

Job Description



Job Title: Communications Officer	Service Area: Policy and Communications	
Directorate: People, Policy and Communications	Post Number: TBC	Job Evaluation Number: 6455
Grade: PO3	Date last updated: June 30 2022	

People at the heart of everything we do

We are committed to putting people – Newham residents and Council staff – at the heart of all we do. Our approach is a collaborative joint enterprise between residents, the Mayor, Members, Council staff and the Corporate Management Team.

Equality and Diversity

We are committed to and champion equality and diversity in all aspects of employment with the London Borough of Newham. All employees are expected to understand and promote our Equality and Diversity Policy in the course of their work.

Protecting our Staff and Services

Adherence to Health and Safety requirements and proper risk management is required from all employees in so far as is relevant to their role. All employees are expected to understand and promote good Health and Safety practices and manage risks appropriately.

Corporate parent

Every member of staff working for Newham Council should understand and fulfil our corporate parenting responsibilities for our looked after children that we have under the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Overall purpose of job

1. To act as a dedicated customer interface accountable for Communications and Campaigns performance and service provision to Councillors and senior officers, providing strategic advice on innovative, audience-focused communications which promote the Council's reputation.
2. Providing support in coordinating all the resources of the Communications and Campaigns team to develop and deliver specialist communications services that enable stakeholders and customers to engage with and make informed use of the service(s) and where appropriate, to instigate behavioural change in our customers/stakeholders.
3. Establish a programme of regular engagement with senior officers, partners and stakeholders: undertaking discussions from the early stages of policy and service

development to identify communications implications and reputational risks; explaining and negotiating communications strategy and plans.

4. Actively contribute to the development of the Councils Communications and Campaigns Strategy and underpinning plans.
5. Provide input to the design and implementation of priority communications and campaign programmes, ensuring projects are underpinned by -
 - Robust evidence,
 - measurable, outcome-focused objectives (which complement and support Council priorities/business objectives)
 - and effective implementation and evaluation plans; with key stakeholders actively engaged in providing input and agreeing success measures and deliverables.
6. Look outside the organisation to identify innovative approaches to communications and opportunities for income generation.

Job context

1. The post holder reports to the Communications and Campaigns Account Manager.
2. The post holder will be responsible for commissioning communications to meet key objectives.
3. The role will work collaboratively across the Council and within the Communications and Campaigns team operating across services and disciplines to provide the best possible customer service and delivery of tangible outcomes.
4. The role will require the management of projects and the post holder will be required to manage multi-disciplinary cross-departmental programme and project teams often including partners and key stakeholders.
5. The post holder will engage with contentious and/or sensitive press and media issues that arise as part of the areas of responsibility for this post. The role will need to act with discretion and ensure confidentiality in delivery of advice and communications outcomes.
6. The role will work collaboratively with the Communications and Campaigns team to strategically plan and implement marketing campaigns, consultations and public affairs. The role is expected to collaborate on projects and initiatives contributing creatively and innovatively to the style, tone and image, exploiting the Councils media, digital and printed channels for the best outcome.
7. The post holder will have a role in media crisis management communication planning and delivery of media handling strategies on key issues to protect the Council's reputation.
8. The post holder may be required to work some evenings, weekends and occasional public holidays in order to meet service requirements and to ensure appropriate representation of the Council with residents, the Mayor and elected Members, and external bodies.

Key Tasks and Accountabilities

Key tasks and accountabilities are intended to be a guide to the range and level of work expected of the post holder. This is not an exhaustive list of all tasks that may fall to the post holder and employees will be expected to carry out such other reasonable duties which may be required from time to time.

The Communications Officer will work as part of a team supporting Newham Councils Directorates specific responsibilities and communications requirements. The team works and acts flexibly ensuring consistent communications support and excellent customer service across all the Councils Directorates. Core responsibilities include -

1. To assist with the implementation of a comprehensive strategic communication plan for the Directorate. This includes effective engagement with all stakeholders including, elected members, residents, partners and the wider community of Newham.
2. Contribute to the the communications (internal and external) and event functions, contributing to the press, marketing, web and events in line with the Directorates delivery plans and strategies.
3. To develop positive engagement with the press and media, ensuring that strong relationships are built and maintained. This includes ensuring that Newham Council's and the Directorates public profile is managed effectively.
4. Ensure all channels of communication are monitored regularly and any issues responded to effectively and with pace. This includes ensuring that the whole service understand and provide consistent messages internally and externally.
5. To project and create a positive image of the Borough and the Directorates programmes and initiatives.
6. To help produce and maintain a 12-18 month forward plan of relevant activities and opportunities.
7. To commission from within the communications team or external consultants, high quality materials, content, platforms required to support the Directorates plans and strategies.
8. To provide strategic advice, communications risk mitigation and crisis management to the project teams, director and other stakeholders as necessary
9. To provide connections to wider council initiatives and resident engagement processes.
10. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with colleagues, Members, the Mayor, and provide briefings when required.

11. Ensure effective strategic communications advice is in line with the Newham's and the Directorates agenda and council's priorities.
12. The post holder will review technologies to explore new developments in the digital landscape to find ways to achieve value for money and to enhance communications messaging and campaigns.
13. To lead work across the Communications and Campaigns team and Council services to ensure an annual programme of agreed content and campaigns that actively contributes to delivery of the Councils Communications and Campaigns strategies.
14. Actively use and interpret feedback, evaluation, research and survey data, etc. to ensure evaluate the effectiveness of the Directorates campaigns and the Council web platforms to ensure the needs of residents and the Council are being met.
15. Ensure that all communications and commissions meet statutory guidelines and adhere to the relevant legal and voluntary controls on local government publicity.
16. Implement consistently high customer service standards and levels of customer service and monitor performance using the Councils performance and project management frameworks.
17. Take responsibility for interpretation and delivery of accessible communications in all formats and across all channels.
18. Respond strategically to rapidly changing priorities and needs in relation in relation to senior member, office and organisational requirements and actively manage competing and high level priorities and projects.

Personal Specification



Job Title: Communications Officer	Service Area: People, Policy and Performance
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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

The criteria listed in this Person Specification are all essential to the job. Your application form must demonstrate clearly and concisely how you meet each of the criteria. If you do not address these criteria fully, or if we do not consider that you meet them, you will not be shortlisted. Where there is an alternative method of assessing the criteria, e.g. via a test or interview, this will be indicated below. Please give specific examples wherever possible.

Behaviours and competencies

The London Borough of Newham has identified six key behaviours and competencies which should be demonstrated by all Council employees. Successful candidates will show the ability to meet these behaviours and it is essential that you give **at least one example** of your ability to meet each of the behaviours. Candidates applying for managerial/ leadership roles should also demonstrate two additional management behaviours.

CRITERIA	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT
<p>Qualifications:</p> <p>An appropriate degree level qualification or demonstrable extensive experience.</p>	Application
<p>Knowledge/experience:</p> <p>Proven track record of successfully leading on the development of a communication programme in a large complex political organisation</p> <p>Experience of working with Elected Members</p> <p>Extensive experience of working with residents, or similar stakeholders.</p>	Application/interview
<p>Skills and abilities:</p> <p>Demonstrable effective strategic planning expertise to achieve the implementation of communication plans as follows:</p>	Application/Interview

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of effectively using media whilst minimising risks. • Strong organisational skills that ensure plans are developed and implemented resulting in desired outcomes. • Excellent communication skills, able to write concise reports and deliver these to Senior Management. This also includes communicating effectively to a range of different audiences, producing relevant material for these audiences. • Ability to meet tight deadlines, whilst dealing with conflicting priorities. • Strong ability to set and meet own targets and those of the service. • Ability to maintain grip of project objectives in line with corporate and service plan. • Strong ability to work collegiately within various teams. • Ability to build lasting, strong relationships and credibility quickly. • Proven stakeholder management. • Demonstrable understanding of the political nature of local and central Government and the Communications function within this climate. • Track record of leading communication projects in a strong performance management culture. • Excellent communication (oral and written) and inter-personal skills with the ability to foster strong effective working partnerships with members, staff, stakeholders, customers, Government departments and agencies. • Experience of successfully operating in an environment where priorities are constantly developed, changed and conflicting. • Ability to organise and present information in a compelling way to inform and persuade audience. • Truly flexible approach to working whilst adhering to Council policy and Newham’s Values. <p>Additional factors</p> <p>Willing to work evenings and occasionally outside ‘standard’ business hours.</p>	<p>Application/Interview</p>
<p>PERSONAL STYLE AND BEHAVIOUR:</p> <p>Focus on residents and customer outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts the resident at the heart of all they do. • Provides the same quality of service to both internal 	<p>Application/Interview</p>

<p>and external customers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive to resident feedback and works to understand and internalise the lived experience of our services by residents. • Prioritises appropriately between the competing demands of customers and residents. 	
<p>Working together and collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds effective relationships with internal and external customers. • Shares information with stakeholders and involves them in decisions that affect them. • Is proactive in generating ideas and solutions across the organisation. 	Application/Interview
<p>Aim high</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers what they promise and continuously strives to improve performance. • Understands how the organisation’s vision impacts on them and their team. • Shows commitment to achieving the organisation’s goals. • Encourages solution focused problem solving and tenacity when faced with challenges. 	Application/Interview
<p>Accountability, ownership and judgement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of their accountabilities and takes responsibility for their own actions. • Seeks to effectively resolve conflict at an early stage to prevent problems escalating. • Moves things forward with enthusiasm. 	Application/Interview
<p>Say it like it is, setting direction and leading change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readily embraces change and capitalises on opportunities created by change. • Encourages people to be creative and innovative in their work and reviews success to build on what has gone well. 	Application/Interview
<p>Show people who you are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats people as individuals in a respectful and friendly manner. • Sees diversity in their team and the community they serve as positive and demonstrates a pro-active approach to promoting equality of opportunity. • Manages their own emotions appropriately. 	Application/Interview

<p>Commercial focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always seeks value for money in all projects and initiatives. • Manages and plans the use of resources and budgets effectively • Consider, and be able to articulate, the financial impact of your actions and decisions in the use of public funds • Identifies and manages the risks in a course of action. • Follow the Council’s Scheme of Delegation, Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. • Examines how partners, stakeholders and the commercial sector can support what we do. 	<p>Application/Interview</p>
<p>OTHER SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:</p> <p>Politically Restricted Post</p>	<p>Satisfactory clearance at conditional offer stage</p>