

Assistant Director News and Media

Job Title:	Assistant Director News and Media	Date:	July 2018
Reporting Line:	Director of Communications and Engagement	Job Level:	Subject to JE – Senior Leadership
Team:	Communications and Engagement	Business Area:	GMCA

JOB PURPOSE

To work with the Director of Communications & Engagement and the Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement to design and oversee delivery of a comprehensive Media Strategy and media handling plan for the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (including Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service).

This will include promoting the work of the above bodies and demonstrating the difference that devolution is making across Greater Manchester.

The role holder will be responsible for the generation and management of the news agenda for GMCA and the Mayor, as well as building positive and productive relationships with a wide range of media; with a view to ensuring the strategic objectives of the Mayor and Combined Authority are delivered.

It is a high profile and demanding media role which will see the post-holder working closely with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and GMCA leadership, including the Chief Fire Officer, to handle significant local, regional, national and international media activity and manage the huge interest in Greater Manchester.

Reporting to the Director of Communications and Engagement, it is a key senior role in the GMCA Communications and Engagement team, working towards our strategic aim to build awareness of, involvement with and trust in the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and Greater Manchester the region. We will do this through engaging and informing a wide range of stakeholders and audiences, through creative campaigns and a forward thinking approach.

The communications and engagement team supports the Mayor of Greater Manchester, its deputies and the portfolio holders across the city region, who, working with and through GMCA, ensure the objectives set out in the 2017 Greater Manchester Strategy: Our People, Our Place are delivered.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

- Mayor of Greater Manchester
- Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester
- Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service Chief Fire Officer
- Greater Manchester GMCA senior executives
- GMCA portfolio holders – council leaders and chief executives
- Director of Communications and Engagement, Assistant Director News and Media and GMCA communications and engagement team
- Mayoral team and GMCA policy team
- Wider Greater Manchester communications and media teams
- Partner agencies working within News and Media in Greater Manchester and nationally, where appropriate

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Provide strategic leadership and management to the news and media team. Leading on service delivery strategies, establishing new ways of working – focusing on outcomes and impact as well as organisational need.

GMCA has a Communications and Engagement Strategy in place which provides a framework for our activity. It's expected that the post-holder will work closely with the Assistant Director Communications and Engagement to oversee the successful delivery of this strategy.

As part of this its media plan has objectives which include:

- To maximise positive media coverage of GMCA and the Mayor as leading voices in UK public life
- To safeguard and, where necessary, defend the reputation of GMCA and the Mayor
- To build productive relationships with national and regional media
- To ensure GMCA and the Mayor are positioned effectively as a voice on emerging public policy debates in the media

It's expected that the post-holder will deliver the following, in order to meet the objectives:

- To lead on the design and provision of a comprehensive, creative and effective media strategy (including handling plan and policy), ensuring all proactive and reactive work contributes to delivering tangible outcomes set out in our Communications Strategy, in the GMCA Business Plan and in the Greater Manchester Strategy

- To build and maintain excellent and effective relationships with key local, national, specialist, political and where appropriate international media, to include:
 - An effective programme of media networking for the team and key Greater Manchester leaders
 - A database of key journalists and the positions adopted by them and their organisations on areas of interest to the organisation
- To lead on undertaking short and long term media and political affairs horizon scanning in order to spot risks and opportunities to position our work in the media
- To provide and/or procure media training for appropriate senior leaders
- To lead, develop, oversee, and take part in, an effective in and out of hours monitoring and reactive/on call service to ensure key leaders are sighted on relevant media coverage and able to respond, to include participating in Greater Manchester's emergency planning processes
- To lead evaluation of the impact of the media strategy and handling plan (and amend accordingly), including overseeing the GMCA's media monitoring service and carrying out perception/pulse checks with journalists, to contribute to the team's overall performance dashboard
- To play a key role in ensuring the successful delivery of campaigns, working with the Assistant Director Communications, Engagement and Campaigns
- To ensure the GMCA team is positioned positively nationally and takes an active role in appropriate professional networks
- To support the embedding of a communications culture across GMCA, to include media training where appropriate
- To realise the benefits of a flexible approach to work in undertaking the duties and responsibilities of this post and participating in multi-disciplinary cross-department and cross-organisational groups and project teams.
- Provide strategic and tactical media advice to senior stakeholders, including the Mayor, Deputy Mayors and GMCA leadership.
- Alongside the Assistant Director Communications and Engagement lead on ensuring that the impact of the campaigns and PR activity is maximised

General

- To lead and manage the GMCA news and media team, through inspiring a shared vision within the team. Actively supporting their professional development and performance; and recognising the team contributions to the successful running of the wider GMCA communications and engagement team.
- To be responsible for evaluating the impact of the media plans (and amend accordingly), including carrying out internal and external insight work, to contribute to the team's overall performance dashboard.
- To be responsible for and manage the News and Media teams budget, successfully ensuring that service needs and resources levels are identified and met, and anticipating future needs.

- To empower and enable the team to deliver their projects and work collaboratively; ensuring it is positioned positively nationally and takes an active role in appropriate professional networks.
- To take part in an out of hours rota to offer advice and guidance to the team members on call, and to ensure cover is provided for Greater Manchester's emergency planning processes.
- To build alliances and networks in Greater Manchester and beyond, including transport, health, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the voluntary and community sector, to design and support relevant News and Media activity involving the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Greater Manchester portfolio holders and Chief Executives and GMCA.
- To model embedding of a communications culture across GMCA, to include media training where appropriate. To seek out innovative ways of improving the News and Media Team, the support they provide, and the organization as a whole.

NB: This list of duties and responsibilities is by no means exhaustive, and the post holder may be required to undertake other relevant and appropriate duties as required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Knowledge & Experience

- Post graduate or equivalent qualification, or at least ten years' experience in communications, engagement, journalism or another relevant disciplines
- Professional qualification in Leadership / Management at Level 6 (or above) or equivalent relevant professional leadership and management experience
- Evidence of continuing professional development e.g. CIPR, CIM etc
- An extensive network of contacts in the media, including national media, lobby correspondents, media commentators and online media and influencers
- Knowledge of the national policy context for public services and devolution; and the implications for News and Media within this
- Knowledge of media operations, publication times and deadlines
- Knowledge of media law and relevant local authority legislation and guidance relating to communications, media and officers
- Understanding of the evaluation of communications functions and an ability to use evidence to guide decision making for future communications activity.
- Knowledge of the political and business environment of GMCA and Greater Manchester
- Significant experience as a journalist and/or press specialist, working at a senior level in a regional or national outlet/organisation and covering a range of issues, including

political affairs at a regional and national level

- Experience of successfully developing and delivering media strategy for a large, complex, political and high profile organisation with a focus on achieving perception and impact outcomes
- Demonstrable experience and proven ability in advising senior leaders on reactive and proactive media activity
- Experience of managing media training programmes and providing media training to senior leaders
- Knowledge and experience of crisis management and the role of communications and media in fast-moving crisis situations. The ability to stay calm and retain authority in an apparent crisis
- Experience of working with marketing and PR colleagues to provide media input into wider campaigns and programmes
- Proven leadership and management experience and ability
- Demonstrable experience of developing strategies and communications initiatives for implementation and seeing them through to completion.

Skills & Behaviours

- Ability to build and maintain effective relationships with key media – and handle significant challenge while protecting the professional relationship
- Significant powers of persuasion and willingness to appropriately challenge senior leaders and undertake rebuttal/challenge with journalists where appropriate
- Excellent writing skills and ability to translate complex messaging for differing audiences, both on and offline
- Excellent digital skills and complete familiarity with social media
- Able to manage conflicting demands and juggle complex and high profile stakeholders effectively
- Creative and resourceful
- Self-motivated and able to deal with a demanding workload and deliver consistently to deadlines
- Ability to work flexibly and creatively as part of an effective team, building and maintaining positive relationships with colleagues
- Commitment to high standards of customer care and public service
- Commitment to collaborative and partnership working
- Willingness to work out of office hours
- Requirement and willingness to travel outside the county to attend meetings etc. when required may include overnight stay.
- Requirement to work evenings and / or weekends
- Willingness and ability to travel across county and work from other sites as required