

London Borough of Southwark

Job Description

Job Title	Head of External Affairs
Grade	Grade 16
Business Unit or Division	External Affairs (within Strategy & Economy)
Department	Chief Executive's Department

Purpose

- 1.1 The Head of External Affairs will manage and enhance the standing of the London Borough of Southwark through the development of external and internal communications, public affairs and policy projects and initiatives. To ensure that Southwark's residents, councillors, partners and staff are able to fully understand and engage with the Council's agenda. Leadership of an effective business support service for the Leader and Cabinet to assist them to undertake their responsibilities in corporate political leadership. Act as professional lead for the service, ensuring that staff provide a high quality and effective service.

Principal accountabilities

Professional Accountabilities

- 1.2 Lead the Council's internal and external communications strategy and support including business continuity planning and crisis management, campaign management involving all aspects of PR, media/press relations, brand identity, digital presence, reputation and relationship management and employee and community engagement.
- 1.3 Develop and lead a communications strategy which supports the Council's objectives and outcomes whilst safeguarding and enhancing its reputation.
- 1.4 Provide effective business support service to the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet members, ensuring they are able to effectively undertake their portfolios
- 1.5 In association with the Leader, Cabinet, Chief Executive, Chief Officers, and Directors develop the Core corporate strategy framework that will drive the Council's objectives and targets and development of the Borough Plan.
- 1.6 To plan and manage Southwark's media liaison team to deliver a 24/7, 365 day media operation ensuring all press/media enquiries are dealt with in an appropriate manner and a constructive dialogue with media

providers is maintained to enhance Southwark's presence in media output.

- 1.7 Work closely and support the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council with communications and public affairs such as stakeholder, community, and employee engagement, influencing key relationships, promoting, and managing reputation, and managing media communications and relationships
- 1.8 Be credible and build relationships at all levels to effect and ensure a professional and consistent approach to London Borough of Southwark's communications and external affairs strategy
- 1.9 Give strategic guidance and provide sound judgement and advice to Directors, Officers and Members on communications and public affairs to ensure that alignment, brand, image and reputation are an integral part of decision making.
- 1.10 Develop a strategic approach to communications and public affairs, evolving and refreshing a compelling brand strategy that is effective and easily recognisable
- 1.11 Lead and build effective media networks and relationships to promote the Council's work. Work closely with external networks to promote the Council's interests to influence and support the collaboration agenda, whilst maintaining strong partnerships across the public sector system and in the local community
- 1.12 Plan and deliver a continuous review and evaluation of activities including external benchmarking, customer satisfaction and performance standards to ensure professional delivery of the service
- 1.13 Within in a politically led complex organisation work effectively and collaboratively across a diverse workforce to achieve constructive and positive outcomes.

Managerial Accountabilities

- 1.14 Manage and lead staff resources to optimise service delivery.
- 1.15 Responsible for implementing the formal performance and development framework, while informally coaching others throughout the organisation in area of personal expertise. Ensures that the team is focused, motivated and inspired to achieve objectives and create a positive team culture, ensuring others follow the expected ways of working.
- 1.16 Undertake an active role in the department's senior management arrangements, developing and contributing to plans to deliver the Councils objectives. Focus upon the long-term strategic management and contributes to the wider longer-term business strategy; using knowledge of the competitive

environment to inform strategic direction and drive performance improvements.

- 1.17 Be an advocate and promoter of equality of opportunity throughout the communications function's delivery and employment
- 1.18 Develop and deliver the financial management and control systems. Manage service budgets and audit processes so that they align with organisational strategy.

Job Context:

3.1 Organisational Objectives

This role (on behalf of the Chief Executive) will often lead (on behalf of the Council) working closely and collaboratively with other departments within the Council to achieve positive outcomes for the community. The role will also on behalf of the Council work extensively with external partners on strategic developments.

Southwark employs around 5,000 staff, with a Corporate Management Team (of Strategic Directors) led by the Chief Executive.

This role works in a cross cutting and collegiate way across portfolios and departments to be more than the sum of our parts and to deliver more with less. Closer collaboration has been effective in delivering the Council's vision of a fairer future for all in Southwark.

This role will on behalf of the Council will lead by thinking and acting strategically in the development and practical delivery of creative solutions for positioning the work of the Council in the public space in a manner that creates a positive perspective of the organisation delivering for Southwark.

In achievement the Councils objectives in terms of wider delivery against the 'Fairer Future' promises and principles; this role will be required to challenge internal perceptions, views and attitudes at all levels within the Council to ensure development of a clear and consistent public message on the Council its role within its own community, and Southwark's wider role in terms of the challenges for the London and national local government community.

The Council is committed to maintaining Investors in People accreditation. All senior managers are responsible for managing "People and Performance Management" responsibilities within their areas

3.2 Structural Arrangements

The post holder formally reports to the Director of Strategy and Economy.

Directly responsible for a staff group and is accountable for implementation and execution of policy, procedures and processes. The staff groups and numbers will vary but will generally comprise professional, technical and operational support staff. The role leads and shapes the workforce to achieve organisational objectives, building a high performing team that is focused, motivated and inspired to achieve objectives.

As Head External Affairs there is an expectation that the post holder may be required to take responsibility for additional staff groups / units without this impacting upon the overall context of the role or its grade.

3.3 Financial Responsibilities

Responsible for controlling budgets including costing, analysis and financial controls. Calculates return on investment; for example, analysing costs and benefits to inform decisions.

3.4 Contacts

The role will have regular contact with the Leader, Cabinet, leading Council Members, Chief Executive, Chief Officers and other senior managers across the Council providing high quality professional advice and ensuring quality administrative support. The role will use expertise which exists across the council and beyond to help shape local policy responses to challenges faced in Southwark in a way that will have greatest impact for residents. The individual will work with local, regional and national media, using radio, television, online and print to promote the work of the council and to manage its reputation. The role will also research, plan and deliver effective marketing to promote the council's work and deliver change in our local community.

Grade/Conditions of Service

This post has been evaluated at grade 16

Governed by JNC for Chief Officers of Local Authorities (as amended by Southwark).

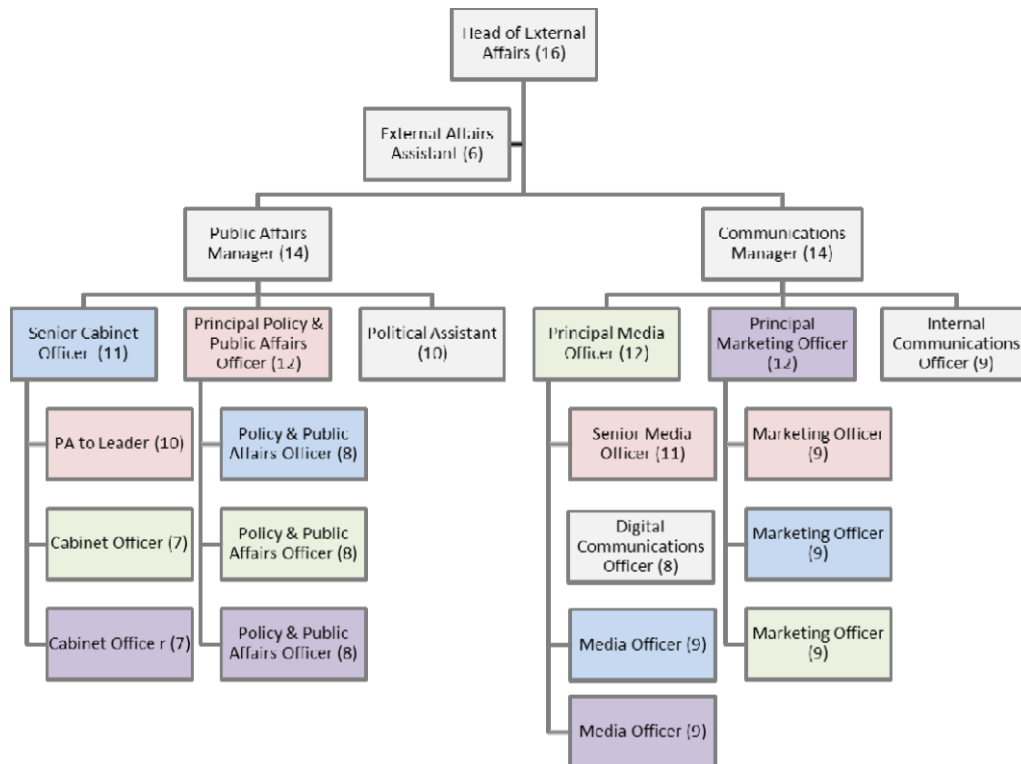
Contractual hours - minimum of 36 hours per week.

The post holder may be expected, on a regular basis, to work outside normal office hours, including attendance at evening meetings.

The post is considered politically restricted under the terms of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended) as a 'specified role'.

Structure Charts

External Affairs Division



Person Specification

Education

The post holder should be qualified to degree level or equivalent, this may include consideration of relevant work experience	S
Hold a relevant professional qualification and/or membership of a relevant professional body	S
Demonstrate evidence of continued professional, managerial and personal development, within the relevant discipline.	E/S/I

Knowledge

Extensive, comprehensive knowledge and understanding of functional management and best practice relating to its application in a large diverse organisation.	E/S/I
An in-depth understanding of management concepts, practices and principles gained through experience of managing at a senior level, including knowledge of change management.	E/S/I
Be able to demonstrate proven experience of managing a successful communications, external affairs and policy support service ideally within a complex politically led organisation or another complex organisation	E/S/I
An in-depth and practical understanding of existing and pending legislation, issues and financial challenges facing local government and specifically issues relating to the service area.	E/S/I
An understanding of the relevant constraints, risks and trends affecting the service and an awareness of how they affect the development and delivery of programmes.	E/S/I
A knowledge of equalities and diversity policies and how these influence service direction.	E/S/I
In-depth knowledge of the principles and implications of the modernisation agenda for local government.	E/S/I
Knowledge of the relationship between performance management and continuous improvement.	E/S/I

Experience

Experience in a relevant professional/management capacity within a large organisation, with experience of managing a significant portfolio; management and development of staff and responsibility of the management of substantial resources including budgets. E/S/I

Demonstrate a track record of practical and successful experience of engagement with a wide range of external bodies including local and national media, Central Government departments and agencies, and other relevant regional and national organisations E/S/I

A proven track record of influencing strategic decision-makers. E/S/I

Practical experience of commissioning and contract management for the provision of professional creative services (copywriting, editorial, on-line and print design etc) E/S/I

Experience of strategic planning and decision making at a local and regional level. E/S/I

Experience of effective organisational 'brand' market place positioning and promotion. E/S/I

Experience of implementing large, complex modernisation programmes. E/S/I

Experience of effective practical use of new and emerging digital communication channels for presentation of organisation and engagement within the public space with various key groups. E/S/I

Experience of consultation with a diverse local community, analysing their views and needs to achieve an accepted positive outcome. E/S/I

Experience of dealing with a wide range of stake holders, influencing and negotiating to achieve common objectives. E/S/I

Experience of developing and implementing strategies and policies. E/S/I

Experience of successful project management of complex initiatives in a political environment E/S/I

Managing resources to achieve demanding targets

E/S/I

Aptitudes, Skills & Competencies:

Exceptional verbal and non-verbal communication skills with the ability to communicate with and influence a wide range of stake holders at all levels both internally and externally.

Highly developed analytical and interpretation skills enabling judgements on a range of frequently highly complex and often conflicting facts and circumstances

Strategic thinker, able to develop strategy and initiate and evaluate changes in policy and procedures. Exceptional skills involving the development of long term strategic plans which take into account the overall aims and objectives of the service and which may impact across the whole Council

Proven leadership skills - ability to lead and motivate groups and individuals, allocating and delegating work effectively with a high level of interpersonal skills, able to persuade, negotiate and influence.

Skilled in financial management and management of people. Proven ability to manage significant corporate and departmental budgets.

Work in a flexible, adaptable manner and to act with discretion and tact at all levels of contact

KEY:

E Essential

S Shortlisting criteria

I Evaluated at interview

T Subject to test