

Communications Manager

Department	Communications
Pay Grade	G10
Responsible to	Chief Executive

Role Purpose

To be the Council's Communications expert ensuring high levels of public satisfaction with Horsham District Council and its services and protect and improve the Council's reputation.

Support the Chief Executive with internal messaging, ensuring employees know about and understand all key messages.

Lead and manage the Communications Departmental Team in delivering corporate communications services and arrange specialist training in communications and marketing for councillors and senior officers.

Provide emergency planning media and public information management in the event of a major incident or any smaller civil emergency.

Direct Reports

- Communications Officer x 2
- Digital Communications Officer x 1
- Senior Graphic Designer x 1
- Copywriter x 1
- Digital Marketing Officer x 1

Role Specific Responsibilities / Accountabilities

- Prepare and implement the Council's communications strategies, corporate narrative, plans, dashboards and grids, to generate high levels of public satisfaction, whilst protecting and improving the Council's reputation.
- Work closely with the Leader of the Council, Cabinet and Chief Executive, to plan, prepare and place stories and campaigns about the Council, identifying negative public relations items and manage communications risks.

- Monitor the external and internal environment to ensure the Council places its media releases at the best times and support the Chief Executive and Directors to deliver clear, timely and effective communication, identifying the best channels to use.
- Build strong relationships with Directors and Heads of Service across the Council, to identify innovation, best practice and positive messages to promote to the media and residents, to build on the Council's reputation.
- Ensure that the public are both engaged and well-informed about the Council and its services, by developing and implementing communication campaigns with colleagues across the Council to promote and market Council services and evaluate the impact of these.
- Develop and lead the Council's brand management to ensure consistent branding across the authority.
- Establish and maintain excellent working relationships with the media and partner organisations, to build on the Council's excellent reputation.
- Design, procure and oversee training and development in communications and marketing for councillors and officers, to ensure a consistent and appropriate communications strategy, style and processes are achieved.
- Design, procure and present the findings of a residents' survey every three years, and other surveys as needed between times.
- Ensure effective Communications Team membership to the Organisational Development Group.
- Design and implement a scheme to control the workloads introduced from front facing teams across the Council, including controlling media contacts and e-newsletters written and run by front facing teams.
- Identify and lead innovative approaches to communications including identifying savings and efficient ways of working.
- To take the communications lead in civil emergencies, providing a communications presence throughout the emergency and work with emergency planning colleagues to ensure they are well prepared for media contacts during the incident.
- Provide communications support to the Returning Officer in the preparation of and holding of elections including managing media organisations on election day and during the count.
- To carry out such other duties that may reasonably be required.

Knowledge, Skills and Qualifications

Minimum knowledge, skills and qualifications required to perform this role; relevant experience may be a substitute.

Essential Criteria

- Experience at senior communications practitioner level in a large and complex organisation, providing both internal and external communications, whilst working with senior managers and councillors or board members / trustees.
- Experience in handling complex and highly time sensitive media, social media, public relations, and ideally emergency planning communication issues, adapting communication style as appropriate.
- Excellent written and verbal communications skills, including strong storytelling and message development abilities.
- Proficiency in crafting compelling content for different mediums, tailoring it for different target audiences with diverse perspectives.

- Crisis communication and reputation management skills.
- Proficiency in digital communication platforms, social media management, and content creation and familiarity with Search Engine Optimisation and online analytics.
- Line management experience and management qualification to at least 'Level 5'.

Desirable Criteria

- Educated to Bachelor's degree level in a relevant subject.
- Chartered Institute of Marketing or Public Relations Diploma, NCTJ Level 5, or equivalent.

Appendix

Generic Employee Responsibilities / Accountabilities

- Engage and participate in delivering the corporate objectives of the Council and contribute to the collective leadership, development and management of the organisation to assist in the implementation and realisation of the Council's strategic objectives and Corporate Plan through the development of business plans.
- Ensure that all duties are carried out in compliance with statutory processes, corporate policies and the Council's constitution.
- Proactively seek opportunities to improve ways of working by evaluating activities to determine what adds value and where necessary, implement changes to improve / enhance performance to continuously deliver improvements to services.
- Develop team members' skills and knowledge through a culture of learning, collaborative working and excellence to build a culture of high performance that inspires and enables people and supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and strategic objectives.
- Develop good working relationships with local people, local businesses, the voluntary sector, regional authorities, government and a wide range of other partners to promote the interests and uphold the reputation of the Council, and so building a positive image of the organisation.
- Participate in the recruitment and management of team members, giving clarity regarding targets, standards and performance expectations. Review performance, giving regular feedback and implementing solutions to address both high performance and poor performance. Before acting as recruiting manager you must partake in training on the Council's recruitment processes.
- Ensure all team members, and new team members, including casual workers, undertake mandatory training (Fire, Health and Safety, Data Protection and Safeguarding).
- Support in the management of budgets and resources, ensuring that they are deployed effectively with robust internal controls to deliver intended outcomes in a manner which demonstrates value for money and compliance with relevant policies and guidelines.
- Contribute to the provision of advice and guidance to Cabinet / Council, Scrutiny Committees and Advisory Groups, to assist in supporting the translation of political objectives and priorities into coherent initiatives that will deliver their intended outcomes for Horsham District.

- Promote equality, diversity, inclusion, access to services and tackle discrimination both within and outside the Council to ensure there is a clear and consistent focus across the organisation and its partners in delivering an inclusive customer experience to all.
- To comply with all Health and Safety policies and guidance ensuring the required mechanisms are used and to support the promotion of a culture of good health, safety and welfare, especially if nominated or appointed specifically to carry out simple checks at your place of work and log the activity.
- Follow the Council's safeguarding procedures and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults across Council services.
- Assess risk management in service areas and follow reporting procedures, as appropriate, to minimise risks to people and the Council's operations.
- Follow and adhere to all Data Protection procedures and processes in accordance with relevant legislation, ensuring all personal data of employees, members of the public and clients is used appropriately and retained within guidelines.
- The Returning Officer in this constituency is responsible for the election process. There is an expectation that Council employees will, as reasonably requested to do so, assist the Returning Officer in election processes.
- In the event of a major incident or disaster you may be required to assist in whatever capacity necessary to provide the necessary organisation, co-ordination and supply of resources to support the local emergency services or other services within the council and relevant partner organisations.

Generic Employee Behaviours

Our behaviours framework links to our values and identifies the core knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes we require from our people to deliver services.

Customer Focus

- Managing customer service
- Constructive customer relationships
- Improve customer service to meet local needs and aspirations

Achieving Excellence

- Strive to be an excellent organisation
- Deliver continuous service improvement
- Use taxpayers' money wisely to deliver the highest quality services to the satisfaction of our customers

Our People

- Support the team to work collaboratively
- Invest in our people for continuous improvement
- Support creativity and responsibility