



LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE: Head of Communications

Grade: MGA

DIVISION/SECTION: Customers, Policy & Improvement

Location: Various offices according to the needs of the service

Responsible to: AD Customers, Policy & Improvement

Responsible for:

Senior Communications Officers (x2)
Communications Officer
Commercial Marketing Manager
Matrix management of grant funded communications officers (up to 4)
and of leading the network of officers delivering service specific
communications activity in departments.

Post number: TBC

Date: June 2016

MAIN PURPOSE

- To manage an effective and comprehensive internal and external corporate communications service, covering both media management and strategic campaigns and marketing for the London Borough of Merton, in order to deliver the annual communications workplan. To be fully responsible for the management of the Communications team including associated budgets, people budget and service planning.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To be the lead officer to ensure the effective and efficient management of media relations, communications campaigns and marketing activities and

internal communications activities of the council.

- To be responsible for the day-to-day management and supervision of the central communications team and matrix managed communications officers. To provide strategic leadership to network of service based officers who undertake occasional marketing/communications activities within depts.
- To be accountable to the Chief Executive for agreed service outputs and outcomes and for achieving agreed personal performance targets and key result areas.
- To manage the budgets of the section (around £0.4m) and centralised communications and marketing budgets on behalf of CMT and to ensure the budget expenditure is within expected levels and that proper authorities are obtained for all expenditure.
- To lead the development and approval by CMT and Members of the annual communications strategy and workplan in support of the council's strategic objectives and communications priorities.
- To be responsible for the production and distribution of My Merton and other council publications, nominating communications officers to lead on each project as appropriate.
- To act as lead advisor on media relations and communications as necessary to the Leader, Chief Executive, Cabinet Members and Senior Officers.
- To develop close working relationships with the media and community partners to enhance the image and reputation of the council.
- To alert the Chief Executive, Leader, relevant CMT and cabinet members of any issues of particular significance that are likely to generate considerable media interest or impact on the council's reputation and image.
- To be fully proficient in all methods of office and computer technology relevant to the corporate communications team.
- To arrange press conferences, visits, photocalls for media and radio, television and press interviews for senior council officers and/or the appropriate spokesperson, plan and prepare exhibitions and organise dignitary visits.
- To attend council meetings where appropriate and work evenings and weekends where required, or to ensure cover is provided from the communications team.
- To act as the out of hours media relations contact, or have responsibility in ensuring that out of hours cover is provided by the communications officers.
- To undertake any other tasks which may be assigned from time to time by the Chief Executive.
- To champion Data Quality in the Department, proactively appraising data

produced by the Department for robustness, ensuring that Data Quality issues are addressed, and corporate reporting requirements are met, as set out in the council's Data Quality Strategy."

- To work within the provisions of Merton's policies for Health & Safety, Equal Opportunities, Value for Money and Customer Care.

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
PERSON SPECIFICATION

POST TITLE: Head of Communications

Grade: MGA

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Professional and post specific requirements

- Managerial role within a communications or PR environment.
- Delivery of effective communications, media and marketing for a multi-functional organisation

Management requirements

- Experience of project management and delivery, including HR and budget management
- Experience of staff management

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge

- Understanding the role that communications must play in shaping and promoting the priorities identified by the authority, and how to implement, co-ordinate and evaluate communications activity to achieve these objectives.
- Understanding of the structure of local Government, the role of elected members and current issues facing local Government.
- Experience in the use of computer systems including Microsoft word, excel, PowerPoint, access, outlook and a working knowledge of the Internet. Ability to use news management software, such as Newsflash.
- An understanding of how the principles of Equality of Opportunity can be reflected in the Council's communication arrangements.
- Understanding of the Code of Conduct relating to Local Government

publicity

Skills

- A demonstrable understanding and experience of internal and external communications techniques practices and current thinking.
- Experience of operating to tight deadlines in highly pressured environments.
- Strong leadership and staff management together with the ability to motivate and develop staff.
- Political sensitivity and the ability to form productive, professional working relationships with councillors across the political spectrum and with staff at all levels within the organisation.
- Understanding of media relations and marketing communications - including crisis management.
- The ability to develop close working relationships with the media and community partners to enhance the image and reputation of the council.
- The ability to effectively manage budgets.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including presentation skills in formal and informal settings.
- Ability to make sound and timely decisions, take initiative and initiate action.
- An understanding of the workings of local government, current issues and challenges and the law as related to local government PR.
- Flexibility to work outside normal office hours as required and attend council meetings as required
- A commitment to understanding of the principle of Customer Care in both employment and service delivery.
- A commitment to and understanding of principals of Equal Opportunities in both employment and service delivery.