

# JOB DESCRIPTION



Ribble Valley  
Borough Council

[www.ribblevalley.gov.uk](http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk)

- JOB TITLE:** Principal Communications Officer
- WORKING PATTERN:** Part-Time, Job Share  
18.5 hours per week: Wednesday afternoon, all day  
Thursday and Friday  
**(Please note, this is a politically restricted post)**
- REFERENCE NO:** RES233
- SALARY SCALE:** PO 1-4 (scp 31-34) £37,261 to £40,478 per annum
- RESPONSIBLE TO:** Head of HR
- JOB PURPOSE:** To develop and implement the Council's communications strategy and a range of strategic communications activities that deliver positive outcomes for the Council and its communities. To raise awareness of Council services and the issues facing Ribble Valley residents. To advise the Chief Executive and senior managers on communications matters and build and develop the Council's relationship with the media and key stakeholders.

## MAIN DUTIES:

- To plan and undertake conventional and digital communications activities and campaigns that align with organisational goals and deliver measurable positive outcomes for the Council and its communities.
- To deliver a modern strategic communications function featuring robust systems for communications planning, measurement and evaluation.
- To develop and implement a communications strategy that aligns with the Council's corporate plan and the communications needs of Ribble Valley communities and stakeholders.
- To take a strategic approach to communications planning, working with Council departments to ensure message alignment along owned, earned and bought channels.
- To develop effective channels of communication with the media to ensure positive exposure for the Council and its work, including compiling and distributing news releases and organising photocalls and press conferences.

- To increase awareness of the Council and its work through a proactive and strategic approach to media relations, including creating, developing and managing working relationships with key journalists.
- To act as the first point of contact for the media, providing timely pro-active and reactive statements.
- To produce multi-channel content, including long and short copy to approved time, budget, quality and accuracy criteria.
- To manage a communications budget efficiently and to approved spending criteria.
- To advise senior leadership on reactive communication and reputation management, including responding to crisis situations and facilitating media training.
- To keep up to date of trends and technologies across the communications mix, identifying and recommending opportunities for the development and improvement of the Council's communications function.
- To ensure equality, diversity and inclusion in all Council communications activity is included.
- To ensure Council communication adheres to ethical standards, including accuracy, honesty, transparency and governance.
- To adhere to the Council's policies, including equal opportunities and health and safety.
- Due to the nature of this role, some flexibility and out of office cover may be required.
- To undertake other duties of a similar responsibility as may be allocated to the post from time to time.

# PERSON SPECIFICATION



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ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	TO BE IDENTIFIED BY
<b>Qualifications</b>		
Nationally recognised professional qualification in public relations or journalism, such as the CIPR or PRCA PR Diploma, or NCTJ National Qualification in Journalism.		Application
	Educated to degree level in communications, public relations or a related discipline.	Application
	Full or accredited membership of a professional organisation, such as the CIPR or PRCA.	Application
<b>Experience</b>		
Experience of working in a busy public relations and media team.		Application Form/ Interview
Experience of strategic public relations practice and delivering positive, measurable outcomes for customers and stakeholders.		Application Form/ Interview
Experience of establishing working relationships with journalists and driving substantial media coverage.		Interview
Experience of producing fast and accurate copy and creating or commissioning impactful multi-media content.		Application Form/ Interview
Experience of compiling and distributing news releases and organising photocalls and press conferences.		Application Form/ Interview
	Experience of managing budgets efficiently and to approved spending criteria.	Interview
	Experience of reputation management, crisis management and ethical decision-making.	Interview
	Experience of creating audio-visual content, such as photography, videography or podcasting.	Interview

ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	TO BE IDENTIFIED BY
<b>Experience</b>		
	Experience of Local Government.	Interview
<b>Skills/Knowledge</b>		
Excellent writing, editing and proofreading skills and ability to produce clear, accurate long and short copy at speed.		Interview
Experience in multi-channel communication, including conventional, digital and social media.		Application Form/ Interview
Operational knowledge of Microsoft Office suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook).		Interview
Ability to manage own time, resolve conflicting priorities and deliver to deadlines.		Interview
Able to use effective verbal and written skills to communicate, influence, persuade and present to a diverse range of internal and external stakeholders.		Application Form/ Interview
Able to create and implement impactful publicity campaigns that raise public awareness and community engagement.		Application Form/ Interview
Understanding of and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.		Interview
<b>Skills/Knowledge</b>		
	Knowledge of local authority decision making processes and the role of elected members.	Interview
	Knowledge of the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Government Publicity.	Interview
	Knowledge of the essentials of media law and the Editors' Code of Practice.	Interview
<b>Personal Qualities</b>		
Ability to deal with sensitive information and a range of internal and external stakeholders, including elected members, with discretion and tact.		Interview

