

STRATEGIC SERVICE HEAD JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE: Strategic Service Head: Communications and Engagement
GRADE: SM1
LOCATION: LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY
RESPONSIBLE TO: Strategic Director, Engagement, Culture, and Organisational Development
RESPONSIBLE FOR: Head of Insight and Engagement
Strategic Communications Manager
Regeneration Communications Manager
Publications Manager
Integrated Care Partnership Communications Manager
Also indirectly responsible for 27 other staff up to PO5

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

- This pivotal role will lead and deliver the Council's strategic communications, and engagement with its residents and stakeholders, working closely with the Mayor and Cabinet, HMT and the leadership of the wider organisation.
- The postholder, working closely with the Strategic Director, will set the strategy for communicating the Council's services and priorities, managing the reputation of both the Council and the borough, shaping the Council's organisational narrative, and ensuring that residents, businesses, partners, and other stakeholders are fully informed about the Council, its priorities, its activities, and its values. The post will have lead responsibility for the full range of communications disciplines; media relations and reputation management; service communications and public information; social marketing and behaviour change; digital communications; print media communications (including Hackney Today/Hackney Life); public affairs, lobbying and government relations; consultation, insight and engagement, tenant and leaseholder engagement; integrated campaigns; regeneration communications; business engagement; systemwide Integrated Care Partnership communications; communications management for external clients including NHS City and Hackney.
- The Strategic Service Head for Communications and Engagement will provide collaborative and creative leadership - and clear direction - to the Communications and Engagement Team to identify and deliver creative solutions to a range of communications and engagement issues. With responsibility for the Consultation and Engagement team, the postholder will ensure that the Council consults and engages

residents, businesses and stakeholders in a way that is inclusive, and gives residents a genuine voice and influence in the decisions that affect their lives.

- The postholder will play a key role in the Council's emergency response, being the chief communications advisor to the borough's Gold Command structure, and taking a lead on crisis communications, ensuring the delivery of communications that inform and protect the public, as well as managing the reputation of the Council.
- The postholder will work closely with key strategic services across the Council such as Policy and Strategic Delivery, ICT, Customer Services and Staff engagement to drive change across the organisation and build trust with our stakeholders. The role will have a strong connection to tangible change on the ground and a sense of real impact and engagement with local communities.
- The postholder will be the chief advisor to the Mayor, Cabinet, Chief Executive, and senior leadership team on issues of public relations, communications, and reputation management.

SERVICE SPECIFIC ACCOUNTABILITIES

- As a member of the Engagement, Culture, and Organisational Development Management Team the postholder will be responsible for contributing to the successful delivery of the Mayor's priorities, the Council's corporate objectives, and the business objectives of your designated Services.
 - To provide effective leadership and management that will contribute to the continuous improvement of the Council.
 - To actively contribute to Council-wide and directorate initiatives that will achieve and implement the Mayor's priorities and corporate objectives.
 - To be Strategic Service Head with direct responsibility for the leadership and management of the following services:
 - Strategic Communications
 - Consultation and Engagement
 - Regeneration Communications including business engagement
 - Integrated Care Partnership Communications (including communications for City and Hackney within NHS North East London CCG)
1. To lead the development and implementation of the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy and all supporting strategies
 2. To act as principal advisor on strategic communications and reputation management issues to the Mayor and Cabinet, and to the Chief Executive and HMT.
 3. To ensure that Hackney residents and businesses are well informed about the services that the Council and its partners provide and that they can easily access that information.
 4. To ensure that residents are able to participate in decision making and have their voices heard through effective and inclusive consultation and engagement.
 5. To ensure that Hackney's communications are engagement-led, shaped by community insight, and properly evaluated.

6. To engage directly with the public on high profile and sensitive issues
7. To lead the management and delivery of high quality communications and engagement activities that support the work of services across the organisation.
8. To work closely with the Mayor, the Cabinet, the Chief Executive, and HMT to devise and implement communication and engagement strategies to support major corporate initiatives, and the delivery of the Corporate Plan and the Manifesto.
9. To lead the development of communications responses to highly sensitive and high profile issues, ensuring that the Council is open and transparent in its responses as well as protecting its reputation.
10. To generate income for the Council by developing and growing the Council's communications consultancy work with external public sector organisations.
11. To take responsibility for managing all budgets associated with the role.
12. To make a significant contribution to the next stage of the Hackney journey, whether in terms of culture change, organisational development or in working collaboratively with colleagues in ICT and elsewhere as the organisation continues the process of transforming itself to be a digital council, adopting open data principles and ensuring digital opportunities are taken across all our work.
13. To provide expert advice to Members, Chief Officers and Senior Managers on complex strategic and reputational matters that will have major implications for the Council and/or partnerships, and to support the Council's political and managerial leadership in translating their ambitions into reality.

CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITIES (NOT TO BE CHANGED/ MOVED OR ADDED TO)

Corporate Responsibilities

Actively contribute to the leadership of the Council in a way that promotes a one organisation' approach.

Actively demonstrate commitment to inclusive leadership

Develop and maintain positive relationships with elected members to ensure the Council and directorate strategic priorities are effectively implemented and to support Members to undertake their strategic monitoring role.

To promote equality among all staff, and ensure that services are delivered in a non discriminatory way, that is inclusive of disadvantaged groups. Deputise for the Strategic Director

Service

Actively consider new and innovative ways of delivering services that provide high quality and good value for money. Research and benchmark to establish most effective delivery methods.

Drive the implementation of consistently high quality service standards and levels of customer service, establish and monitor performance using Council project management and service review approaches.

Ensure there is effective integration of related services within and across directorate and the Council, ensure the contribution of partner and contractor organisations is appropriately harnessed.

People

Work collaboratively with the Council's partners to inform strategic decision making sure that this supports the delivery of specific corporate programmes and the community strategy.

Establish clarity around expected outcomes and standards, providing clear lines of accountability and delegated authority

Establish and promote a culture of learning and workforce planning that enables staff to realise their potential, manage their careers and therefore improved outcomes for Hackney residents

Finance

Challenge and sign off financial strategies and plans / budgets that support the effective delivery of strategic priorities.

Monitor the Directorate budget and ensure it is effectively controlled within cash limits, driving down spend where appropriate.

Hold managers to account to provide services that are value for money and within allocated budgets.

**STRATEGIC SERVICE HEAD
PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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Technical Experience/ Skills/knowledge

Substantial experience leading communications or engagement activities in a large complex organisation.

Substantial experience of public sector communications.

Substantial experience of developing communications or engagement strategies

Experience and knowledge of working closely with elected Members, and knowledge of political and government affairs.

Excellent written and oral communication skills.

Excellent personal impact and the ability to effectively engage with and influence a wide variety of audiences from residents to senior stakeholders.

Experience of successfully managing staff at a variety of levels and leading multi-disciplinary communications and/or engagement teams.

Experience of leading communications for a large publicly accountable organisation in a crisis situation

Knowledge of and understanding of delivering communications and engagement activities to a diverse range of audiences within a complex, urban environment.

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Accountability

Political awareness with proven experience of building positive relationships with elected members to balance political drivers with strategic priorities.

Experience of creating a culture of learning, to maintain a capable and high performing workforce.

Experience of providing leadership within a dynamic and changing environment.

Delivery

Experience of interpreting vision and strategy to drive delivery through strong and effective leadership.

Experience of setting service standards that will enhance the reputation of the Council and empowers others to deliver.

Experience of leading and delivering successful organisational and cultural change programmes.

Decision Making

Experience of making difficult decisions through the analysis of relevant information and risk assessment.

Able to make decisions that demonstrate commitment to the Council's vision for a better Hackney.

Working Together

Experience of establishing and facilitating cross organisational working that shapes and influences the benefits of having a diverse workforce.

Experience of developing services that takes account of the needs of diverse stakeholder groups.