

Post title	Engagement and Participation Officer
Division / Section	Sustainable Development / Strategic Asset Planning
Department	Place
Responsible To	Programme Manager
Number of Post Holders	1
Acting up/ Secondment	No

Purpose of Job

Deliver specialist engagement and participation activity that supports key strategic national shifts of policy and changes in service delivery; and provide specialist professional support within a multi-disciplinary environment to engage with internal and external audiences to help develop the future shape of services.

Major Tasks/Objectives

Support the development and implementation of engagement and participation strategies that help deliver the Council's strategic aims and service objectives.

Support the involvement and engagement of stakeholder groups, partners, communities and service users in joint working and service development through the effective use of appropriate and innovative engagement tools and channels. This includes face to face, social media, online consultation tools, local/community based news/information sources or specific service/professional channels.

Initiate, develop and monitor integrated engagement/participation activities and collateral to meet specific measurable objectives, strategies or programmes of work. This could be city-wide, community/locality focused or targeted to specific service users.

Provide advice and support in the development of appropriate engagement and participation techniques and their application.

Establish and maintain effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders and colleagues, and ensure their participation at relevant stages in programme/project delivery.

Engage with community-based groups and service users including building up knowledge of communities/service users/organisations across the city

Gather and analyse customer insight/intelligence to inform engagement/participation/consultation planning, ensuring activities are targeted to appropriate audiences and appropriate channels/tools are used.

Ensure that key information about services, as they develop, is distributed to target audiences, using the most appropriate channels and tools, and involving best practice in the process.

Set up and run public meetings and other forums to support engagement/participation.

Develop, update and maintain engagement/participation tools and channels, including electronic/online.

Contribute to the preparation and delivery information, advice and creative presentations on engagement/participation matters to senior officials, external partners, representatives, elected members and partnership groups.

Monitor and report on engagement/participation activities to ensure best practice is achieved, and make recommendations for improvements.

Maintain a good knowledge of community engagement, consultation and participation developments.

Make sure that engagement/participation activities adhere to appropriate consultation standards where there is a statutory requirement to engage over service delivery changes.

Procure suppliers and services to deliver projects as required, following the Council's procurement processes. Oversee suppliers and ensure effective delivery to meet project objectives, reporting on progress as required.

Support continual improvement activity within the service.

Organise, maintain, design or develop manual or computerised filing and/or record systems.

Substitute for senior staff in their absence in respect of service issues and engagement/participation projects – this can be at local, national or international level.

Contribute to and, where required, take the lead in cross service/joint agency initiatives or other appropriate team and working groups, cross-service/partnership initiatives or other appropriate working groups. Represent and advise on engagement and participation issues on the Council's behalf at local and national level.

Supervision and Management of People (Numbers and type of staff)

No supervisory responsibility although the post is expected to assist in management of multi-disciplinary teams, ensuring the allocation of work and delivery of projects within set timescales.

Creativity and Innovation

Develop and deliver imaginative and effective engagement/participation initiatives, to involve communities and stakeholders in community, partnership and service planning.

Prepare analysis, recommendations and reports on complex policy, operational and strategic issues that reflect agreed or proposed outcomes, performance, financial and policy issues.

Provide creative direction on engagement/participation activities and create new and fresh ideas for supporting collateral/tools that will encourage stakeholders and target audiences to engage and participate

Write content for engagement and participation collateral, including online, that is effective in targeting diverse audiences.

The post is expected to work independently, and to exercise initiative in carrying out tasks, referring to managers for guidance on complex issues.

Contacts and Relationships

The post will have frequent contact with a wide range of contacts at all levels within the Council, external contractors and partner/external organisations. In particular, the post will work closely with service managers and the Council's communication team to develop a holistic approach to engagement/participation activities.

The post is expected to develop constructive relationships with professional staff within the Council and its partner organisations and stakeholders including for example NHS, people who use the services, other service providers/suppliers, contractors, community and voluntary groups and commercial partners.

Contact with key partners and stakeholders will require tact, diplomacy, persuasion and negotiating skills. The post must be able to listen, interpret and understand the best ways of increasing awareness and understanding of the service/information needs of the target audiences. Some contact will inevitably encounter criticism of the Council and the post holder will need to be able to constructively listen and negotiate solutions.

The post holder will be required to develop, lead, manage and contribute to relevant multi-agency groups in order to take forward engagement and participation activities.

Decisions (Discretion)

Planning and prioritising own workload within given timescales and overall workplans.

In consultation with the appropriate staff, determine the best ways to develop engagement/participation tools to promote and explain the Council policies and services.

Identify the need to respond to matters raised in the course of service monitoring and progress these matters with the appropriate senior staff.

Research and identify possible solutions to identified problems through partnership working.

Bring to attention of senior staff issues of a more complex or unusual nature and participate as required in the resolution of such complex problems.

Monitor and allocate resources in relation to projects for which the post-holder has responsibility.

The post will be allocated tasks by managers who will provide advice and support when necessary.

Decisions (Consequences)

Determine the most appropriate form of engagement/participation strategies and planning required, considering the brief, budget and deadline.

Prioritise tasks and output to meet the required project timescales and ensure the outputs meet strategic objectives, comply with brand, accessibility and equalities guidelines, and to meet target audience needs.

Identify the staff to be consulted on engagement/participation planning and in resolving issues.

Take cognisance of the sensitive and complex nature of the council's business and external issues, and ensure that engagement/participation outputs support a positive reputational outcome for the Council.

Resources

The post holder will be responsible for ensuring contact databases and engagement/participation tools/channels such as website, social media and other channels are kept up to date.

Coordinate and monitor allocated resources (eg project budget) for which the post has responsibility.

Environment – Work Demands

The post will work in a dynamic environment carrying out a wide range of high profile, creative and complex tasks within tight deadlines. At all times the post must remain flexible and be able to multi task, and respond effectively to new and conflicting demands, generating solutions with an awareness of possible budgetary constraints.

The strong partnership-working element of the post requires excellent communication and negotiation skills.

The post will need to work with partners, stakeholders and service providers and users to agree project resources and support where those resources may be limited or committed elsewhere.

Environment – Physical

Although the post may be exposed to some physical demands these will be predominantly within the range of normal office based activities.

Environment – Working conditions

Although the post may be exposed to some adverse working conditions these will be predominantly within the range of normal office based activities.

Environment – Work Context

Although the post will have some requirement to take care in relation to the working environment, work activities and dealing with people this will not be more than the normal required of a Council employee.

Knowledge and Skills

The post will require knowledge and skills equivalent to a degree in a relevant discipline.

Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively as part of a team both within the service area and across different functions of the Council and of partners, stakeholders and service providers.

The post holder is required to demonstrate political awareness and be capable of communicating ideas/projects/proposals in a variety of settings to different audiences, with tact and sensitivity.

The post requires essential partnership development and project management skills. This requires an awareness of the city and local contexts, including issues of political significance and appropriate engagement/participation and consultation and needs with communities.

Excellent interpersonal, communication and negotiating skills are essential and the post must be able to present engagement/participation activities to a range of audiences and have a particular awareness of inclusivity and diversity issues. The post must have high levels of literacy and be able to communicate effectively with a range of partners in a multi function environment, and support engagement processes.

The post will be required to establish good working relationships with partners at all levels and must have knowledge and understanding of working with partners, community agencies and organisations.

The post is required to demonstrate professional knowledge of policy and service issues affecting local government and of engagement/participation activities.

Knowledge of delivering innovative, proactive and effective engagement/participation initiatives in a similar organisation or environment is required. Be able to demonstrate the ability to produce high quality work to meet tight deadlines.

Knowledge of working in a large, complex organisation and able to deal with conflicting priorities to achieve operational and strategic objectives is required.

The post holder must demonstrate clear understanding of political sensitivities, and how to engage with partners, colleagues and communities with tact and sensitivity in order to support community planning, and develop key partner relationships.

Health and Safety

The Council must abide by relevant health and safety and employment laws, as well as the common law duty of care. All members of staff are required take care for their personal health and safety, and that of others who may be affected by their actions or inactions. You are therefore required to carry out your duties in a safe manner in accordance with instructions and in compliance with safety

rules/procedures, regulations and codes of practice. You are required to advise your line manager if you become aware of any unsafe practice or condition or if you have any other safety concerns and should comply with accident and near-miss reporting procedures.

If you supervise, manage or lead other staff, you are also responsible for ensuring that the Council's operations are carried out in such a way that ensures, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of those staff and that of any others who may be affected. You will therefore conduct relevant risk assessments and assign duties with appropriate instructions, in compliance with safety rules/procedures, regulations and codes of practice. You will address and/or escalate any issues of any unsafe practice, condition or any other safety concerns you identify or that are brought to your attention, taking appropriate advice as necessary and will ensure that accident and near-miss reporting procedures are understood and complied with.

Organisation Structure

(attach structure - specific to area of operation)

