



Position Description – Communications and Engagement Manager

This position reports to: Head of Communications, Engagement and Marketing **Career Level:** 21

Position purpose:

As a member of the Communication and Engagement Team, the Communications and Engagement Manager will be responsible and accountable for:

Leading Selwyn District Council's strategic communications and engagement planning function, ensuring the organisation receives proactive, well-planned and high-quality support that strengthens relationships, improves forward planning and enhances Council's reputation.

The role provides leadership across business partnering, strategic planning, prioritisation, engagement planning and service delivery, enabling the Communications & Engagement Team to operate as a trusted strategic partner to the organisation.

Working closely with wider members of the team, the Communications and Engagement Manager will ensure consistent practice across the business partner model, drives forward planning and prioritisation, and supports a sustainable, high performing Communications & Engagement Team service that is audience focused, strategic and aligned with Council priorities.

The functional areas of responsibility include;

Strategic Leadership of Communications & Engagement Planning

- Lead the implementation and continuous improvement of the C&E business partnering model across the organisation.
- Ensure each business unit has a clear, trusted point of contact and receives consistent, strategic advice.
- Champion early involvement of C&E in project planning, ensuring communications and engagement are considered from the outset.
- Provide strategic guidance to Senior/Communications Advisors on complex, sensitive or high-profile issues.
- Work with the Head of Communications, Engagement and Marketing to embed shared expectations, processes and service standards across the organisation.
- Support the organisation to understand how to work effectively with the C&E team, including lead-in times, planning expectations and appropriate channels.

Planning, Prioritisation and Work Programme Management

- Lead the development and maintenance of forward work programmes for all business units supported by the business partner stream.
- Oversee prioritisation processes, ensuring resources are allocated to the highest value work and aligned with Council priorities.
- Support Advisors to balance proactive planning with reactive needs, escalating risks or capacity issues early.
- Ensure consistent use of planning tools, templates and workflow systems to support sustainable workloads and reduce rework.
- Work with the Channels and Content Manager to coordinate integrated delivery across communications, engagement, design and digital.
- Contribute to shared service performance reporting, including workload dashboards, KPIs and planning insights.

Relationship Management and Client Partnership

- Build and maintain strong relationships with business unit leaders, ensuring C&E is seen as a strategic partner.
- Facilitate joint planning conversations with business units to identify priorities, risks, pressure points and opportunities.
- Support Advisors to set clear expectations with clients around lead-in times, processes, roles and responsibilities.
- Provide coaching and support to Advisors to strengthen their partnering capability and confidence.

Be a good
human

Be brave – think
differently

Better
together

Make it happen
for Selwyn

Selwyn
DISTRICT COUNCIL

- Ensure two-way feedback loops are embedded, including post project reviews and insights sharing with Customer Services.
- Support the Head of Communication, Engagement and Marketing in representing the team at senior leadership forums as required.

Engagement Planning and Consultation Support

- Oversee engagement planning and consultation support across the business partner stream, ensuring alignment with Council's engagement principles and statutory requirements.
- Work closely with the Principal Communication and Principal Engagement Advisors to ensure engagement approaches are well-designed, inclusive and appropriate for the scale and impact of each project.
- Support Advisors to identify engagement risks, opportunities and community impacts early in project lifecycles.
- Ensure engagement plans are audience-focused, accessible and aligned with Council's strategic priorities.
- Contribute to evaluation of engagement activities and ensure lessons learned inform future practice.

Quality, Consistency and Risk Management

- Ensure business partnering practice is consistent across the team, including planning, advice, documentation and client engagement.
- Support Advisors to identify reputational risks early and provide sound strategic advice to mitigate them.
- Oversee quality assurance processes for communications plans, engagement approaches and strategic advice.
- Ensure all work aligns with Council's brand, tone of voice, accessibility standards and legal requirements.
- Contribute to the development and maintenance of shared tools, templates, guides and "ways of working" resources.

Leadership, Capability and Performance

- Provide day-to-day leadership for Senior Communications and Engagement Advisors assigned to the business partner stream.
- Support professional development, coaching, mentoring and capability building across the team.
- Foster a collaborative, supportive and high-performing team culture.
- Ensure workloads are manageable, expectations are clear and wellbeing is prioritised.
- Support recruitment, onboarding and induction of new team members.
- Work closely with the Principal Communications Advisor to ensure alignment of standards, messaging and quality.

Collaboration, Continuous Improvement and Systems Development

- Work closely with the Channels and Content Manager to ensure integrated, end-to-end service delivery.
- Lead or contribute to the Business Partner Workstream Project, including development of shared tools, templates and processes.
- Support evaluation and reporting of communications and engagement activity, capturing lessons learned and informing improvements.
- Stay up to date with best practice in strategic communications, engagement, planning and public sector service delivery.
- Contribute to a culture of learning, improvement and shared accountability for quality.

Key Communications and Engagement Team Deliverables and Performance Expectations

- Strong, trusted relationships with business units and clear, consistent partnering practice.
- Well-planned, realistic and prioritised forward work programmes across all portfolios.
- High-quality strategic advice and communications/engagement planning that supports Council priorities.
- Effective coordination with the Channels and Content Manager to ensure integrated delivery.
- A cohesive, capable and supported business partner team.
- Contribution to a sustainable, proactive and strategic C&E operating model.
- Clear, accurate and timely service performance reporting.

Values, Wellbeing and Ways of Working

- Act in accordance with Council values and foster a respectful, collaborative team culture.
- Support sustainable workloads through effective planning and prioritisation.
- Raise risks, issues or wellbeing concerns early and constructively.
- Contribute to a culture of learning, improvement and shared accountability for quality.

Direct reports: 5

Indirect reports: Nil

**Be a good
human**

**Be brave – think
differently**

**Better
together**

**Make it happen
for Selwyn**

**Selwyn
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Deliverables

Strategy & Planning	• Drive the strategy of the of the Council to be aspirational and focused on high standards of service which reflect the demographics (as appropriate to role) • Deliver an annual plan, budget and (where appropriate) capital budget on time and in alignment with strategy and overall business plans • Contribute strategic and detailed information to the development of Council's LTP • Provide functional input for each of the teams that report to this role into the strategies and plans of other functions • Monitor the activities and plans of other business units for relevance and impact to own business unit – plan and take action accordingly • Achieve and maintain a high level of understanding of Selwyn District initiatives, developments, trends and issues • Manage risk through careful planning and sound judgement • Provide expert evidence-based advice and direction to governance and leadership on matters relating to designated area(s)
Goal & Performance Achievement	• Set performance objectives with all staff which are aligned with the strategy and goals of the organisation and team • Review staff performance and development, providing regular feedback and coaching. Remedy performance discrepancies • Recruit capable people who are a fit with the culture and values • Ensure that staff are sufficiently trained and adequately resourced to complete their work • Ensure a high level of achievement of plans and KPIs within business unit • Manage and control operating expenses and take prompt action to remedy negative budget variances • Develop and maintain a high level of digital literacy within the team • Optimise the use of technology within service area • Evaluate programmes in functional area, ensuring continuous improvement with the customer at the core • Balance prudent expenditure whilst also ensuring fit for purpose activities and programmes
Culture	• Develop a motivated, positive, empowered, psychologically safe, continuously developing team • Achieve year on year improvements in staff engagement • Role model and ensure full commitment to Council's safety culture • Be seen by all direct reports as fair and honest with high standards • Operate an effective two-way communication channel and feedback loop – keep people in the know, positively • Be seen as a visible and positively influential leader throughout the organisation (as appropriate to role)
Reporting & Compliance	• Prepare timely and informative monthly reports (and other reports as required) • Maintain currency of knowledge with regard to relevant legislation, LG protocols, policies and procedures and ensure compliance by self and others • Routinely capture data that informs future service planning and delivery by team/organisation • Attend and be prepared for all management and council meetings
Relationships & Representation	• Achieve productive and positive internal relationships across the organisation • Represent the Council carefully and positively in the media (as required for role), in-line with media policy and training • Engage proactively and constructively with Council, Councillors and community boards (as required for role) • Provide an appropriate level of positive visibility in the community • Represent the team/unit/group positively and proactively

Requirements for all staff

- Selwyn District Council honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We are committed to working with our Treaty partner to deliver on our obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Take all reasonable and practical steps to ensure the health and safety of yourself and others. Comply with any reasonable health and safety instruction, policy or procedure and ensure that all hazards, risks and incidents are reported using Vault.
- Actively participate in Performance Appraisals and complete a learning plan in conjunction with your manager.
- Maintain a strict sense of professional ethics, maintaining confidentiality and privacy as per the Privacy Act and abiding by Council Policies.
- Be responsible for meeting the provisions of the Public Records Act 2005 (PRA) and the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) in respect of Council information, and for following related Selwyn District Council policies and processes.

Emergency Management requirements for all Council Staff

Selwyn District Council has a legislative responsibility to respond to an adverse event occurring within our communities. As such, any staff member may be required to assist the Emergency Management Team respond to such an event. Family circumstances and BAU roles will be taken into account. Required assistance may include:

- Coordination of emergency services and lifeline providers within the community during a civil defence emergency or adverse event.
- Respond to civil defence emergencies or adverse events wherever possible and if it is safe to do so.
- Participate in any required Civil Defence exercises to ensure that essential services are maintained.

Authorities

- Authorised to commit the Council to a course of action by signing external correspondence within approved delegation levels. For courses of action which will exceed the delegation levels, this must be done in conjunction with your manager.
- Comply with all other relevant sections of the Delegations and Policies manuals and their amendments.

Skills and Experience

Essential	Desirable
• Minimum 10 years+ experience in communications, engagement, marketing or related strategic advisory roles. • Demonstrated experience leading teams or functions in complex, public-facing environments. • Strong capability in planning, prioritisation and programme management. • Proven ability to build trusted relationships with senior leaders and project teams. • Experience providing strategic advice on sensitive or high-profile issues. • Experience in engagement planning or consultation processes. • Excellent written and verbal communication skills. • Strong judgement in reputational risk and issues management. • Demonstrated commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and inclusive, culturally responsive practice.	• Local government or public sector experience. • Experience in service design, account management or programme leadership. • Experience with workflow systems, planning tools or project management methodologies.

Key relationships

External	Internal	Committees/groups
Te Taumutu Rūnanga	Chief Executive	Committees of Council
Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga	Executive Leadership Team	Business organisations and networks
Council customers	Council staff	Special interest groups and committees
Selwyn residents	Mayor	
External contractors	Elected Councillors	
Territorial and Regional Authorities	Elected Community Board Members	
Government Agencies (incl MfE, MBIE, Work safe NZ, Ministry of Justice, Police, ACC)		
Greater Christchurch Partnership		
Non-government agencies		
Unions – Public Service Association		

Education, Qualifications, Memberships

Essential	Desirable
A relevant bachelor's degree in either Communication, Public Relations, Marketing or equivalent.	Qualifications in communications, public relations, marketing, public policy or related fields.

Be a good
human

Be brave – think
differently

Better
together

Make it happen
for Selwyn

 **Selwyn**
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Leadership Competencies



Eats problems for breakfast. Removes obstacles promptly to enable the team to get on with their work. Thinks methodically, and makes sound, informed decisions.



Does Change Well. Embraces change and creates a culture whereby people are open to and involved in change. Carefully plans for and addresses the associated people impacts.



Builds Togetherness. Shows genuine interest in people and builds trusting relationships with team members and peers. Creates a positive, collaborative, inclusive climate where all people feel part of the team and the organisation.



Rocks the messaging. Ensures people are kept informed. Puts care into ensuring messages and instructions are relevant, interesting, and easily understood.



Tackles the tough stuff. Deals effectively with performance and disciplinary situations. Has the difficult conversations. Takes ownership.



Delivers the goods. Thinks ahead and plans the work of the team accordingly. Ensures work is done well and to time.



Brings out the best. Appreciates that high performance is a journey not a destination. Puts effort into unlocking people's potential.



Sets the tone. Aware of the role of the leader in creating calm and confidence in the team. Monitors own emotions and takes action to stay positive.

The information contained in this position description is intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of the position and incumbent. From time to time it may be necessary to consider changes to the position description in response to the changing nature of our work environment.