translates into a host of interesting roles and career paths awaiting those who want to work in a leading- edge public sector organisation.

## Aims and Objectives

Our focus is to work as one council to design and deliver a cohesive, modern public service offer for all Kent's residents, businesses and communities. This will bring together change projects consistently across the council and create organisational design opportunities to transform the way we work, including our people, assets, technology, structures and service delivery.

Success in delivering this aspiration will be determined using the following criteria:

- Working beyond the limit of organisational and service boundaries
- Thinking beyond the limit of our statutory powers
- Building capacity to provide sector and system leadership
- Delivering at both strategic and local scale
- Supporting economic security
- Delivering a cohesive service offer
- Flexibly uses its assets as part of public service design and delivery

[Framing Kent's Future](#) is our top-level council strategy for 2022 to 2026. It sets out the priorities that we will focus on over the next four years to tackle the challenges and make the most of the opportunities that the county is facing. Through delivering these priorities, our aim is to improve life in Kent and build a solid foundation for the county's future success.

# Political Arrangements

The County Council has 81 councillors and elections take place every four years.

The political composition of the County Council is as follows:

Conservative	62 members
Labour (including Labour and Co-operative party)	7 members
Liberal Democrat	6 members
Green Party	4 Members
Independent Groups	2 members

The Leader of Kent County Council is Roger Gough.

There is a Cabinet of Executive Members which meets regularly to debate policy issues and make key decisions. The cabinet comprises of:

Roger Gough	Leader of Kent County Council
Peter Oakford	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services
Clair Bell	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
Susan Carey	Cabinet Member for Environment
Sue Chandler	Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services
Mike Hill OBE	Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services
Rory Love	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
David Brazier	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Shellina Prendergast	Cabinet Member for Communications, Engagement, People and Partnerships
Derek Murphy	Cabinet Member for Economic Development

# Structure of KCC

The structure of the organisation is as shown [here](#)

The Senior Officer team consists of six Corporate Directors. For more information on the Corporate Management Team please follow this [link](#)

The directorates are as follows:

## **Growth, Environment and Transport**

The Directorate comprises a range of key frontline, strategic, policy and commercial functions, and plays a major role in making Kent a better place to live, work and visit. The services provided, and the future the directorate helps to shape, affects every household in Kent. This includes strategic responsibility for the future of the county in terms of planning, economic development, transport policy, and major transport improvement schemes, waste disposal and recycling services. In addition, GET manages country parks; libraries; and delivers enforcement services including trading standards, community safety and emergency planning.

Responsible for services that include:

Highways, Transportation & Waste, Regulatory Services, Economic Development, Community Safety & Emergency Planning, Libraries, Registration & Archives, Sport & Country Parks, Arts including Kent Film Office, Development Planning, Planning Applications, North Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Flood Risk & Environment, Sustainability & Climate Change and Heritage Conservation

## **Adult Social Care and Health**

The Directorate commissions and provides a range of services to improve outcomes for older and vulnerable adults, including those with mental health issues or disabilities, and their families. The Directorate supports vulnerable adults to live independently by promoting their wellbeing and supporting their independence. Services for adult mental health and learning disability already work in integrated teams with NHS colleagues and as a key partner in the Kent and Medway STP we are developing multi-disciplinary teams within communities to support local care.

Responsible for services that include:

Adults Central Referral Unit, Adult Community Teams, Safeguarding and quality, Kent Enablement at Home, Sensory and Autistic Spectrum Conditions Service, Integrated/Registered Care Centres, Day Centres, Community Learning Disability Teams, In-House Provision and

Mental Health Services.

## **Children, Young People and Education**

This Directorate combines and integrates the statutory responsibilities of Specialist Children's Services together with Education services and the targeted and universal services for children and young people within Early Help and Preventative Services. There is a strong focus on alignment of resources to help ensure achievement of one of the key County Council strategic outcomes: 'Every child and young person in Kent gets the best start in life'. To improve outcomes for children and young people, services within the Directorate are working together with relevant partners to deliver the vision set out in the Children and Young People's Services Integration Programme.

### Responsible for services that include:

Children's Social Care, Adoption & Fostering, Standards & School Improvement, Skills & Employability, Early Years and Childcare, Provision Planning, Fair Access, Educational Psychology, SEN Assessment & Placement, Youth Justice, Outdoor Education Centres, Children's Centres and Youth Hubs, Inclusion & Attendance, Early Intervention and Community Learning & Skills and Disabled Children and Young People Teams.

## **Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department**

### **Chief Executive's Department (David Cockburn, Chief Executive Officer for KCC)**

#### Responsible for services that include:

- Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance
- Finance
- Governance and Law
- Strategic Commissioning

### **Deputy Chief Executive's Department (Amanda Beer, Deputy Chief Executive)**

#### Responsible for services that include:

- Infrastructure
- Technology
- HR/OD
- Marketing and Resident Experience
- Health and Safety
- Business and Client Relationships
- Strategic Reset Programme



# Job Description


<b>Job Title:</b>	Graduate PMO Project Officer
<b>Division:</b>	GET Portfolio Team, Corporate Director's Office
<b>Directorate:</b>	Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)
<b>Grade:</b>	KR8
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Head of Portfolio Management

## **Purpose of the Job:**

Support, monitor and review activity relating to specific projects within the GET Directorate, including the development of change and improvement initiatives, process and governance, information reporting and stakeholder management. Provide advice and support to project/programme teams across the Directorate in order to ensure effective project implementation is being monitored and reported on in accordance with governance expectations.

## **Main duties and responsibilities:**

1. Support a range of projects/programmes across the Directorate at all stages of the lifecycle, including pre-assessment, initiation, planning, management of project dependencies, development of sustainability plan, assisting in the project closure and lessons learned report.
2. Monitor and evaluate the progress of the project, identifying any scope for improvement to current projects or any problems or constraints as determined by legislation, national and local policy and initiatives, in order to develop project proposals and business cases which support agreed and changing objectives.
3. Maintain regular and effective communication with stakeholders, to support effective working relationships and ensure informed decision-making takes place.
4. Develop specialist knowledge of change and improvement as well as project management approaches and techniques to enable informed decision-making throughout the various stages of the project and to ensure effective briefing to all stakeholders.
5. Promote PMO activity within GET and KCC to ensure full user and stakeholder participation in the development of appropriate initiatives.

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6. Gather, collate, maintain and analyse monitoring and performance information for all stages of the projects/programmes, to ensure that all relevant standards are met.
  7. Contribute to and support working groups - such as the Directorate Technology Board, SRP Board - as required by the Head of Portfolio Management.
  8. Research PMO best practice and industry developments, and engage with other teams, to encourage shared learning and development.

Footnote: This job description is provided to assist the job holder to know what their main duties are. It may be amended from time to time without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grade of post.

# Person Specification: Graduate PMO Project Officer

The following outlines the criteria for this post. Applicants who have a disability and who meet the criteria will be shortlisted. Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

**As part of this Graduate Programme there is a requirement to undertake an Improvement Practitioner Level 4 Apprenticeship therefore we are unable to accept applications from those with an equivalent/higher level qualification in this area.**

	Criteria
<b>QUALIFICATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 2:1 degree or equivalent qualification in any discipline</li><li>▪ GCSE Grade A-C or above in English Language or equivalent (Level 2 qualification).</li><li>▪ GCSE Grade A-C or above in Mathematics or equivalent (Level 2 qualification)</li></ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Direct experience of work involving analysis or review in a range of settings</li><li>▪ Previous experience of presenting reports and participating in meetings</li></ul>
<b>SKILLS / ABILITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Excellent communication skills (both verbal and written) to communicate with people at all levels</li><li>▪ Excellent presentation and negotiation skills</li><li>▪ Ability to think creatively and strategically</li><li>▪ Ability to build relationships across organisational and professional boundaries, and to work collaboratively</li><li>▪ Ability to analyse and interpret complex data</li><li>▪ High level of political and organisational skills – tact and diplomacy</li><li>▪ Ability to challenge accepted ways of working</li><li>▪ Excellent organisational and co-ordination skills</li><li>▪ Ability to meet strict deadlines and targets</li><li>▪ Ability to effectively plan and implement projects</li></ul>

<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some knowledge of project management theory and practice is desirable</li> <li>Good general knowledge across a broad range of the Council's services, and knowledge of the services provided by the GET Directorate</li> <li>KCC's strategic statement, 'Framing Kent's Future'</li> </ul>
<b>KENT VALUES</b>	<p><b>Kent Values:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are <b>brave</b>. We do the right thing; we accept and offer challenge.</li> <li>We are <b>curious</b> to innovate and improve.</li> <li>We are <b>compassionate</b>, understanding and respectful to all</li> <li>We are <b>strong together</b> by sharing knowledge.</li> <li>We are all <b>responsible</b> for the difference we make.</li> </ul> <p>Our values enable us to build a culture that is:</p> <p><b>Flexible/agile</b> - willing to take (calculated) risks and want people that are flexible and agile.</p> <p><b>Curious</b> - constantly learning and evolving.</p> <p><b>Compassionate and Inclusive</b> - compassionate, understanding and respectful to all</p> <p><b>Working Together</b> - building and delivering for the best interests of Kent</p> <p><b>Empowering</b> - Our people take accountability for their decisions and actions</p> <p><b>Externally Focused</b> - Residents, families and communities at the heart of decision making.</p> <p>If this document is being used for recruitment purposes, examples of Behaviours which support the Kent Values will need to be demonstrated within the context of this post)</p>

# The Portfolio Management Office Graduate Programme – An Overview

## What's Involved

The GET Portfolio Management stream offers an exciting opportunity to start your PMO career in the Public Sector. It is ideal for a graduate who is up for the challenge of supporting services to deliver successful projects and programmes across the directorate. The GET Portfolio Management Office (PMO) is responsible for providing expert support and advice across Growth, Environment and Transport's three divisions – Environment & Waste, Growth & Communities and Highways & Transport. Combined with ongoing progress monitoring the team assists projects in reaching successful outcomes and maximising benefits. The PMO also maintains a regular brief for senior managers across a defined portfolio of significant projects and programmes to support cross-directorate collaboration and decision-making.

You will work as part of a team that supports a wide range of exciting and significant projects that are crucial to the strategic aims of the council. You will learn about the diverse services that the council delivers and work regularly with a wide range of colleagues who are responsible for key service delivery areas.

This role will have a particular interest in change and improvement, and the approaches and techniques which will support service development. You will also learn about core methodologies in project and programme management, as well as the various functions delivered by PMOs. KCC is a member of the Association of Project Management (APM) and you will have the opportunity to gain a formal APM qualification. You will also benefit from an established community of practice across KCC to support you in learning about the full project lifecycle, including elements such as:

- Concept
- Business cases
- Risk management
- Information reporting
- Closure/lessons learned
- Stakeholder engagement
- Governance
- Dependency management

This stream is ideal for a graduate with an interest in PMOs, business strategy, change and improvement, project and programme management, risk management or quality assurance.

## **Length of stream**

2 years

## **Salary**

You will receive a starting salary of £26,598 which will increase as you progress

## **Location**

We are currently operating hybrid working giving the flexibility for individuals to work from home or in one of our reconfigured office buildings. We will support you to work in a hybrid way, with the necessary induction, management and equipment.

You will be expected to work in our Maidstone office at least one day a week in order to build strong relationships within the PMO team and take advantage of collaborative learning and working.

## **Training and Development**

The job provides you with invaluable on-the-job experience of working within the public sector and offers extensive training and development opportunities you won't find elsewhere.

While on the programme, you will be provided with the right support to help you achieve the Improvement Practitioner (Level 4) apprenticeship

We will commit to your professional development and will support you in your training as you develop your skills and knowledge.

## **Entry Requirements**

- a 2:1 degree or equivalent in any discipline
- a GCSE in mathematics - grade A to C or equivalent (new grades 4-9)
- a GCSE in English language - grade A to C or equivalent (new grades 4-9)

All overseas applicants must have the UK equivalent. See our [equivalency table](#) to check if you meet our academic requirements.

# Working for Kent County Council

## **Salary and Notice**

This post is offered as a permanent contract.

The appointment will be subject to 1 months' notice.

KCC pays salaries to bank accounts on the 25th of the month unless this falls on a weekend or public holiday.

## **Terms and Conditions**

The appointment is subject to the terms and conditions contained within the Kent Scheme of Conditions of Service.

27 days annual leave is provided excluding Bank Holidays. You will also receive paid time off for public holidays plus a concessionary day at Christmas.

## **Pensions**

The post holder will have the choice of contributing to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Further details will be available for the successful applicant.

## **Whole Time Employment**

The person appointed will be required to devote their whole-time service to the work of Kent County Council and should not engage in any other business without the express consent of the County Council.

## **Health and Safety Policy**

The County Council recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer, and will take positive action to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees and other persons who may be affected by its operations, by providing safe working conditions and a healthy and safe working environment.

## **Sickness Provision**

Our sickness benefit scheme exceeds statutory requirements. Actual paid absence depends on how long you have worked for KCC and the circumstances of your absence. For example, after 6 years' service your benefit would be 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay.

## **Training and Development**

KCC is committed to supporting staff to reach their full potential through annual appraisal and personal development plans, enhanced by a range of career development opportunities.

Managers from KR9 to KR20 will be required to undertake our Kent Manager standard programme within the first year of employment.

## **Green Travel**

Our Green Travel Plan is exploring alternative modes of transport to improve travel choice and reduce congestion and pollution. This includes:

- Car sharing and emergency taxi home.
- Discounted fares, free tickets, trip planning and improved travel information.
- Pool car and bikes

## **Other benefits**

KCC offers a range of family friendly policies including:

- A generous maternity scheme
- Emergency leave
- Parental leave
- Special leave
- Help Fund – all employees have the opportunity both to pay into the fund and to apply for help from it when experiencing financial hardship
- An in-house confidential counselling service and Occupational Health Service
- Kent Rewards - discounts at over 1,200 retailers ranging from reduced rates at Health Clubs to house and car insurance to holidays

## **Living in Kent**

With great schools, vibrant cities, golden beaches and stunning countryside Kent has lots to offer you. Find out more about [locations in Kent](#).



# Vacancy Timetable

**Closing Date for Receipt of Applications:** This post will close at midnight on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023.

**Candidates will be invited to complete a first sift activity:** 1<sup>st</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

**Final Stage Interviews:** Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend interview on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

**Start Date:** Successful applicants will join KCC on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

## How to Respond

To apply please visit [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk) to complete an online application form.