

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM JOB PROFILES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor Giel
LEAD OFFICER: Hilary Mitchell
REPORT AUTHOR: Hilary Mitchell

Summary and Recommendation:

This report reports slight changes proposed to the job profiles of the Communications team.

The Personnel Panel is asked to agree the changes to the job profiles and consequent grades of the posts in the Communications Team.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The current structure of the Communications team in the Policy and Performance service was determined during the corporate restructure of 2004/5.

1.2 The posts created during the restructure were filled, but as a vacancy has arisen since then, it has been decided to reconsider the job profiles in light of the experience of operating with the posts, and in light of the current conditions for local government.

2. ARGUMENT

2.1 In 2005 three posts were created in the Communications Team under the corporate structure that was implemented on 1 June 2005. The posts are :

002 Communications Manager:	PO 39-42 (£33,315 max per annum)
005 Communications Officer	Scale 4 (£17,985 max per annum))
0160 Webmaster/Graphics Technician	Scale 5 (£20,235 max per annum)

2.2 The Webmaster/Graphics Technician post was not fully funded until early in 2006. This report does not discuss this post.

2.3 The grade for the Communications Manager, a new post in 2005, reflected a recommendation from the Best Value review of Communications 2003/5. It was felt at the time that a senior Communications professional was needed to champion the Council's relationship with the media, and develop a communications strategy to improve the Council's corporate communications capacity through training, development, influence and bringing knowledge of best practice from outside.

2.4 The Communications Officer was anticipated to be a junior post, with low autonomy and high supervision from the Communications Manager. It is classified as a Technical Support Officer in the Council's job family structure.

2.5 In practice this was not how the two posts interacted when the posts were filled. While a manager/subordinate relationship does exist between the posts, from the

beginning in order to cover all the demands on the team, each postholder had responsibility for separate areas of the workload, and were required to represent the Council on occasions, support elected members, facilitate the response to media on behalf of the Council, arrange events and briefings and operate in both operational and strategic ways. The Council benefited from having two posts operating in parallel. The original grades of the posts are therefore both out of line with the reality of work the postholders actually performed.

2.6 The person appointed to the Communications Manager post in September 2005 resigned in November 2006 for personal reasons. At present there is one post-holder covering most of the workload of both posts, but this position is not sustainable.

2.7 The Council's demand for specialist communications skills is growing, and over the next eighteen months we will see increased demand for both external and internal communications activity. We face a period of rapid change in structures, service organisations, governance and requirement for efficiencies. All of these will require careful communication to employees and the public to introduce the changes as smoothly as possible. There is also a greater need to work in partnership with other Cumbrian authorities and agencies on communication issues, which takes considerable time away from the workplace.

2.8 It is therefore proposed to reflect the change in the way that the posts have already operated with revised job profiles for the two posts reflecting the balance of supervision and autonomy (attached in Appendix 1) and a slight equalisation in grades to:

002 Communications Manager – PO33-36 (£28,221 max per annum)

005 Communications Officer – Scale 6 (£22,293 max per annum)

2.9 The person specifications for the posts are also amended to require more proven experience and skills for the Communications Officer.

3. OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

3.1 Option 1 : Make no change. This would mean that the Communications Manager post, currently vacant, would receive the existing level of salary and be required to manage the team as originally envisaged in the job profile. The autonomy required to address all the demands on the Communications team would not be possible with the junior post job profile left unamended. For operational reasons, this means that the Council would be less well served, having one post-holder required to supervise the other closely.

3.2 There would also be consequences for filling the vacant post, in that to attract candidates qualified to fill the original Communications Manager post would probably require national advertising, relocation expenses and a longer period without the post filled.

3.2 Option 2 : Revise the job profiles and grades for the posts as described in section 2 above.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 For the reasons set out above the Personnel Panel is recommended to agree to the

slight changes to the job profiles and grades of the Communications posts

5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

5.1 As outlined in the report above. There will be no increase to the Council's establishment or salary budgets.

6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Project management not required.

6.2 Risk management on recruitment included in Head of Service plan 2007/8

7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

7.1 A significant workload for the Communications team will arise from delivery of the Council's 5 year plan and its wide-ranging objectives. It will require adequate resources to help achieve the Council's priorities in this area.

List of Background Documents: Report to Executive 10 March 2005 Corporate Restructure

List of Consultees: HR Manager
Chief Executive
Corporate Team

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed . This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	Para 7
Impact on Sustainability	Para 7
Impact on Rural Proofing	Para 7
Health and Safety Implications	Para 7
Project and Risk Management	Para 6
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	Para 7
Children and Young Persons Implications	Para 7
Human Rights Act Implications	Para 7

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Proposed revised job profiles for Communications Manager and Communications Officer

 Copeland Borough Council JOB PROFILE	Job Title	Communications Manager
	Job Family	Manager
	Salary Grade	PO
	Directorate	Chief Executive
	Service Unit	Policy and Performance
	Ref No	002 PP
	Date	1 April 2007

1. MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB

To manage and take a proactive role in the Council's corporate external and internal communications in order to ensure successful achievement of corporate and service objectives. To raise awareness of the Council's roles and responsibilities and promote the Council's image locally and nationally.

2. POSITION IN ORGANISATION

Responsible to: Head of Policy and Performance.
Employees responsible for: Communications Officer, Webmaster/Graphic Designer
Context: Manager of Corporate Communications function

3. EMPLOYMENT BASE The Copeland Centre, Catherine Street, Whitehaven

4. SUMMARY OF MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Take a proactive role in the identification and introduction of new systems and techniques to generate efficiencies and improved ways of working.
2. To be the main source of advice and expertise on communications activities and skills for managers and members in support of delivery of the Council's plans and priorities.
3. Develop, review and evaluate corporate communications and consultation strategies, and support project and service managers to develop their plans for communicating with the Council's customers and stakeholders.
4. Raise awareness of the value and importance of good communications practice with the Council's managers and members, and support them with training and guidance as required.

5. Manage the Council's reputation and identity through appropriate marketing and engagement with media, partners and the public.
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's external and internal communications and introduce practical improvements.
7. Select, train, guide and develop members of the communications team, monitoring their progress and delegating tasks as appropriate.
8. Manage periodic staff attitude surveys and develop improved internal communications practice and mechanisms to contribute to the delivery of resulting action plans.
9. Act as editor of the Council's main corporate publications. Maintain an overview of all the Council's publications to ensure continued effectiveness with customers and contribution to corporate priorities and identity.
10. Maintain the effectiveness of the Council's website as a communications tool for customers, ensuring that it is consistent with other channels, and contributes to the Council's reputation and identity.
11. Maintain links with communications colleagues within and outside Cumbria. Monitor the development of partnerships in which Copeland Borough Council participates to allow provision of appropriate levels of communications support.
12. Contribute to corporate and service projects and initiatives to ensure that communications issues are properly addressed to contribute to their success.
13. Attend meetings of the Council involving officers and members as required.
14. Any other duties that may be required from time to time, appropriate to the grade of the post.

5. CONTACTS

Internal: Executive and other Councillors, Corporate Team members, all other managers, other employees

External: Member and officer representatives of other Cumbrian councils, equivalent post-holders at other local authorities, representatives of other agencies and community groups

6. SPECIAL FEATURES

This post requires occasional attendance outside office hours for committee and other meetings.

7. PERSON SPECIFICATION

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Education and Qualifications	<i>GCSE English Language and Mathematics; post-16 education which has included a significant element of report writing and research</i>	<i>A first degree; CIPR or other communications qualification;</i>
	<i>At least 4 years experience of PR, marketing and</i>	<i>Communications experience in the public sector; experience of</i>

Knowledge and experience	<i>consultation; knowledge and experience of all types of media; understanding of customer focus</i>	<i>managing communications function; experience of managing change strategy;</i>
Job related skills	<i>Able to communicate to an excellent standard in writing and orally; Able to develop rapport quickly with elected Members, colleagues, partners and press; able to influence others to change practices; able to innovate and encourage innovation; highly-developed IT skills</i>	<i>Training skills; project management skills</i>

Personal competencies

1	Health and Safety Core competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operates within the Council's health and safety policy and ensures that the Service adheres to safe working practices • Takes care of own health and safety and that of others • Challenges unsafe practices or behaviours
2	Equality and Diversity Core competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes and ensures that the Service acts in accordance with the Council's equal opportunities and diversity policies. • Avoids language, actions and behaviours which may be considered discriminatory or cause offence or discomfort • Challenges discriminatory practices or behaviours • Respects diversity by listening to and being positive about alternative contributions
3	Service Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements the rules, principles and culture of Best value within the service unit. • Manages the Service's business planning and financial processes • Promotes and applies the full range of Copeland Borough Councils policies and procedures • Monitors and evaluates service standards and outputs to effect improved working processes, practices and systems
4	Leadership and People Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets challenging but achievable goals, clearly identifying what is required of self and others • Establishes effective working relationships with Service team members • Delegates work appropriately • Anticipates and manages conflict effectively • Gives constructive feedback • Ensures that employees are developed to their full potential
5	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes best use of the mechanisms within Copeland Borough Council to ensure excellent communication • Communicates clearly and with confidence

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens actively, asks questions, clarifies points and checks understanding • Presents information in a way that promotes understanding • Briefs supervisors and team leaders regularly • Observes confidentiality
6	Delivering Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritises and manages activities to ensure delivery of service to cost, time and quality • Applies a methodical and systematic approach • Anticipates problems and takes advantage of opportunities as they arise
7	Customer Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements the Council's Customer Care strategy relative to the work of the service unit • Communicates the importance of the customer perspective to provide and develop quality services • Understands the needs and builds effective relationships with internal and external customers • Focuses on meeting customer expectations
8	Self Management and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps relevant knowledge and expertise up to date • Has a positive and resilient approach • Is conscientious and committed to meet service objectives • Displays fairness and integrity • Pays attention to self development • Welcomes and acts on personal feedback
9	Impact and Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents a positive and professional image of self, team, department and Council • Wins support for ideas and action plans • Reaches positive and constructive agreements with others • Anticipates and prepares for others reactions
10	Behaving ethically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complies with legislation, industry regulation, professional and organisational codes of practice • Shows integrity and fairness • Is open, yet diplomatic, with others • Remains objective and fair even when personal issues are at risk

Prepared by: Hilary Mitchell

Date: 01/04/07



Copeland Borough Council

JOB PROFILE

Job Title	Communications Officer
Job Family	Technical Support Officer
Salary Grade	Scale 6
Directorate	Chief Executive
Service Unit	Communications
Department	Policy and Performance
Ref No	005 PP
Date	1 April 2007

- **MAIN PURPOSE**

To contribute to the development of good practice in the Council's corporate external and internal communications.

- **POSITION IN ORGANISATION**

Responsible to: Communications Manager

Employees responsible for: Nil

Context: One of three posts in Communications team.

3. EMPLOYMENT BASE: The Copeland Centre, Catherine Street, Whitehaven

4. SUMMARY OF MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Assist in the introduction of new systems and techniques to improve the way the Council works and to generate efficiencies.
2. Act as main contact for the media and stakeholder partners for news, information and briefings, under the supervision of the Communications Manager, contributing to the maintenance of the Council's reputation and identity.
3. Write or commission the content of the Council's main corporate internal and external publications preparing them for production following editorial approval from the Communications Manager.
4. Write corporate pages on the Council's website as required and maintain them to ensure that the website is up to date. Support the production of web pages by services, providing advice and expertise on communications issues.

5. Organise events in support of corporate internal and external communications, such as press briefings, staff conferences, community focus groups, strategy launches and marketing of the Council and its services.
6. Develop and maintain the Council's consultation database, to ensure that the information gathered through consultation exercises can be shared across the Council.
7. Develop an understanding of how the Council's teams operate, their customers and their priorities in order to provide reliable information in response to press queries. Support the Communications Manager to help the Council's services to develop communications skills and expertise.
8. Edit, write and commission content for The Word and team briefing tools.
9. Undertake special projects as delegated by the Communications Manager in support of marketing, internal or external communications.
10. Monitor the appearance of articles about the Council in various media, and report as required to managers and members.
11. Attend meetings of the Council involving members and officers as required.
12. Deputise for the Communications Manager when necessary.
13. Any other duties requested from time to time by the Communications Manager appropriate to nature of the post.

5. CONTACTS

Internal: Potentially all members, Corporate Team, managers and employees.

External: Representatives of the media, other local authorities, public and private sector agencies, contractors and suppliers.

6. SPECIAL FEATURES

Occasionally the post-holder will have to work outside normal working hours and at places other than the Council HQ.

7. PERSON SPECIFICATION

Criteria	Essential**	Desirable
Education and Qualifications	<i>GCSE English Language and Mathematics; post-16 education which has included a significant element of report writing and research</i>	<i>A first degree; further education qualification; additional study involving communications;</i>
Knowledge and experience	<i>2 years' previous experience in a communications role; experience of writing and proof reading professionally; experience of taking responsibility for carrying out and completing tasks; experience of researching and writing publications of various</i>	<i>Experience of working in a complex organisation; experience of good website practice;</i>

	<i>kinds and in a range of media;</i>	
Job related skills	<i>Excellent IT skills; able to prioritise and meet deadlines; able to communicate clearly orally and in writing; able to relate easily to a range of different people;</i>	<i>Coaching skills; ability to persuade people to change their practices.</i>

Personal Competencies

1. Health and Safety Core competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complies with the Council's health and safety policies • Takes care of own health and safety and that of others • Challenges unsafe practices or behaviours
2. Equality and Diversity Core competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aware of and acts in accordance with the Council's equal opportunities policy • Avoids language, actions and behaviours which may be considered discriminatory or cause offence or discomfort • Challenges discriminatory practices or behaviours • Respects diversity by listening to and being positive about alternative contributions
3. Team working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is tactful, patient and courteous with all team members • Supports and helps others when necessary • Is actively involved and committed to achievement of team objectives
4. Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates clearly and with confidence • Listens actively, asks questions, clarifies points and checks understanding • Presents information in a way that promotes understanding • Observes confidentiality
5. Delivering Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organises own workload to meet deadlines and objectives • Delivers results to cost, time and quality • Knows when and where to seek additional information and advice • Uses a structured, logical and planful approach
6. Customer focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aware of and adheres to Copeland's customer care policy • Understands who are the internal and external customers • Makes every effort to find out customer needs • Promotes a professional image of self, department and Council, demonstrating an impartial approach
7. Self management and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps relevant knowledge and expertise up to date • Is not afraid to admit to mistakes or lack of knowledge • Has a positive and resilient approach • Is conscientious and committed to see tasks through

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not give up despite setbacks • Pays attention to self development • Welcomes and acts on personal feedback
8. Handling Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compiles clear and accurate information • Keeps records up to date • Maintains confidentiality • Uses IT effectively
9. Behaving ethically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knows and complies with relevant rules and legislation • Is open, yet diplomatic, with others • Demonstrates integrity and fairness

Prepared by: Hilary Mitchell.

Date.....1/04/07.....