

Role Title	Head of Communications and Channel
Competency Level	Principal Officer
Pay Scale	PO11
Purpose	
<p>This is a pivotal leadership role in our Communications and Campaigns service, responsible for overseeing the development and production of, and implementing, storytelling, content and community strategies across all channels for the whole Council - both internal and externally-facing, and for digital and print.</p> <p>Reporting to the Corporate Director of Communications & Campaigns and working alongside and closely with the Head of Campaigns and Public Affairs, the primary purpose of the role is to ensure that our communications output balances responsiveness and accountability with an unwavering proactive emphasis on the Council's priorities and needs.</p> <p>Our approach should always protect and augment our reputation, and be always relevant to our core audiences' sensibilities and outlook, with particular attention paid to growing the trust and support of our residents. Our output should support outcome delivery, being guided by evidence while being comprehensively evaluated for reach, impact and effectiveness.</p> <p>The postholder will develop an overarching strategic framework for the production, publication and scheduling of content, and the effective use of channel - for the entirety of the Council's communications output, including for activity that does not directly sit within the scope of the central team.</p> <p>They will also ensure that effective triage mechanisms guide the team's use of time and effort, making informed and sensitive calls on prioritisation whenever demands clash.</p> <p>They will ensure audience engagement is underpinned by innovation and excellence in storytelling and presentation, from inspiring imagery to engaging case studies, all of it relevant to the audiences, outlets and platforms we seek to target.</p> <p>Engagement with stakeholders will include but will not be limited to media outlets, journalists and editors, contacts at partner institutions, sector bodies and the full breadth of internal stakeholders including members.</p> <p>The role involves managing a multi-disciplinary team, overseeing budgets, and ensuring effective communication with diverse audiences both within the Council and across the Borough.</p> <p>The role needs to provide for quality and value for money at all times. The postholder will manage, develop, organise and control a professional service area ensuring the delivery of the service meets all Council, professional and legislative requirements.</p>	

Generic Accountabilities	End Results/Outcomes
<p>Plan and ensure service delivery within a diverse environment. Control activities within the service area and ensure professional standards are delivered.</p>	<p>The service is delivered to the quality, professional and legislative standards required.</p> <p>Integrated service development and delivery is informed by client, partner and stakeholder views, latest thinking, best practice and, where relevant, legislative requirements.</p> <p>Corporate strategies are effectively implemented within area of responsibility.</p> <p>Service delivers excellent customer service.</p>
<p>Advise Senior Managers, Members, Leadership and others on issues relevant to the service area. Provide professional challenge and advice to colleagues, managers and partner organisations.</p>	<p>Expert professional advice, interpretation, information, support and challenge are provided to Waltham Forest and external parties on the full range of operational, legislative and strategic issues within the field of expertise.</p> <p>Responses to major corporate or partner initiatives / complex operational issues are managed effectively.</p> <p>Major issues are managed through to a satisfactory conclusion with final decisions being made by Head of Service/Senior Management.</p> <p>Feedback and complaints procedures are developed and managed. Complaints are effectively resolved.</p>
<p>Ensure the development and delivery of continuous improvements in all aspects of the service.</p>	<p>Improvements are developed and delivered effectively.</p> <p>Stakeholder requirements are met.</p>
<p>Lead, motivate and develop staff to create and maintain a highly competent and participative workforce, unrelentingly focused on resident priority and need.</p>	<p>Instrumental in ensuring a workforce development strategy is designed and delivered, including induction of new staff.</p> <p>The team is highly competent, effective, motivated and outcomes focussed.</p> <p>Recruitment, induction, development, performance reviews, employee relations and all HR processes and planning is completed to the required standards and timescales.</p> <p>Effective team meetings take place to required timescales.</p> <p>Regular supervision is undertaken, and clear objectives set and monitored through the Council's Appraisal process.</p>

	<p>Agreed priorities and performance targets are monitored and met with action taken to resolve unsatisfactory attainment in both staff and campaigns.</p>
<p>Identify, secure, deploy and manage the resources necessary for the professional service area to meet/exceed its objectives.</p>	<p>Resources including equipment, people, and systems are utilised optimally and efficiently.</p> <p>Budgets are planned, developed and delivered. Value for money is maximised.</p> <p>Financial expenditure and financial integrity are controlled to assure regulatory and Council policy compliance.</p>
<p>Prepare and present a full range of reports (both standard and non-standard) covering area of responsibility.</p>	<p>Reports are prepared, distributed / presented to the appropriate committee/ to the required standards and timescales.</p> <p>Evidence based recommendations are made.</p>
<p>Ensure the successful implementation of health and safety legislation, policies and practices.</p>	<p>Risks to staff and others are assessed and managed.</p> <p>Suitable health and safety instruction and training are provided.</p> <p>There is a safe working environment.</p>
<p>Act in accordance with all policies and procedures which apply to the job and understand the reasons for this.</p>	<p>All policies and procedures are complied with.</p>

Job-specific Accountabilities	End Results/Outcomes
<p>Lead the development and oversee content and channel strategies for all audience targets, both positioning-based and in direct support of service delivery outcomes.</p> <p>The above based on insight and understanding of our key audiences' demographic segmentation, using data and evidence from a variety of internal sources</p>	<p>A clear sense of purpose for all our communications activities, and better curated and more audience-relevant channels reflecting the behaviours and understanding of those consuming our content.</p> <p>Messages and content that are better engaged with, building audience trust and ensuring a positive relationship with the Council and what it has to say.</p> <p>The more consistent application of behavioural insights to guide our approach to service access, prevention and public health messaging.</p>
<p>To deputise for the Director of Communication and Campaigns and support them in delivering an overall communication strategy and associated frameworks</p>	<p>Works with the Director to develop a comprehensive communications strategy and concomitant performance framework, based on key corporate and emerging priorities with clear, measurable outcomes.</p> <p>As with above, allocates account management portfolios to members of the team.</p> <p>Represent the Team and the Council in key decision-making forums as required</p> <p>Contribute to the development of governance and risk mitigation frameworks and plans,</p> <p>Provide expert communications advice to senior managers, Council leadership and partners on the optimum communications approach to achieve council and shared outcomes</p> <p>Make key and complex decisions that have relevance across the Council and the wider Borough using knowledge, initiative and tact.</p>
<p>Oversee standard of all activity and ensure that have clarity on any budgetary implications.</p>	<p>Promote use of standard communications plans identifying audiences, messages, channels and timing amongst team and across the Council.</p> <p>Be clear on any financial implications and ensure managed within available budget.</p>
<p>Ensure that all internal communications channels, delivery mechanisms and outputs are effective and</p>	<p>Council staff feel valued, engaged and included in decision-making processes, and are aware – and feel ownership of – direction of travel.</p>

<p>appropriate to the audience, keeping staff informed and engaged.</p>	<p>Council staff can interact with the Communications team with ease and are aware of the role of Communications.</p> <p>There is a connection between internal and external engagement as a result of the above, with frontline staff in particular acting as ambassadors for taking key messages forward to residents.</p>
<p>Oversee the Council's approach to social media, with channel, community and content audits informing a holistic multi-channel approach. Oversee the establishment of an ecosystem covering the Council's use of social from the individual accounts of our leadership to, where appropriate, accounts targeting specific demographic groups or coalescing around specific thematic areas. Develop guidance for growing, and growing the effectiveness of, our key social media platforms.</p>	<p>There is clear understanding of how each channel performs in relation to our principal audience segments, which informs how we use them across a range of outcome areas.</p> <p>Governance is drafted and formalised to ensure standards for content are met, we maximise channel effectiveness and we reduce or remove the risk of audience dilution, duplication and broken user journeys.</p>
<p>Lead, develop and implement an approach to ensure media relations work offers a mixed and balanced approach from day-to-day news management to proactively influencing and shaping the media agenda through features, opinion and leadership profile pieces - using innovative content and a clear narrative about Waltham Forest Council that reflects the priorities, behaviours and understanding of local residents.</p>	<p>We have the capacity and skills to pitch and secure long lead pieces, broadcast segments and feature profiles, and we are no longer disproportionately defined by our reaction to and handling of potentially negative news stories</p> <p>We use our reactive media work to proactively share key messages about the Council's good news stories, or to emphasise and demonstrate the effectiveness of the Council.</p>
<p>To support and manage the Council's crisis management efforts through effective communication and use of different channels.</p>	<p>High quality, professional communication is maintained with key stakeholders throughout crisis period</p>
<p>To generate positive stories that support the delivery of the council's strategic narrative and priorities.</p>	<p>Creative knowledge and skills are utilised across the team.</p> <p>Communication channels are effectively utilised to meet the strategic priorities of the organisation.</p>

<p>To ensure that the team's work is effectively performance managed, relative to quality, understanding of brief, audience effectiveness and delivery of defined outcomes.</p>	<p>Clear direction and expectations set for all team members relative to objectives pursued while maintaining space for innovation, creativity and flexibility in delivery.</p> <p>Activities measured and reviewed for effectiveness with reporting and feedback provided to team members and Management.</p>
<p>Working with Service Heads and Portfolio Holders from across the Council, and with the Director of Communications and Campaigns and the Head of Campaigns and Public Affairs, develop and maintain a triage and prioritisation framework that allows for effective management of competing demands.</p>	<p>Capacity to deliver is maintained and the team is not consistently stretched to deliver beyond its means.</p> <p>Quality of output is maintained, and activity and outputs do not compete with one another for share of voice.</p> <p>Colleagues outside of our team are signed up to the mechanism and frustrations are avoided.</p>
<p>To keep abreast of the latest news and developments in the public sector and ensure that the forward planning grid is up to date.</p>	<p>The Council is aware, plans and organises in preparation for changes, developments within the service area</p>
<p>Nature of Contacts</p>	
<p>Frequent contact with internal Senior Leaders, and senior representatives from external organisations in both the public and private sector, providing expert advice, guidance and support on complex issues.</p> <p>Manage relationships with key stakeholders and delivery partners including negotiation of complex political issues / contractual agreements / amendments.</p> <p>Develop and sustain professional communications contacts across local government and beyond to share and build expertise.</p> <p>High levels of tact, sensitivity and diplomacy is required with confidentiality maintained where necessary.</p>	
<p>Procedural Context</p>	
<p>Work to broad managerial direction, within a policy framework and regulatory guidelines, to ensure performance standards are met.</p> <p>Control the deployment and allocation of service resources within overall corporate and legislative framework. Accountable for the performance of the service area against agreed objectives. Develop service plan for area of responsibility and contribute to term wider service planning. Professionally accountable for interventions within area of responsibility.</p> <p>Manage complex issues within a framework of policy and procedures. Creative and innovative problem solving of complex issues, often in situations where there is ambiguity and a significant degree of judgement is required in relation to risks outside the remit of</p>	

existing policy. Think and act strategically in decision making in a complex professional and political environment.

Development of policies and procedures and strategy for own area. Lead in partnership development, working with a range of agencies and extended services to meet strategic, legislative and Government policy requirements.

Occasionally the post will be expected to work from other locations.

Post holder will oversee operational decisions.

Post holder will report into Corporate Director of Communications.

Key Facts and Figures

Delegated responsibility for budgets.

Monitoring and controlling major financial transactions /information.

Effectively control significant budgets / resources.

Manage teams of staff.

Resourcing

Budget Responsibilities: Communication budgets.

Supervisory Responsibilities: a minimum of 3 direct reports

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Clear understanding of communication products, practice and the key drivers for strong and positive reputation management.
- Evidenced understanding of brand strategy and management
- Very strong understanding of audience segmentation and best practice for various channels and platforms.
- Understanding of how to create, commission and optimise different content types and engagement techniques to maximise impact and response
- Familiarity with relevant legal and voluntary controls on local government publicity.
- Direct experience of developing and delivering effective strategies in at least *three* of the following disciplines: digital communications or marketing, campaigns, internal communications, media relations, behaviour change
- Significant experience of developing and maintaining strategic narratives
- Ability to work in an agile fashion to respond to respond to internal or external crises
- Experience of leading a multidisciplinary team, deploying coaching and performance
- Experience of providing support and training to up skill and develop team
- Experience of leading high-profile campaigns that have support the delivery of key strategic objectives
- Experience/knowledge of different campaign approaches and methods
- Experience in evaluating and reviewing campaigns
- Experience of using insight and data to create communications plans.
- Experience of crisis management
- Experience in planning and delivery of communications strategies and activities
- Experience of providing direct advice and briefing to senior managers and/or elected members on media and reputation issues

- Experience of working across a wide range of communications projects including media, campaigns, marketing and events
- Experience of working in a highly pressured environment and delivering results to tight deadlines
- Experience and ability to manage a team to deliver high quality campaigns and projects
- Proven ability to find solutions to public relations problems and take necessary action
- A strong understanding and knowledge of national, regional, local and specialist press relevant to local government and Waltham Forest's communities
- An understanding of local government, the services provided by local councils, and the responsibilities a council has to its residents
- Excellent writing skills with a clear, concise and lively prose style, and the ability to write for a range of different audiences
- Excellent oral communications skills and the ability to maintain effective relationships at every level of an organisation
- Ability to translate complex information into a clear and approachable format for a wide range of audiences
- Excellent attention to detail, strong organisational skills and the ability to operate to tight deadlines in highly pressured environments

Indicative qualifications

Educated to degree level or equivalent standard

Professional qualification desirable but not essential.

The above profile is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by employees in this role. It is not intended to be a detailed list of all duties and responsibilities that may be required. This role profile will be supplemented and further defined by annual objectives, which will be developed in conjunction with the post holder. It will be subject to regular review and the Council reserves the right to amend or add to the accountabilities listed.