

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Communications and Engagement Lead (x2)
MANAGED BY:	Public Engagement Manager OR News & Media Manager
GRADE:	11

THE ROLE

The West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (WECA) is leading a number of the region's most significant growth and place-making programmes. These include the development of the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS), the Brabazon & West Innovation Arc (WIA) new town programme, the Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England, and the development and delivery of a mass transit transport system. Together, these programmes will help shape how the region grows over the coming decades, delivering homes, jobs, infrastructure and investment that support inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

The Combined Authority is looking to recruit two Communications and Engagement Leads, one focusing on Strategic Growth and Place, and the other on Mass Transit.

These roles are central to building public understanding, stakeholder confidence and political support for these programmes. The postholders will act as the communications and engagement leads, developing compelling narratives, leading engagement and consultation activity, and ensuring that the region presents a coherent, coordinated story around growth, infrastructure, transport, and place-making.

As the Communications and Engagement Lead, you will:

- Lead communications, engagement and consultation activity across the programmes, effectively communicating the vision for growth, infrastructure, and sustainable transport.
- Build and manage relationships with key local, regional and national stakeholders, helping to secure support and confidence in strategic growth programmes.
- Lead communications and engagement activity associated with the preparation of major projects associated with Place or Mass Transit, ensuring communities can meaningfully participate in shaping the future of the region.

- Work closely with other key growth-focused programmes within the Combined Authority to ensure a consistent, compelling narrative focused around economic growth.
- Ensure consistency of messaging and engagement approaches across major growth programmes.
- Lead the client-side management of external communications, engagement and consultation consultants appointed to support these programmes.
- Operate within a matrix-managed environment, requiring effective collaboration across directorates and accountability to both functional and programme leadership arrangements.

It is expected that one role will formally report to the Public Engagement Manager, with the other to the News & Media Manager.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Working across WECA's Communications and Marketing team and the relevant delivery Directorates (Transport and Place), key duties and responsibilities will include:

- Planning and delivering proactive engagement activity using a range of channels to support the delivery of the Strategic Growth and Place / Mass Transit programmes, working within the corporate Communications and Marketing team, as well as with the teams responsible for the delivery of the programmes.
- Leading consultant teams to support delivery of specific communications, engagement and public affairs related activity, and managing them through appropriate contractual arrangements.
- Owning and developing key stakeholder relationships, in partnership with relevant colleagues.
- Working with partner Unitary Authorities to ensure a regional and collaborative approach to strategic growth and infrastructure delivery, and to design communications strategies that work for the diverse communities in the region.
- Planning and leading public consultations including promotion, design, project management, analysis, interpretation and dissemination.
- Ensuring consultation and engagement activity is inclusive and reaches the West of England's diverse communities and hard-to-reach groups.
- Supporting the preparation of briefings for senior leaders as necessary, advising them on opportunities and risks and providing advice on mitigation to manage the reputation of the organisation.
- Working closely with the wider Communications and Marketing team to increase the reach and raise the profile of the programmes and ensuring that all activities are delivered in line with our overall Communications Strategy, brand, visual identity, tone of voice and key messages.
- Developing the brand identity for the programmes.
- Providing support to the wider Communications and Marketing team to support WECA work with duties commensurate with the role.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Degree in a relevant field or equivalent professional experience.
- Understanding of communications, engagement and consultation principles in a public sector environment.

Experience

- Experience of delivering communications and engagement programmes for complex, high-profile transport or infrastructure projects.
- Experience of working across multiple stakeholders with differing priorities and interests.
- Experience of developing and implementing communications and engagement strategies.
- Experience of delivering or overseeing public consultation and community engagement activity.
- Experience of building productive relationships with regional and national stakeholders.
- Experience of operating within a political environment.

Skills and Competencies

- Excellent interpersonal skills, with ability to manage complex relationships with a range of stakeholders with competing priorities.
- Excellent communication skills including writing, presentation, influencing, negotiation, demonstrable political sensitivity, tact and diplomacy as well as strong relationship management skills
- Ability to translate technical information into clear messages for a broad audience
- Good organisational skills with proven ability to manage priorities and deliver results on time and work well under pressure to tight deadlines
- Willingness to work in a collaborative matrix management style
- Ability to develop compelling narratives around complex policy and delivery programmes.
- Strong political awareness, judgement and sensitivity.
- Ability to influence senior stakeholders and build consensus.

DESIRABLE

Qualifications and Knowledge

- An understanding of local, regional and national context relevant to the delivery of strategic growth, place or transport programmes.
- An understanding of how major projects are developed, approved and funded

Experience

- Project and contract management of consultations supporting communications and engagement related workstreams.