

## Job Description

Job Title: Media Officer – News and External Affairs

POSCODE:

Grade: SO2

### Overall purpose of the job

This role supports Communications Managers and Business Partners in delivering high-quality, consistent and timely media activity that aligns with the council's strategic communications approach. The postholder contributes to shaping media narratives, ensuring accuracy, and upholding the council's reputation. They will feed into campaigns, public affairs and change-related work led by more senior roles, while actively supporting the council's strategic framework, Future Council programme and CARE values. By providing insight, analysis and tactical delivery, this role ensures the smooth operation of the newsdesk and effective coordination with broader communication activity.

To work as a media officer for the council, promoting, enhancing, and supporting the work and reputation of the organisation through the provision of timely and high-quality communications.

Specifically, the post holder will lead the day-to-day running of the news desk and delivery of a communications service to the council, both internally and externally, through guidance, support, and recommendations. The role will work as part of a team to deliver a coordinated corporate service dedicated to a specific area of the business – news and external affairs, delivering part or all of the following functions:

- ☐ Media handling and responding to the demands of a 24/7 media landscape both in and outside working hours.
- ☐ Planning and delivering communications to support council activities to traditional or social media.
- ☐ Producing monitoring reports and presenting them to snr members and councillors to maintain effectiveness in communications.

To work as part of a team to lead and manage a coordinated multi-skilled corporate service to deliver the agreed outcomes for your area of the business.

- ☐ Driving innovation, creative thinking, and alternative ways of delivering outcomes in line with cross Council objectives.
- ☐ Delivering strategic plans linked to major reputational issues (serious case reviews, court cases or inquests) or major committee announcements.
- ☐ Managing resources within agreed procedures and budgets
- ☐ Supporting and deputising for Business Partner/ Communications Managers on reputational issues and media handling.

### Main accountabilities

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1.	Support the Communications Manager to oversee the council's day-to-day media handling by analysing media traffic and media themes to determine key issues for the council to

	respond. To understand the media landscape to identify opportunities for media coverage or opportunities to promote policies or decisions. To ensure senior colleagues are made aware of issues and incidents of importance as they arise.
2.	<p>Manage the news desk (this role and a communications officer on rotation) to ensure that activity is planned, colleagues are briefed, and appropriate cover is always available during business hours.</p> <p>Undertake work on the on-call rota c taking calls from the media, senior officers or Members on emergency communications issues that can't wait until the next working day.</p>
3.	<p>Prepare media/communications advice and support around key issues related to the council to senior officers and members, providing critical challenge by negotiation and influence to produce appropriate answers and media scripts to enable Members to best respond to emerging complex issues from the media. Provide communications support for committees aligning outputs with the council strategic outcomes.</p> <p>Quality assure all work making sure that it improves and enhance the reputation of Cambridgeshire.</p>
4.	Support Business Partner/ Communications Managers to deliver media, training and coaching to senior officers and Members.
5.	Collaborate with communications colleagues to ensure effective integration of PR, digital communications, internal communications, media and marketing activity.
6.	Develop and deliver communications plans which are linked to maintaining the council's reputation or democratic operation, including PR, social media and internal communications in response to an emerging issue or committee report or motion.
7.	Deliver and support media opportunities and interviews which help the council's business.
8.	Develop and maintain constructive working relationships with services, Members, local communities, stakeholder groups – including the media, key partners, suppliers, and contractors.
9.	Produce reports on performance indicators for the department, evaluate media coverage and support the provision of reports on their effectiveness - reporting to senior managers to develop effective feedback to key audiences, and to elected Members to give feedback on effectiveness.
10.	Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.
11.	Ability to contribute to our organisational commitment to becoming a Net Zero organisation by 2030.

## Person Specification

### Qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience

Minimum level of qualifications required for this job

Qualifications Required	Subject	Essential/ Desirable
Degree or equivalent professional qualification	Journalism or NCTJ qualification preferred	Essential
Sound communications experience in a media handling environment	Relevant and related	Essential
Evidence of continuous professional development from internal or externally provided learning	Relevant and related	Desirable

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills and experience required for this job

Identify	Describe	Essential/ Desirable
<b>Knowledge</b>		
Media relations or communications and their delivery	Experience of delivering successful communications in a fast paced, media facing role.	Essential
Crisis management	Experience of delivering externally focussed crisis communications in large and complex organisation - which may include being part of a local authority resilience team or similar.	Essential
Management or leadership skills	Knowledge & understanding	Desirable
A thorough understanding of the environment in which local government operates	Knowledge & understanding	Desirable
<b>Skills</b>		
Working together	Think creatively about opportunities to work together, building rapport.  Deliver results across team and organisational boundaries.	Essential
Respect	Identify areas for improvement to meet the diverse needs of customers and Colleagues.	Essential

	Challenge poor use of resources, delivering improvements.	
Effective communication	<p>Good, clear copy writing, with a flexible, adaptive style and strong attention to detail.</p> <p>Excellent verbal and written skills, as well as the ability to communicate effectively with a variety of internal and external customers.</p> <p>Ability to negotiate across different agencies, services, and groups.</p> <p>Effective interpersonal skills in groups, teams, and one-to-one situations.</p> <p>Visible communication of positive messages about Cambridgeshire County Council and the communications service.</p> <p>Ability to influence others set and review priorities, and take responsibility</p> <p>Ability to challenge others appropriately.</p>	Essential
Partnership working	Willingness to promote the wider activities of the council and work with partners	Essential
Strategic Thinking	Ability to see the big picture, interpret it and use it in the development of the post holders' key activities.	Essential
Management skills	<p>Ability to plan, prioritise and review performance.</p> <p>Ability to use a media management system and manage activities</p> <p>Strong budgetary control skills.</p>	Desirable
Judgement and decision making	<p>Ability to exercise sensitivity and clear judgement over organisational issues.</p> <p>Ability to understand and analyse complex issues and to offer sound, strategic, professional and managerial advice.</p>	Essential

	Demonstrable ability to learn from experience and to share that learning.	
Coaching	Ability to coach individuals at a senior level.	Desirable
Professional Resilience	Able to work under pressure with senior officers.	
<b>Experience</b>		
Productive relationships	Proven ability in fostering positive and constructive relationships with and amongst team members, Members, media and with peers across and outside the organisation.	Essential
Customer focus	Clear understanding of the need to engage with communities and promote good customer relations.	Essential
Presentation of information	Ability to prepare meaningful and concise written communications for a range of different channels and presentations and to participate in senior level meetings to achieve desired outcomes.	Essential
Delivering at pace	Experience of working at pace, to meet tight deadlines and delivering a professional service.	
<b>Other</b>		
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (applies to all roles).	Ability to demonstrate awareness and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion and how this applies to this role.	Essential
Net Zero (applies to all roles).	Ability to contribute towards our commitment of becoming a net zero organisation.	Essential

#### Disclosure level

What disclosure level is required for this post?	None	