

# Head of Communications – Media and Publications

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>POST TITLE:</b>	Head of Communications – Media and Publications
<b>GRADE:</b>	15
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Strategy and Communities
<b>REPORTS TO:</b>	Director, Communications, Engagement and Change

## PURPOSE OF THE JOB

- To work collaboratively with colleagues at every level of the council to develop the culture, behaviours and capabilities required to achieve the priorities and commitments in the council delivery plan.
- To strategically lead on all aspects of the council's media relationships, media risk management and core publications, managing complexity in stakeholder management and supporting the management of the council's external reputation;
- To lead on all universal communications publications, such as Southwark Life and e-news.
- To lead the communications – media and publications service, ensuring that team members role model the council's values and together achieve sustained high performance.
- Working as part of a collaborative team to provide strategic direction to ensure that media channels are effectively utilised as part of the council's approach to public affairs, campaigns, engagement and behaviour change.
- To adopt a positive and proactive approach to council media communications strategy.

## PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To lead the design and delivery of the council's media strategy and approach, and related plans, ensuring they are aligned to corporate objectives including the priorities and commitments in the council delivery plan
2. To lead and manage the strategic and operational activities of the Communications - Media and Publication teams to ensure successful delivery of the Council's media and related services.
3. To lead the design, plan and management of Southwark's media liaison, enquiries and pro-actively monitor media activity concerning or of interest to the Council.
4. To lead on and enhance the media and public profile of the Council and its key representatives and provide senior counsel on media relations issues to the Council's senior leadership, as required.
5. To lead on providing expert advice and assistance to leaders and senior officers and councillors on all aspects of reactive communications and media management and support including providing leadership and guidance on media and publications initiatives, projects and programmes.
6. To identify, set, promote and lead media priorities for the Council and be the council's senior level representative for media activity at local, regional and national level, including handling complex stakeholder relationships to achieve positive, impactful results on the council's reputation.
7. To lead, deliver and maintain a strategy to coordinate across the Council all media and publications activity with the Southwark community that improves the lives of Southwark residents.
8. To lead, develop and enhance the council's approach to media management and publications design and delivery, including establishing solid baselines, and generate regular, good quality data and information to inform the council's work, and allow our residents' voices to more consistently influence our policies and plans.
9. To lead and develop creative and innovative approaches to communications and media relationship and management, drawing on sector-led specialist thinking, evidenced-based research, and learning from others.
10. To utilise strong news judgement and creativity and skill to anticipate news stories, generate coverage and provide leadership in the council's response to breaking (and ongoing) stories of significant council wide impact.
11. To lead and take responsibility for council wide corporate projects, and work with the Head of Campaigns and Behaviour Change and teams across the Strategy and Communities

departments to help ensure that all media and public relations opportunities are identified and maximised and have positive impact for the council and residents.

12. To lead on the council's media response in emergencies and other such incidents.
13. To manage budgets in line with the council's financial policies and procedures, ensuring value for money and financial control. In particular, to lead and manage the media and publications budget (circa £150K), and in addition support the Director with budgetary oversight of other council departmental communications and related activity where necessary to ensure a consistent, council wide approach to delivery.
14. To provide leadership and management to employees in the communications – media and publications team and model the behaviours required of all staff and demonstrate commitment to the council's values. This includes leading and planning the recruitment, ongoing training and development of the staff resource within the team.
15. To enhance the impact of the Media and Publications team by ensuring that services within the remit of the post are delivered effectively and efficiently; and handling all resources in ways which maximises value-for-money and achieves service efficacy.
16. Have an outward focus to delivery, including acting as a senior ambassador for the Council and proactively ensure that the work of the service is well communicated both internally and externally at both a senior and operational level.
17. Oversee the implementation and delivery of projects, programmes and strategies across the service and ensure the development of the service is informed by future practice within its specialisms.
18. To champion and proactively support the implementation of the council's vision to be an ever more inclusive, anti-racist organisation
19. To ensure that all duties and responsibilities are discharged in accordance with the council's policies and procedures, and any relevant legislation and regulation

## **JOB CONTEXT**

Southwark Council provides services to a diverse community of in excess of 300,000 people, in inner London. A dynamic and vibrant part of London, Southwark has challenges in terms of having areas of economic deprivation and social inequality alongside areas of large scale physical, social and economic growth that has over the last quarter of a century revitalised significant parts of the borough.

The Council, in addition to being an organisation delivering a wide variety of services, many via its own 5,000 strong workforce utilising an annual revenue spend of over £300m, is also the largest landlord for social housing in London and one of the largest in the country.

The aim of the Council is to provide high quality, accessible, cost effective services to all sections of the community, seeking to help each resident be able to realise their own potential, and seek to make Southwark as a place more equal, challenging within society all forms of discrimination and racism.

To achieve its aims the Council needs to communicate effectively with a wider variety of audiences on the work and plans of the Council for the community: this includes not only those who live and work in Southwark as a place but strategic partners, including the Mayor's office, GLA, the health service, business and commerce and central government to name a few.

The Leader and Cabinet form the political, strategic and civic leadership of the Council holding accountability to the electorate of Southwark for delivery of effective and efficient Councils services (including statutory services); allied with delivery of the majority groups political programme objectives for the benefit of the population of the borough.

To support the Councils objectives and service delivery the Council needs to develop a framework of policy to provide structure and direction for the organisation. This will cover the whole spectrum of Council work, and will need be flexible enough to allow for review, revision and creation of new policy as required.

To achieve delivery of the Council's plans there is a need to develop a borough plan, Southwark 2030, which sets out the longer-term commitments for the place to the people of Southwark. The Council also produces a delivery plan, which seeks to set clear deliverable objectives and the work the Council will need to undertake to achieve the objectives.

Southwark 2030 and the Council Delivery Plan need to be informed by and inform media strategies using all communications platforms available, ensuring that the community can positively engage with the council on a wide variety of topics. This needs to be done in a manner that ensures all sectors of the community and principal stakeholders can participate.

## **ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT**

As a member of the leadership team for the Communications, Engagement and Change service, the postholder will share collective responsibility for enabling the council to maximise the contribution of its people.

The postholder will lead the design and delivery of programmes, projects and interventions that have a both immediate, short term and significant long-term impact on the council and its ability to achieve the priorities and commitments in the council delivery plan. This work will involve the development of innovative solutions and partnerships that enable the postholder to secure high quality outcomes and best use of resources.

The postholder will work across the council in a collaborative and collegiate way. The postholder will demonstrate highly visible leadership to a diverse workforce in the region of 5,000 employees.

## **STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The postholder will report to the Director of Communications, Engagement and Change.

The postholder will have line management responsibility for direct reports as part of the Communications – Media and Publications. The number and type of employees within the service may vary, but will generally comprise professional, technical and support staff.

In leading the design and delivery of programmes, projects and initiatives, the postholder may be responsible for matrix managing temporary teams comprising employees from other council services and external contractors.

## **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

The postholder will manage a core publications budget of circa £150,000 and will support the Director, Communications, Engagement and Behaviour Change in the management of overall communications resources council-wide

## **CONTACTS**

The postholder will have regular contact with colleagues at every level of the council, including the chief executive and other senior officers. The postholder will use their specialist expertise to provide information, advice and guidance to others. The postholder will seek to build consensus between parties who may have differing interests.

The postholder will be responsible for representing the council to partners, contractors and stakeholders.

## **CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

Conditions of service are governed by the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Officers as amended by Southwark Council.

Working hours are a minimum of 36 hours per week. The postholder is expected to work the hours required to get the job done. Hours are in accordance with the requirements of the service and the postholder may be expected, on a regular basis, to work outside of normal office hours, including attendance at evening meetings.

This post is politically restricted under the terms of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended).

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person specification describes the knowledge, experience and skills required to carry out this role.

**Key: S** Shortlisting criteria

**I** Evaluated at interview

Knowledge, including qualifications	How assessed
Extensive experience of leading/managing a media related service ideally within a complex politically led organisation	S I
Knowledge of the local government sector or equivalent and how this relates to communications and media management strategy and delivery	S I

Experience	How assessed
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.	S I
Experience of strategic planning and successful project and budget management in a medium to large organisation, ideally in the public sector.	S I
Experience of delivering media activity in a local government and equivalent context.	S I
Evidence of success in significantly and positively influencing media coverage across sectoral outlets in, ideally, the local government field or a comparable sector.	S I
Experience of leading or working on media campaigns which have a provable impact.	S I

Experience (cont'd)	How assessed
Experience of leading and managing a team, coaching junior colleagues and ensuring high performance standards.	S I
Experience in aligning media planning to lobbying and campaigning positions across a range of public policy areas.	S I

Aptitude, skills and competencies	How assessed
A proven track record of influencing strategic decision makers with outstanding communication abilities.	S I
Able to lead and manage a multidisciplinary team of professionals applying sound performance management principles to achieve outcomes.	S I
Excellent written, oral and influencing skills, with the ability to give clear advice on procedural issues.	S I
Politically adept, with the ability to exercise discretion, judgement and confidentiality when dealing with politicians and officers at every level acting with courtesy, tact and sensitivity.	I
Models behaviours that demonstrate an active commitment to stand against all forms of discrimination and racism in the work place and work to make Southwark more equal and just.	I