

## Job Description

Job title	Junior Press Officer
Directorate	BUSINESS: Business Support Department
Team	Press Office – Communications and Marketing
Grade	4
Reports to	Press Officer

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### Main purpose of the job:

The Junior Press Officer supports the day-to-day operation of the Press Office, promoting the services, decisions, policies, and priorities of the council in the media and on social media, both proactively and reactively.

They also provide a supporting role to promote the council's reputation and provide professional advice to Cabinet and senior management.

This role also helps ensure the council's values and tone of voice speak across all our press office and digital communications activities and provides a direct link to internal and external stakeholders.

The Press Office is managed between 8.30am and 5pm on weekdays and provides an out-of-hours emergency media service on a rota system, which the Junior Press Officer is involved with.

This role also helps cover Medway Full Council and Cabinet meetings, which are held in the evening, to support the media and promote the council's vision, values, and priorities.

### Accountabilities and outcomes:

The Junior Press Officer will help ensure the council's brand values and tone of voice speak across all our press office and digital communications activities.

Under the direction of the Press Officer, the Junior Press Officer will assist with answering media enquiries, meeting tight external deadlines.

They are also responsible for writing their own press releases, publishing press releases to the website and social media platforms and securing coverage in media publications.

The Junior Press Officer will also support the Press Officer with preparing media briefings for interviews, facilitating media interviews and researching media matters to help protect the council's reputation.

They will also help to track and manage proactive media requests from services and external partners, identify, and save coverage which references Medway Council and identify target audiences and publications.

This role also deputises for the Press Officers and helps to look after the press office inbox to monitor and respond to incoming requests.

The Junior Press Officer provides a key role during a crisis or emergency incident, contributing to the council's legal duty to warn and inform before, during and after a crisis. They will help to provide consistent, accurate and timely messages to a variety of audience across varied social media channels.

The Junior Press Officer will also play a role in supporting Medway's digital and social media agenda, using a variety of social media channels and digital communications methods, including video interviews, to communicate, engage and expand our target audiences.

They will work with the Press Officer to programme the council's social media news flow, creating and scheduling engaging posts about services, and corporate and national campaigns. They will also help to monitor digital communications, reporting on key trends and local issues, and making recommendations for improvement where appropriate.

The Junior Press Officer is responsible for supporting our customer services team by responding to service requests on social media. They are also responsible for monitoring and co-ordinating responses to more challenging social media queries.

This role also contributes content to the council's Medway Matters magazine, where required.

At the discretion of the Press Officer, such other activities as may from time to time be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.

## **Key Corporate Accountabilities:**

To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives and targets.

To understand and actively keep up to date with GDPR responsibilities, including completing regular refresher training.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all employees are required to act in such a way that safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

To participate in the Performance Appraisal process and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs utilising the Career Development Framework.

To actively promote the Council's Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place.

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.

To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder.

Promote the Medway Carbon Neutral by 2050 commitment; supporting the Council action plan to ensure we play our part in addressing the climate emergency.

Medway Council is a Category One responder in relation to the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and as a result all staff working for the authority may be asked to carry out Category One response duties or stand into the role of another member of staff who is responding to a Major Civil Incident.

## **Organisation:**

This role reports to the Press Officer.

The post holder will not be required to line manage others but may be required to direct, coordinate or train other employees.

The post holder will be required to liaise with all stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation. This includes local, regional and national journalists, members of the Kent and Medway Resilience Forum, senior leadership team, Cabinet members, and key stakeholders the council is working with.

## **Working Style:**

Hybrid working – a flexible working arrangement whereby an employee can undertake their work either in the office and/or partially or mainly from home on a temporary or permanent basis.

There will be a minimum of two days working in the office each week.

The post holder is also required to travel to other sites as and when required as part of their duties, in and out of work hours.

# Person Specification

All criteria at level A are considered essential unless stated otherwise.

## Qualifications

### Level A

- Qualification in journalism or public relations (e.g. NCTJ qualifications, related degree or suitable alternative).

### Level B (in addition)

- N/A

### Level C (in addition)

- N/A

## Knowledge

### Level A

- Understanding of the structure, responsibilities and policies of the public sector.
- Good knowledge of a press office/news desk.
- Good knowledge of how to use a variety of social media channels.

### Level B (in addition)

- Stay up to date on best practice across media relations.
- A developing understanding of media law
- A developing understanding of Freedom of Information process in relation to the work of the press office
- Enhanced knowledge of writing and publishing effective media releases.
- An understanding of the variety of corporate media channels used for corporate purposes.
- Detailed understanding of how to write in different formats.

### Level C (in addition)

- Continue self-learning in media relations and monitor trends across social media to benefit the work of the press office and communications team
- Demonstrate understanding of how to deal with a variety of media enquiries, using own knowledge, media law, and researching and working with services to respond in a timely manner.
- A solid understanding of how Freedom of Information requests are processed and how the press office is involved.

## Experience

### Level A

- Has a good understanding of working in a busy newsroom (journalism), press office (media handling) or digital newsroom/customer relations environment.
- Has a good understanding of using multi-media content online e.g. video or audio.
- Some experience in using a variety of social media in a personal or professional context.

### Level B (in addition)

- A minimum of 18 months experience of working in a newsroom or press office.
- Demonstrate easy use of proactive and reactive communications, including social media use, in a public relations context, supporting the council's vision, values and priorities.
- Starting to gain experience in handling crisis/emergency/reputational matters and media enquiries, with support from colleagues.
- Preparing senior members or staff for media interviews, providing advice on handling broadcast and print interviews, providing written briefings and support.
- Evaluating local, national and specialist media activity and coverage and adapting approaches to media handling to achieve the best results.

### Level C (in addition)

- A minimum of three years' experience of working in a newsroom or press office.
- Experience of delivering an effective social media campaign to boost engagement, and to support the council's vision, values and priorities.
- Confidently able to handle reputational media enquiries, with little input required from others.
- Consistently producing engaging videos, and able to support colleagues with filming opportunities.
- Ability to write priority area press release, with a track record of securing wider than Medway coverage.

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## Skills

### Level A

- Proficient in the use of Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook
- Full driving licence valid for use in the UK and access to own transport for work purposes
- Developed writing skills; able to write in different styles according to need and target audience.
- Demonstrate the ability to use their judgement to develop communication skills to present information in an understandable way, to a range of audiences.

- Video editing and filming
- The ability to work independently whilst carrying out the day-to-day duties of the role.
- Planning skills to prioritise workload and outputs as necessary.
- Adaptable and is able to deal successfully with unexpected problems or situations.
- Ability to produce the very best coverage whether resulting from conversation or copywriting.
- Always listens and responds to people in a helpful and polite manner.
- Able to work in a service-style culture while retaining the independence and credibility to give good advice as to how to achieve the best outcome from the media and social media activity.

### Level B (in addition)

- Developed filming and editing skills.
- Excellent writing skills to demonstrate positive results from writing in different formats.
- Developed personable skills, show the ability to build trusting professional relationship with senior leadership team and Cabinet to provide advice on media response and digital work.
- Developed communication skills to work with stakeholders to provide thorough briefings for Cabinet for video interviews.

### Level C (in addition)

- Ability to provide effective, and largely unaided, support in a crisis/emergency/reputational matter and using their skills to issue consistent and accurate social media messaging in a timely manner.
- Demonstrates highly developed media-writing expertise, producing press releases and briefings that achieve regional or national media coverage.
- Demonstrates the ability to proactively identify and assess issues, projects or decisions with potential reputational impact on the council and the work of the press office.