



Susan Priest Head of Paid Service Sandgate, Kent, United Kingdom · 146 connections

Shepway District Council University of Cambridge

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Activity

- We are really proud to announce our dog team are in charge of the overnight security of The Knife Angel monument while it is in situ at Rochester...
Medway City of Culture 2025- Was so proud to be at the parliamentary launch of Medway's City of Culture bid yesterday. Amazing support and positivity...
A little fluffy perhaps but it ticks my box. Happy Friday

Join now to see all activity

Experience

Head of Paid Service Shepway District Council Apr 2018 - Present · 1 year 8 months

To discharge the responsibilities of the Head of Paid Service in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 and the Council's Constitution.

Provide strategic and corporate leadership and direction to Officers of the Council so as to deliver the vision, values and objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan.

Determine and establish the organisational structure, managing and providing strategic direction across the Council.

Act as principal policy advisor to Members in order to enable them to make informed choices and decisions.

Ensure that strategies, policies and systems are in place to communicate with and consult about the activities and priorities of the council externally.

Ensure the effective governance of the Council and the legality, probity, integrity, proper public accountability and scrutiny of its decision-making processes.

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Director South East Local Enterprise Partnership Apr 2012 - Sep 2013 · 1 year 6 months

Director of the largest non-metropolitan LEP with a population of 3.7m and 156,000 businesses contributing £63bn pa GVA, managing a public private sector Board of 44 representing 6 strategic authorities, 32 local authorities and 8 F/HEIs.

Significant business and political acumen and technical judgement in setting strategy and policy, analysing information, securing funding opportunities, and influencing at national, regional and local levels while delivering interventions in support of strategic and local growth plans.

Accelerating proposals and preparing projects for investment decisions, e.g. £49m of Growing Places Funding allocated and a further £41m identified as pipeline during 2012/13 delivering up to 20,630 new jobs and 25,000 new homes; City Deals; use of innovative funding mechanisms.

Support the business Chairman, 3 business Vice Chairman and private sector workstream leads and members of the Board - offering professional input, advice and guidance on key issues and decisions to be made.

Deep reach and engagement of businesses to secure a mandate, and communicating on key issues to enhance their competitiveness, acting as an ambassador for growth.

Active member of national working groups providing advice on major £multi-billion infrastructure developments: e.g. Lower Thames Crossing; Single Local Growth Fund Stakeholder Group.

Regular liaison with Ministers, senior Civil Servants, Leaders, Chief Executives and Managing Directors of public and private organisations to unblock barriers to growth.

Liaison with Government departments over the devolution of funding while preparing robust transparent proposals for its management, prioritisation and investment.

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SEEDA 12 years 2 months

Executive Director Nov 2009 - Mar 2012 · 2 years 5 months

Directed the restructuring and then full closure of SEEDA's multi-million pound business development unit (£70m), acting as Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for Finance, Risk & Assurance.

In 2011/12 through closure of 32 programmes, delivered £7.5m of in-year financial savings / clawback while delivering 214 new jobs, 1,260 new businesses, assisting 5,041 businesses, supporting 56 knowledge base collaborations, securing £15.5m public and private sector leverage, and delivering 5,765 skills development opportunities.

In 2010/11 oversaw delivery of complex contracts to deliver over 800 new jobs, 24,600 business improvement interventions, over 400 new business collaborations with the knowledge base, and over 10,000 skills development opportunities.

Successful application, management and delivery of European Union grant support programmes (€32m in 2010/11) in complex public and private sector partnerships.

Commercial acumen - Avoided costly legal action by successfully concluding mediation with a commercial organisation, saving the public purse over £500k; and complex contract re-negotiation with one of the UK's largest private sector outsourcing suppliers by 68% from £82m over three years down to £26m over two years.

Board responsibility for a range of specialist delivery vehicles: (1) developed and transitioned a £35m regional venture capital firm and grant provider 'Finance South East' to become a self-sustaining Community Interest Company; (2) guided Tourism South East, the region's tourism marketing company, to maximise its role in delivering business member services to become a self-sustaining commercial entity.

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Change Programme Director Jan 2009 - Nov 2009 · 11 months

Led a successful transformational change programme resulting in over 20% cost savings and a payback period of 1.5 years; a more agile focused workforce (from 450 down to 265); and a more effective delivery organisation involving, inter-alia, manpower planning, budgeting, stakeholder relations, strategic account management, and communications programming.

Focused the Agency in supporting high growth businesses opportunities in key sectors and creating a new approach to inward investment closely linked to the South East's core asset base, its international competencies, and intellectual strengths in research and development.

Ensured stakeholders were informed of the strategic rationale and delivery objectives of the change programme.

Managed a sub-group of SEEDA's Board to act as champions of our change programme.

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Area Director, Kent & Medway Feb 2003 - Dec 2008 · 5 years 11 months

Led multi-million pound area-based regeneration plans in the Thames Gateway (North Kent) and in East Kent (covering Margate, Canterbury & Folkestone) addressing urban extensions, town centre renewal, education-led, arts and culture-led growth plans and worked in multi-disciplinary teams to deliver against growth policy objectives.

Influenced and negotiated at senior levels within local government, with local politicians, with national partners, and businesses to deliver business support, address housing needs, transport and infrastructure requirements, skills development, community facilities, public realm and employment opportunities.

Board member of special purpose regeneration vehicle (EKSDC) to forward-fund the provision of infrastructure; Trustee of Roger de Haan's Creative Foundation; Governor of South Kent College.

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Deputy Director, Business & International Feb 2002 - Feb 2003 · 1 year 1 month

Led business development activities - enterprise development, innovation capacity, commercialisation and internationalisation.

Oversaw divisional budgets and performance data for the service area, prepared Board reports, responsible for corporate planning activities.

Designed a new International Trade Sector Advisory programme to deliver against policy objectives of enhancing trade and exporting, now currently funded and run by UKTI.

Led a change programme - Designed and implemented a new matrix structure bringing place-based and thematic teams together into multi-disciplinary teams.

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Head of Business Support Feb 2000 - Feb 2002 · 2 years 1 month

Within a national framework, developed and implemented the region's strategies, policies and plans in support of SMEs growth and development, encompassing such issues as innovation, technology transfer, export and international affairs and business financing.

Business Development Executive British Chambers of Commerce Jul 1998 - Feb 2000 · 1 year 8 months

Re-designed the management and monitoring systems across the national British Chamber of Commerce network which represented over 100,000 business members and 60 Chambers of Commerce across the UK.

Designed a new national benchmarking system and developed new accreditation standards and implemented these across the national UK network.

Proactively developed relationships and liaised with business members to ensure they were aware of and received maximum impact from the range of commercial services and support offered by BCC.

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Education

University of Cambridge Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) · Economic Geography 1995 - 1998

Activities and Societies: Horse riding; walking ESRC and BCC sponsored PhD at St Catherine's College.

University of Greenwich Bachelor of Arts (BA) · Business Studies · First Class Hons 1992 - 1995

Activities and Societies: Horse Riding

Volunteer Experience

Organiser Medway Rugby Club - Mini Section Sep 2012 - May 2015 · 2 years 9 months

Organising the annual rugby weekend for up to 75 families and 300 tourists.

Publications

Priest, S.J. (1998) Business Links: A Method for Examining Customer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction & Complaining Behaviour. Journal of Customer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction & Complaining Behaviour

Priest, S.J. (1999) Business Link SME Services: Targeting, Innovation & Charging. Government & Policy, Issue 8, 1999 (UK).

Courses

Post Graduate Certificate in Finance, London School of Business & Finance (2011).

Languages

English

Groups

From RDA to LEP

Local Enterprise Partnerships

Business Retention & Expansion International

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