

POSITION DESCRIPTION



Job Title:	Communications and Governance Manager
Responsible To:	Group Manager Business Support
Responsible For:	Communications and Engagement Lead Communications Advisor Community Engagement Advisor Governance Support Officer (2)
Position Purpose:	To provide executive-level leadership of Council's communications, engagement, governance, and democratic services functions, ensuring high-quality strategic advice, strong organisational reputation, and best-practice governance.
Date:	May 2026

ORGANISATION CONTEXT



IMPORTANT FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

External

Residents and ratepayers
Media – liaison, advice, issue management
Iwi and Māori communities
Government agencies and local authorities
Consultants and contractors
Electoral Officer, Remuneration Authority,
Local Government Commission – governance processes

Internal

All staff
Elected Members

KEY RESULT AREAS

The position of **Communications and Governance Manager** encompasses the following functions or Key Result Areas:

Jobholder is accountable for	Jobholder is successful when
Strategic Leadership – Communications & Engagement - Leading the development and implementation of Council's organisation-wide Communications and Engagement Strategy. - Providing executive-level strategic advice on communications, engagement, media, reputation, and brand. - Leading enterprise-level reputation and communications risk management. - Overseeing proactive and reactive media management, including high-risk and crisis situations. - Ensuring communications and engagement reflect the diversity of the community, including youth and Māori. - Setting professional standards and frameworks for communications and engagement across Council.	- Council's reputation is protected and enhanced. - Communications and engagement are strategic, inclusive, and aligned to organisational priorities. - Media issues are anticipated and managed with confidence and professionalism. - Council speaks with "one voice" across all channels.
Strategic Governance Leadership - Leading the strategic development and continuous improvement of Council's governance framework. - Providing high-level governance advice to elected members, the CEO, and senior leaders. - Ensuring compliance with LGOIMA, LGA, Standing Orders, and all relevant legislation. - Overseeing Council, committee, and statutory meeting processes. - Leading electoral processes, remuneration reviews, and elected member induction and capability development. - Ensuring transparent, future-focused democratic processes.	- Governance systems are robust, compliant, and future-ready. - Elected members receive timely, accurate, strategic advice. - Meetings run professionally and support high-quality decision-making. - Governance risks are identified early and managed effectively.
People Leadership - Leading and developing a high-performing, multi-disciplinary team. - Setting organisation-wide standards for communications, engagement, and governance capability. - Ensuring performance development, coaching, and succession planning. - Managing contractors and project teams as required.	- Staff are motivated, supported, and delivering high-quality outputs. - Team culture reflects Council values and leadership principles. - Capability across the organisation is strengthened.

Relationship and Stakeholder Leadership • Building strong relationships with media, iwi, stakeholders, and partner councils. • Representing Council at events, hui, and conferences. • Ensuring consistent, effective communication channels. • Supporting relationships with key community groups.	• Stakeholders experience “one organisation”. • Relationships are strong, professional, and constructive. • Issues and opportunities are identified early. • Engagement with iwi and Māori is meaningful and effective.
Corporate Contribution • Contributing to organisational strategy and cross-council initiatives. • Upholding Treaty principles in all work. • Ensuring compliance with health and safety, information management, and emergency management responsibilities. • Supporting civil defence communications and governance obligations.	• Corporate responsibilities are met to a high standard. • You contribute positively to organisational culture and leadership. • Council's emergency response is supported with strong communications and governance
Financial and Resource Management • Leading the development and management of communications, engagement, and governance budgets. • Managing procurement and contractor relationships.	• Budgets are well-managed and aligned to strategic priorities. • Resources are used efficiently and effectively.
Personal Development • Maintain professional knowledge through training and industry engagement. • Participating in relevant professional development, including CIMS, CDEM and emergency management training • Maintaining knowledge of legislative, policy and operational changes	• Relevant training is completed and applied to role. • Training is completed and applied to improve performance and systems • The role demonstrates continuous improvement and increased capability
Health, Safety and Wellbeing • Take all reasonable care to ensure the health and safety of yourself and others • Comply with Ōpōtiki District Councils Health and Safety Policy and Procedures and any other reasonable instructions.	• Events, near misses and injuries are reported in accordance with organisations requirements • Engage in and promote health and safety in work areas.
Civil Defence • Undertake necessary training to ensure Preparedness for Emergency Management.	• Support is provided during an emergency.

Other duties expected of position holder:

Undertake any other duties and functions as may be requested of you by your manager.

Note:

The above performance standards are provided as a guide only. The precise performance measures for this position will need further discussion between the jobholder and manager as part of the performance management process.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

- Bachelor's degree in communications or a related field, with postgraduate study preferred.
- Valid driver's licence.
- 7+ years in senior communications, engagement, or governance roles.
- Experience advising senior leaders and elected members.
- Proven leadership of multi-disciplinary teams.
- Experience in crisis communications and high-risk issue management.
- Experience in governance, democratic processes, or public sector leadership.
- Experience representing an organisation at regional or national forums.

Key Job Competencies

- Executive-level communication and strategic advisory skills.
- Strong governance knowledge and political acumen.
- Strategic thinking, planning, and risk management.
- Relationship management and influencing.
- Crisis and emergency communications capability.
- Project, budget, and resource management.
- Cultural competence and commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Personal Attributes

- Excellent judgement and initiative.
- Collaborative and inclusive leadership style.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills.
- Ability to manage complexity and competing demands.
- High integrity and credibility.

Manager

Date

Position Holder

Date