

Northumberland County Council
JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title: Communications Support Assistant	Director/Service/Sector Corporate Resources, Communications Team		Office Use
Grade: Band 3	Workplace: Communications Team		JE ref: 2954 HRMS ref:
Responsible to: Communications Business Partner/Engagement Manager	Date: September 2014	Manager Level: 8	
Job Purpose: This post is responsible to the Communications Business Partners and the Engagement Manager. It has a wide range of duties associated with supporting the provision of corporate communications. This will involve assisting with media management; direct communications, marketing or social marketing campaigns; development of the Council’s website and intranet; managing the corporate brand and effective internal communications.			
Resources	Staff	None	
	Finance	None	
	Physical	Media Data and equipment.	
	Clients	General day-to-day involvement with the local, regional and national media and a variety of internal and external clients and partner organisations. This could include senior staff like the chief executive and council leader	
Duties and key result areas: Supporting the delivery of an excellent communication service by: 1. Writing copy for a variety of internal and external media 2. Undertaking training to ensure that competencies are developed in all relevant Communications skill areas. 3. Undertaking media relations work as required 4. To undertake emergency cover as required 5. To assist with communications audits and surveys, to assess the effectiveness of communication techniques 6. Undertaking continuous professional development to enable progression. 7. To contribute to council content in key media: news releases, twitter, facebook, copy for publications 8. Taking notes in meetings and ensuring that relevant actions are followed up 9. To undertake proof reading; liaising with graphic designers and printers			

10. To be present at external events in which there is council involvement or interests to identify and capture stories and images which may be used in council publications, websites and other communications
11. To build a network of community contacts to enable the fulfilment of the role.
12. To develop positive stories that address issues identified through the council's regular community pulse surveys.
13. To comply with health and safety policy and systems, report any incidents/accidents/hazards and take pro-active approach to health and safety matters in order to protect both yourself and others
14. Implement and operate under the terms of the Local Government communications code of conduct and the Civil Contingencies Act.

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

Work Arrangements

Transport requirements:
Working patterns:
Working conditions:

Predominately office based with little need to travel outside of County Hall. However, if necessary, must be able to meet the transport requirements of the post.
37 hours per week, flexible.

Northumberland County Council
PERSON SPECIFICATION

Post Title: Communications Assistant		Director/Service/Sector: Communications Team	Ref: 2954
Essential		Desirable	Assess by
Knowledge and Qualifications			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NVQ Level 3 or equivalent • Awaiting results of a degree/professional qualification • Knowledge of Public Relations, communications, design and print. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of how local government works and the challenges facing it. 	
Experience			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical experience in PR, journalism or marketing. • An understanding of developing and delivering social marketing campaigns • An understanding of dealing with media enquiries • Developing and implementing communication plans. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of brand management • Experience of event management • Budgetary experience • Working in a public sector PR environment • Commissioning services from other creative companies. 	
Skills and competencies			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good judgment and unimpeachable integrity • Ability to maintain confidences • Able to demonstrate appropriate behaviours at all time ensuring that the council's reputation may not be damaged by his or her actions • Understanding of local government and the emerging challenges it faces • Ability to communicate both orally and in writing to a wide range of audiences, including the ability to write for the media. • The ability to convert complex issues into clear, media friendly copy. • The ability to write in plain English to a high standard. • IT Literate, capable of using MS Word / Excel and office packages • Ability to use tact and diplomacy when dealing with a wide range of people • Able to work under pressure, to establish priorities and meet deadlines • Ability to deal confidently with a wide range of people • Ability to produce original and creative ideas • Ability to present information clearly and concisely • Ability to work under pressure and to tight deadlines whilst working on numerous projects • Ability to be efficient and professional • Able to deal with sensitive and confidential issues • Self-motivated 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable ability to use initiative and to work as part of a team. • Working in high pressure situations in the full glare of the media, public and senior staff. 		
Physical, mental and emotional demands		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work under pressure whilst managing competing demands • Commitment and stamina to cope with the challenge of the workload. • Ability to meet daily and weekly deadlines • The post holder may be exposed to sensitive or distressing issues if they are required to assist a colleague with such a piece of work. • The role will require that the post holder is, when appropriate, able to challenge constructively existing ideas and practices • The post requires the use of discretion and initiative across all areas of work 		
Other		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to meet the transport requirements of the post. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A car driver is desirable as contact with partners, members and colleagues county-wide may be necessary. 	

Key to assessment methods; (a) application form, (i) interview, (r) references, (t) ability tests (q) personality questionnaire (g) assessed group work, (p) presentation, (o) others e.g. case studies/visits