



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

Job Specification

Head of Communications (Grade VIII)

(5 Year Fixed Term Contract)

Closing Date: Friday 28th February 2025

To be read in conjunction with

Candidate Information Booklet

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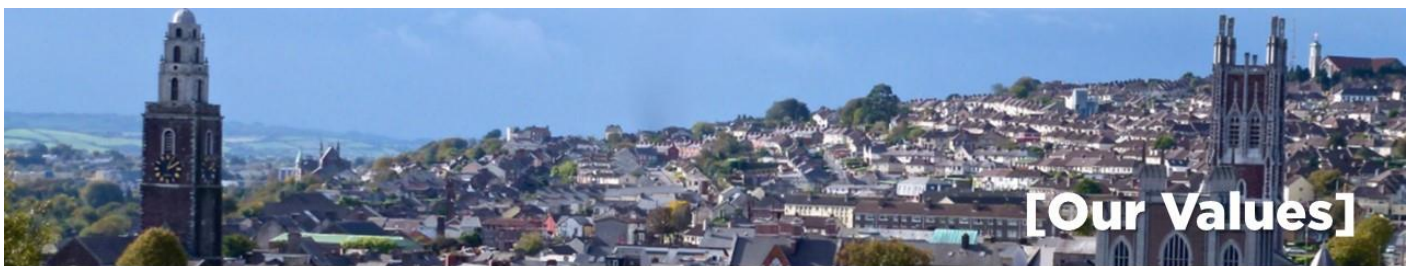
BACKGROUND

Located on the south coast of Ireland, Cork City is the second largest city in Ireland with a population of over 211,000 people.

Cork City is the key driver of the southern region of Ireland. Our ambition is to strengthen the role we play regionally and locally. This ambition is underpinned by Government policy as set out in the [National Planning Framework \(NPF\)](#). This sets a target for Cork City for the population to grow by 125,000 to over 335,000 people between 2020 and 2040, which will make it the fastest growing city in Ireland. This will require a concerted effort to build houses, create circa 75,000 jobs and provide a range of health, social, community and cultural services. Cork will continue to thrive as place of energy, ambition, determination and enterprise. We are a city of ambition, working with our neighbourhoods, communities and businesses to support economic development and facilitate investment. We value our culture and heritage and ensure that Cork continues to be successful as an attractive place to live, study, visit and work.

Cork City Council is a large urban local authority with over 1500 employees across over 40 locations within the City, there are 31 Elected Members of the Council representing five wards in the City. The Council has an annual revenue budget of approximately €325 million for 2025 and provides a wide and diverse range of public services such as parks and recreation, housing, management of the public realm, libraries, physical planning and development, community, culture and place-making and the delivery of infrastructure projects. Internal services include Finance, ICT, People & Organisation Development and Corporate Affairs. The Council is committed to increasing its capacity and capability for change to deliver improved public service.

Cork City Council's Corporate Plan can be viewed on our website: [Corporate Plans - Cork City Council](#)



Public Good

We provide high quality services and address peoples' needs in a manner that is both inclusive and equitable.



Trust & Integrity

We act honestly, openly and fairly in all our dealings.



Respect

We treat all people equally with due regard for their needs and rights.



People Centric Approach

We engage with people in a fair, courteous and timely manner. We strive for continuous improvement



Responsibility

We are accountable and transparent and act responsibly in our dealings and decision making.



Innovation

We continually seek progressive and creative approaches in the services we deliver.



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The City Council is dedicated to delivering excellent public services by working collaboratively with strategic partners, businesses, community, and neighbourhoods to ensure that the city continues to thrive as a place to live, study, visit and work. As Head of Communications, you will be contributing to achieving our vision of leading Cork to take its place as a world class city. Our people are committed to our values of public good, trust & integrity, respect, a people centric approach, responsibility, and innovation.

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for inclusion on a panel from which temporary appointments may be made to the position of Head of Communications (Grade VIII) (5 Year Fixed Term Contract). This post is a full-time 5-year contract for 35 hours a week.

THE ROLE

Cork City Council is seeking the establishment of a Head of Communications role to provide leadership and strategic focus to Cork City Council's expanding communications function which is charged with growing stakeholder awareness and understanding of (1) public services delivered by Cork City Council and (2) the rationale and benefits accruing from the local authority's delivery of complex public facing projects in line with the National Planning Framework's overarching strategy and objectives.

Developing and executing impactful, external strategies to influence and educate the press, stakeholders and the public is a central tenet to this role. As a critical role within the organisation, one of the key requirements is to advise the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team on a range of issues including communications strategy, media relations and policy, social and digital media, and internal communications. This role will be based within the Corporate and Community Affairs Directorate.

Role Specifics and Responsibilities

- Implement and measure the success of a comprehensive marketing, communications and public relations strategy that will enhance Cork's image and position nationally and internationally. It is to be implemented with the active support and engagement of the Council's strategic partners.
- Manage, to a very high standard, media relations including leading publicly on difficult issues.
- Ensure consistent communication of message externally and internally.
- Be responsible for editorial direction, design, production and distribution of all Council publications.
- Coordinate media interest in the Council and Cork generally including regular contact with target media and appropriate response to media requests.
- Manage the appearance of all print and electronic materials such as letterhead, use of logo, brochures, etc.
- Develop, coordinate and oversee programmes, technical assistance and resource materials to assist Council units in the marketing, communications and positioning of their activities.
- Provide advice on marketing, communications and public relations to Managers, Staff and Elected members as appropriate.

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- Ensure that the Council regularly conducts relevant market research and coordinate and oversee this activity.
- Lead projects as assigned including marketing and other special events.
- Understand key business strategies and messages and interpret those to deliver effective and high-quality communication to, and engagement with, the full range of internal and external audiences using channels best suited to the particular audiences.
- Communicate on a regular basis internally within the Council to staff and elected members on key developments within the Council.
- Demonstrate a high level of political awareness and thorough understanding of the local government environment in providing expert advice.
- Provide professional development support and guidance to ensure all communications and marketing activity is in-line with council, professional and legislative standards.
- Manage and promote to its optimum the Council's social media platforms.
- Lead projects to improve the performance of the marketing and communications service.
- Manage a dedicated team of staff.
- Manage budgets as assigned.
- Any other duties as assigned.
- A strategic role within Corporate and Community Affairs Directorate in leading and the vision, values and objectives of Cork City Council's Corporate Plan.
- Provide strategic leadership and build effective expertise, develop motivation and maintain sound employee engagement in the Council's communication function to support the meeting or expansion of the range, effectiveness and quantity or quality of local government services and delivery of communications works programmes.
- Devise and lead the delivery of the corporate communications strategy ensuring consistent delivery across the organisation including designing and delivering strategies to support the stakeholder engagement of high-profile council projects in line with policy context, legislative provisions and operating context.
- Lead the Communications Unit team to deliver services in the following areas corporate communications, press relations, marketing, videography, photography, graphic design, website development, analytics/reporting and social media, internal communications and digital media management.
- Provide communications support and guidance to Senior Management Team and work in a team with colleagues, often of a multidisciplinary nature and interagency, to overcome strategic and operational communications challenges.
- To maintain and develop relations with external partners and stakeholders in accordance with policy and work programmes.
- Understand and manage the communication of complex policy and work programmes to different audiences and stakeholders.

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- Responsibility to uphold and develop the Cork City Council brand identity and outputs.
- Attending meetings with other organisations as required.
- Performing such duties as appropriate to the post which the Director of Services or designated Officer may assign.

The above specification is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all duties involved and consequently, the post holder may be required to perform other duties as appropriate to the post which may be assigned to them from time to time and to contribute to the development of the post while in office.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE POST

1. **Character**

Each candidate must be of good character.

2. **Health**

Each candidate must be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

3. **Essential Requirements**

Each candidate must, on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms have:

- i. Have obtained a qualification at level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications, in Journalism, Multi-Media/Communications, Marketing or Public Relations, or a related discipline.
- ii. Have a minimum of 7 years' satisfactory experience in a broad communications role e.g. PR, Journalism, Media Management, Corporate Communications, Communication Campaigns and Digital Media.
- iii. A proven understanding of the local government operating environment, the Irish traditional and digital media landscape and proven delivery in the field of communications.
- iv. Substantial experience of dealing with the Press.
- v. Proven leadership skills at a managerial level and experience managing a team in a fast-moving environment and advising senior leaders in an organisation.
- vi. Experience contributing communications expertise to the development of wider organisation strategies and plans.
- vii. Proven ability in: Strategic Management and Change, Performance through People, Delivering Results and Personal Effectiveness.

4. **Desirable Skills**

The ideal candidate should have:

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Proven ability to network and develop strategic partners.
- A high degree of resilience and personal integrity.
- Proven skills in use of technology appropriate to the position.
- Highly developed presentation skills.
- Knowledge and understanding of the current/emerging media environment at a national/international level, the current political socio-economic environment and a satisfactory knowledge of topical developments in the Cork region.
- Proven ability to influence and negotiate outcomes.
- Direct involvement in the development of a large-scale consumer communications campaign that included both traditional and digital media.
- Brilliant execution of campaigns demonstrating how an idea was brought to life across multiple consumer touch points, including digital/social channels, over time.
- Clear leadership skills and experience of managing a team including collaborating and working cross functionally with other teams and stakeholders.
- Holders of the office may be required to drive a motor car in the course of their duties and should therefore, hold a clean driving licence (Class B) for the relevant vehicle class they are driving. This licence must be free from convictions and medical limitations that do not permit them or prevent them driving their own vehicle or a vehicle provided by Cork City Council.

Competency Framework

Candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate in their application and at interview that they possess these competencies through the experience and skills they have gained to date.

Strategic Management and Change

Strategic Ability

Displays the ability to think and act strategically. Thinks long term. Can translate strategy into operational plans and outputs. Evaluates capacity and performance against objectives. Demonstrates innovation and creativity to secure successful strategic outcomes.

Political Awareness

Has a clear understanding of the political reality and context of the organisation.

Networking and Representing

Develops and maintains positive and mutually beneficial relationships with a range of stakeholders. Builds networks of technical and professional contacts. Promotes and sustains an appropriate, positive, and cohesive image for the organisation it represents.

Bringing about Change

Demonstrates flexibility and an openness to change. Develops and initiates change management programmes to meet end objectives. Influences others and fosters commitment to change.

Performance Through People

Leading and Motivating

Motivates others individually and in teams to deliver high quality work and customer focused outcomes. Develops the competence of team members and helps them meet their full potential. Leads by example in terms of commitment, flexibility, and a strong customer service ethos.

Managing Performance

Effectively manages performance including underperformance or conflict. Empowers and encourages people to deliver their part of the operational plan.

Communicating Effectively

Recognises the value of communicating effectively with all employees. Actively listens to others. Has highly effective verbal and written communication skills. Presents ideas effectively to individuals and groups.

Delivering Results

Problem Solving and Decision Making

Can pinpoint critical information and address issues logically. Understands the context and impact of decisions made. Acts decisively and makes timely, informed and effective decisions.

Operational Planning

Contributes to operational plans and develops team plans with priorities and actions for their area of operations. Delegates, tracks and monitors activity. Establishes high quality service and customer care standards.

Managing Resources

Manages the allocation, use and evaluation of resources to ensure they are used effectively to deliver on operational plans. Drives and promotes reduction in cost and minimisation of waste.

Delivering Quality Outcomes

Promotes the achievement of quality outcomes in delivering services. Organises the delivery of services to meet or exceed the required standard. Evaluates the outcomes achieved, identifies learning and implements improvements required.

Personal Effectiveness

Relevant Knowledge

Keeps up to date with current developments, trends and best practice in their area of responsibility. Demonstrates the required specialist knowledge, understanding and training for the role. Has strong knowledge and understanding in relation to statutory obligations of Health and Safety legislation and its application in the workplace.

Resilience and Personal Well Being

Demonstrates appropriate and positive self-confidence. Operates effectively in an environment with significant complexity and pace.

Integrity

Behaves in an honest, trustworthy and respectful manner and is transparent, fair and consistent in dealing with others.

Personal Motivation, Initiative and Achievement

Is enthusiastic about the role and is motivated in the face of difficulties and obstacles. Does more than is required or expected, anticipating situations and acting to pre-empt problems. Creates new opportunities.

Salary

The salary scale for the position is:

€78,593 - €79,294 - €82,378 - €85,481 - €88,590 - €91,667 - €94,762 (Max) - €98,273 (LS11) - €103,868(LS12)

In accordance with Departmental Circular letter EL 02/2011, a person who is not a serving local authority employee on or after 1st January 2011, will enter the scale for the position at the minimum point.

Hours of Duty

The standard working week will be 35 hours per week. The role will involve flexible working hours and will include evening and weekend work. Overtime rates will not apply to additional hours worked outside of normal hours. The Council reserves the right to alter your hours of work from time to time.

Holders of the post may be called for duty at any time in accordance with arrangements made by local authorities.

Candidates are advised to view our Candidate Information Booklet where they will find further information on the Format of the Competition, our Principal Conditions of Service and General Data Protection Regulation.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 4pm on Friday 28th February 2025.

Guidelines for completing and submitting application forms are available on our website and can be accessed here: [Recruitment Resources - Cork City Council](#)

We are an equal opportunity employer and through our recruitment process, we welcome and encourage applications from interested and suitably qualified individuals regardless of gender, age, racial or ethnic origin, membership of the traveller community, religion or beliefs, family or civil status, sexual orientation/gender identity or disability.