

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
INNOVATION AND CHANGE DIRECTORATE
JOB DESCRIPTION

Post title: Head of Communications and Engagement

Grade: MG2

Division/section: Communications and Engagement

Location: Civic Centre

Responsible to: Executive Director, Innovation and Change

Responsible for: Communications team, Engagement team, internal communications team

Post number:

Date: January 2024

1. MAIN PURPOSE

- To provide a comprehensive and strategic Communications and Engagement service for the London Borough of Merton including; communications strategy, campaigns, media relations, consultation and engagement, brand management and design, digital communications, public affairs, and internal communications. To provide high quality professional communications advice to the leadership of the organisation. To ensure that all Merton's residents, businesses, and staff have access to high quality information about the services and priorities of the Council, and opportunities to engage and share their views and ideas.
- To be the Head of Profession for Communications within the Council and provide Council wide leadership on effective communication.

2. MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To be responsible for the development and delivery of the Council's Communications and Engagement strategy
- To be responsible for the management of the reputation of the Council, and the borough, with residents, businesses, partners, media, and other stakeholders.
- To act as a senior adviser to the Leader and the Chief Executive on issues of communications and reputation.
- To effectively manage the visual brand of the organisation and all branded collateral, ensuring high design standards and accessibility.
- To drive the development and delivery of creative campaigns to support the Council's priorities, drive resident behaviour change, generate income, and support service priorities.
- To shape the brand of the borough and effectively promote the London Borough of Merton as a destination for inward investment, visitors, and development.
- To ensure that all the Council's consultations are high quality, legally sound, and provide opportunities for all residents and/or businesses to participate.
- To lead the delivery of an inclusive engagement service that reaches out to all residents and puts the resident voice at the heart of what we do, as well as leading a Council wide engagement network to bring together engagement professionals across the organisation and beyond.
- To ensure that the Council has high-quality communications and community engagement support in the event of an emergency.
- To represent Merton in London wide and national local government communications bodies.
- To promote equalities, diversity, and inclusion, through inclusive communications and engagement practice and inclusive leadership.
- To manage the Council's communications and engagement budget of £1.3 million, including staffing

3. HEAD OF SERVICE – KEY ACCOUNTABILITES

- Role model the values and behaviours of the organisation and be an ambassador for and represent the Council at all times: [Work for Merton \[DRAFT\] : Values | Merton Council](#)
- Ensure services have operational plans in place to deliver the Council Plan on time and to budget.
- Work collaboratively across all service areas with other senior managers (including partner organisations) to deliver services and generate efficiencies.
- Ensure the service areas you manage are fully compliant with all existing or new legislation and other statutory requirements.
- Ensure effective performance management is in place, and that any remedial action is taken promptly.
- Manage your teams effectively, ensuring individuals are well-supported, diversity is encouraged and performance is monitored.
- Ensure at all times that a corporate view is adopted and that complaints (both internal and external) are dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Be responsible for equality in service delivery and employment, and work within relevant legislation carrying out Equality Impact Assessments where necessary.
- Ensure that strategic and operational risks are considered and that appropriate actions and reporting are put into place to manage these.
- Attend emergency planning training, be familiar with the London Borough of Merton Emergency Plan and your role during an incident. This may involve receiving notification out of hours and to respond positively to these calls.
- Required to take part in the emergency rota and participate in elections.
- Deputise for the Executive Director and represent the Directorate as required on corporate and external activities and groups.

4. PERSON SPECIFICATION

Experience, skills and technical requirements

- Substantial experience of working in a communications leadership role in a large organisation
- Substantial experience of working with and providing communications advice to senior leaders, including elected Members
- Understanding of and commitment to local government and to the values of public service
- Excellent communication skills, including writing skills
- Understanding of brand and design and its role in strategic communications
- Demonstrable experience of leading major campaigns and behaviour change communications in a public sector or not for profit environment
- Demonstrable experience of developing communications responses to high profile, politically sensitive, or controversial issues
- Experience of leading communications in an emergency or crisis situation
- Experience of managing and leading teams, and an understanding of and commitment to inclusive leadership
- Understanding of and experience in managing news media
- Understanding of and experience in using digital communications tools
- Understanding of and commitment to high quality community engagement, using a variety of means to allow participation from a wide range of audiences.
- Demonstrable commitment to EDI, both in management, and in professional practice