

Derbyshire County Council

Meeting of Cabinet Member for Strategic Policy and Budget

5 August 2014

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive

ESTABLISHMENT OF TWO COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER POSTS

1 Purpose of the Report To seek Cabinet Member approval for the establishment of two Communications Officer posts, one permanent and one fixed term, to support the delivery of the Council's Public Health functions and Children and Younger Adults (CAYA) priorities in line with the Council's commitment to improving health and wellbeing, tackling health inequalities and improving outcomes for children and young people.

2 Information and Analysis In April 2013 responsibility for Public Health was transferred from Primary Care Trusts to top tier authorities. Under the handover of Public Health duties to Derbyshire County Council no specialist communications employees were transferred.

Communication and engagement is central to the delivery of an effective Public Health programme, which has a wide span of duties including providing and commissioning services, promoting healthy lifestyles and health protection.

It is proposed that one Communications Officer post would:

- Deliver evidence-based campaigns to improve health and wellbeing, increase life expectancy and tackle health inequalities by encouraging people to access prevention services and make healthy choices, thereby reducing pressures on other budgets
- Support the Public Health function in the delivery of its statutory health protection duties which include emergency preparedness, disease outbreak response and immunisation programmes
- Provide a specialist media response service for complex and potentially controversial issues, for example sexual health, childhood obesity, substance misuse, and provide a local response to Public Health issues raised in the national media.

A second Communications Officer post (fixed term for two years) is proposed to support the work of the Children and Younger Adults in two key areas:

- Delivering a school governor recruitment and retention campaign. The role of school governors is a crucial part of the Council's Journey to Excellence to increase the numbers of county schools judged outstanding. The County Council has a legal duty to appoint LEA governors and currently has around 112 vacancies out of 858 posts. The authority's vacancy rate is 13.5% compared to the national rate of 11.5%.
- Delivering a programme of communications to promote the home learning environment. Evidence shows that parental involvement in early learning has a greater impact on children's well-being and achievement than any other factor, such as family income, parental education or school environment.

This new post would closely work with health and early years professionals and schools to deliver a multi-channel campaign to encourage, educate, support and signpost parents to ways they can help their child to learn.

3 Financial Considerations The total cost of the two posts is £68,890 at Grade maximum inclusive of 20.6% oncosts. The Public Health post will be funded from the authority's Public Health ring-fenced grant. When the ring-fencing comes to an end a budget virement will be required from Public Health to Communications to cover the on-going cost of the permanent post. The CAYA post will be funded from the earmarked reserve containing the carried forward CAYA underspend.

4 Human Resources Considerations This position has been evaluated through the Council's joint job evaluation process at Grade 10 (£25,735 - £28,562) (attached as Appendix A). Both posts will be managed by and located within the Council's Communications Division and will be recruited to in accordance with the Council's recruitment and selection policy. On cessation of the 2 year fixed term contract the provisions of the Redundancy, Redeployment and Protection of Earnings Policy will be followed to mitigate against compulsory redundancy. Both posts are being recruited to local government terms and conditions therefore the pension scheme on offer will be the LGPS rather than the NHS scheme.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, environmental, health, legal, property and transport considerations.

5 Key Decision No.

6 Call-in Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

7 Officer Recommendation That the Cabinet Member:

7.1 Approves the establishment of two Communications Officer posts as detailed in the report.

Mags Young
Assistant Chief Executive

APPENDIX A

JOB PROFILE

Job Title:	Communications Officer	Ref: DCC/
Department:	Chief Executive's Office	
Section:	Communications	
Job Family:	Communications	Job grade: Grade 10

Purpose of this role:

- To create better public awareness, engagement and understanding of the council's policies, activities and achievements.
- To research, plan, implement and evaluate major communications campaigns.

Key relationships:

Line managed by Senior Communications Officer.

- Advise and brief elected members and council officers up to Strategic Director level on communications matters.
- Liaise with senior representatives of partner organisations e.g. NHS and other councils
- Collaborate with a wide range of external stakeholders including local and national media, businesses and voluntary sector organisations.

Key result areas include:

- Contribute to the research and production of effective strategies for major corporate communications campaigns to meet the council's business priorities.
- Develop, plan and manage specific communications programmes working across a range of service areas.
- Implement internal and external campaigns using a wide range of techniques including: advertising, print, direct mail, media, video and photography, websites and social media, marketing, presentations and road shows.
- Analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of communications campaigns and produce reports.

- Keep abreast of current thinking and developments in communications and public relations practice.
- Build and sustain positive relationships with the media and produce material for local and national print and broadcast media.
- Work flexibly across all communications disciplines including media, campaigns, internal communications, publications and digital communications.
- Supervise, motivate and coordinate support staff on project work providing clear organisation, direction and development.

General Responsibilities:

People Management

On specific projects and campaigns the post holder will be expected to supervise, motivate and organise other members of the team.

Equality and Diversity

To actively support the council's Equality and Human Rights policy.

Health and Safety

Ensure compliance with authority's Health and Safety policy/procedures and any resources the post is responsible for.

Risk Management

Identify opportunities and risks associated with the service and escalate/report to management.