Public Affairs Manager

Grade 11

Our Vision

An innovative, ambitious and sustainable county, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy.

Our Outcomes

We want everyone in Staffordshire to:

* Have access to more good jobs and share the benefit of economic growth
* Live in thriving and sustainable communities
* Be healthier and more independent for longer

Our Values

Our People Strategy sets out what we all need to do to make Staffordshire County Council a great place to work, where people are supported to develop, flourish and contribute to our ambitious plans. Our values are at the heart of the Strategy to ensure that the focus is on what is important to the organisation and the people it serves:

* Ambitious – We are ambitious for our communities and citizens
* Courageous – We recognise our challenges and are prepared to make   
  courageous decisions
* Empowering – We empower and support our people by giving them   
  the opportunity to do their jobs well.

About the Service

Staffordshire County Council’s award-winning Communications Team is responsible for developing and implementing council-wide internal and external communications based on the annual communications plan. Our work promotes the vast, diverse work of the county council that has a daily impact on the lives of Staffordshire’s 850,000 residents.

We deliver corporate marketing and campaigns activity, media relations and reputation management, digital communications including social media, internal communications, corporate publications, place marketing, stakeholder engagement, and lobbying activity.

The Communications team’s aim is to enhance and protect the council’s reputation locally, regionally, and nationally. To help us do this, we give advice, support, and training to senior managers, colleagues, and members across all directorates and subject matters, including media issues and digital communications. We also do this through our many and varied campaigns that we deliver to help change behaviours, raise awareness, and increase understanding about what the county council does for people, and how we support people, businesses, and communities.

We also give advice and support about consultation with residents, service users and other stakeholders so that the county council can engage people effectively. The people of Staffordshire are at the heart of everything we do.

***Political Restriction:*** *This position is considered as a Politically Restricted Post under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and subsequent amendments introduced by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.*

Reporting Relationships

Responsible to: Assistant Director for Communications

Key Accountabilities:

1. Contributes public affairs and campaigning expertise to the annual communications strategy and workplan, working with the AD for Communications, senior county council members and officers to identify public affairs priorities.
2. To enhance awareness and understanding of SCC as an authoritative voice on local government issues, through stakeholder management, media management and attendance at relevant events and conferences.
3. To influence favourably, public policy relating to Staffordshire County Council and local government issues in the UK.
4. To develop and maintain positive relationships with stakeholders important to the completion of the above tasks, raising the county council’s profile with key influencers and decision makers.
5. Responsible for monitoring and analysing the work of Government, political parties, key industry bodies, think tanks and influencers, to provide insight and advice to Cabinet, SLT, and the wider organisation on public affairs issues.
6. Development and delivery of targeted public affairs and legislative campaign plans that support delivery of the council’s strategic vision and objectives.
7. Supporting Directors, Assistant Directors and service areas by advising on Government policy, contacts, and public affairs strategies to inform and influence decision making, or assist, for example, on bids for Government funding programmes.
8. Manages the County Council’s relationship with Staffordshire MPs, organising monthly meetings, and setting the agendas in consultation with the Leader and Chief Executive, to strengthen and maintain relationships and support lobbying activity.
9. Supports forward planning and agenda setting for the Staffordshire Leaders Board and offers public affairs advice and analysis in Board meetings to inform decision-making.
10. Responsible for improving the County Council’s relationship with Government and the Civil Service, and key organisations (e.g. the Local Government Association, County Council Network), national and regional opinion formers (e.g. political correspondents, bloggers) and public affairs contacts, to raise the authority’s profile and ability to influence decision makers.
11. Assists the AD for Communications in providing regular briefings for Cabinet, the Chief Executive and SLT on external political developments.

**Professional Accountabilities:**

The post holder is required to contribute to the achievement of the Council objectives through:

**Financial Management**

Personal accountability for delivering services efficiently, effectively, within budget and to implement any approved savings and investment allocated to the service.

**People Management**

Engaging with People Management policies and processes

**Equalities**

Ensuring that all work is completed with a commitment to equality and anti-discriminatory practice, as a minimum to standards required by legislation.

**Climate Change**

Delivering energy conservation practices in line with the Council’s climate change strategy.

**Health and Safety**

Ensuring a work environment that protects people’s health and safety and that promotes welfare, and which is in accordance with the Council’s Health & Safety policy.

**Safeguarding**

Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable groups.

The content of this Job Description and Person Specification will be reviewed on a regular basis.

**Person Specification**  A = Assessed at Application

I = Assessed at Interview

T = Assessed through Test

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| **Minimum Criteria for Disability Confident**  **Scheme \*** | **Criteria** | **Measured by** |
| **employer_small** | **Qualifications/Professional membership**   * Educated to degree level or equivalent, or demonstrable relevant experience in a political or public affairs environment. * Membership of a relevant, recognised professional body. | A  A |
| **employer_small** | **Knowledge and Experience**   * Significant experience of Public and Political Relations, preferably with a period of providing in-house support of the kind envisaged in this role. * Significant experience of planning lobbying strategies, ideally having worked within a campaigning organisation * Experience in managing a busy workload including daily contact with politicians. * A substantial track record of effective influencing and alliance building around legislation or policy-making processes. * A strong grasp of current political issues and developments. * A good understanding of the specific issues affecting local government * Experience of working with others to build alliances on complex issues, and to work across political boundaries and party lines. | A/I  A/I  I  A/I  I/T  I  I |
| **employer_small** | **Skills**   * Excellent communication and diplomacy skills * A flexible approach is essential due to the role requiring travel across the UK and being available to deal with out of hours enquiries * Ability to manage complex projects and external relationships with partners and stakeholders. * Analysing and interpreting complex data and information. * To manage and prioritise own workload. * To be able to manage conflicting demands and pressures. * Ability to present and deliver complex and potentially contentious messages in a clear and concise manner to a diverse audience. * Demonstrable skills of working effectively in a team | A/I  I  I  T  I  I/T  I |

**employer_small** If a disabled person meets the criteria indicated by the Disability Confident scheme symbol and provides evidence of this on their application form, they will be guaranteed an interview.

We are proud to display the Disability Confidence Symbol, which is a recognition given by Job centre plus to employers who agree to meet specific requirements regarding the recruitment, employment, retention, and career development of disabled people.

If you need a copy of this information in large print, braille, another language on cassette or disc, please ask us by contacting

Talent & Resourcing Team 01785 278300