

Cymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru

Welsh Local Government Association



CLILC • WLGA

Communications and Public Affairs Manager Recruitment Information Pack



Closing Date: 20th September 2019 – 5PM

Interview Date: 1st October 2019

Message from the Chief Executive, Dr Chris Llewelyn

Wales' councils are the foundations of our communities. They provide vital everyday local services, from schools, to housing, to social care, to local transport. They provide a local democratic voice to Wales' diverse communities. They are the economic bedrock of Wales' economy, employing over 10% of the Welsh workforce and spending £3.5bn on goods and services.

Our role at the Welsh Local Government Association is to promote, protect, support and develop democratic local government and represent the interests of local authorities nationally.

The National Assembly for Wales has celebrated its 20th anniversary this year and the WLGA has played a key role in helping shape public policy and supporting public service delivery during the first two decades of devolution.

Working closely with Welsh Government, the WLGA provides an interface between Welsh Ministers, the National Assembly for Wales and local authorities. We also work with the UK Government and wider stakeholders in representing the interests of local government and promoting local democracy.

We are a politically-led, cross party organisation and council leaders and other senior councillors are at the heart of our policy and decision-making arrangements. We provide advice and support to our elected members and work closely with Chief Executives and senior officers across Wales' 22 local authorities. The three Fire and Rescue Authorities and the National Parks are Associate Members of the WLGA too. We regularly meet with Ministers, Assembly Members and MPs and attend Assembly and Parliamentary Committees and liaise with senior civil servants and other influential stakeholders.

We are a high-profile, influential and widely respected organisation. Our influence and reputation however belies the fact that we are a small team of just over 60 staff, based mainly in Cardiff Bay.

We are not standing still as an organization and we constantly change and evolve to ensure we can meet the demands of devolution and the expectations of our members into the future.

Our political leadership have set out an ambitious new Corporate Strategy to lead us into the Assembly elections in 2021 and the local elections in 2022. Our members have set a challenge for the organisation to be more positive and persuasive in all that we do, with a greater focus on public affairs and strengthening engagement with our wider membership and with Assembly Members.

We are therefore recruiting to several new or revised roles across the organisation focusing on policy, public affairs and political support. We are looking for innovative, motivated, talented individuals who can make an immediate impact, bringing new ideas and energy and help shape the WLGA going forward.

If you want to work in a fast-moving, exciting political environment at the heart of Welsh governance and believe you can make a difference, please get in touch.

Communications and Public Affairs Manager

Salary: Grade 6 (SCP 42 – 43) £44,632 - £45,591
Term: Permanent / Full-time
Reports to: Head of Policy
Based: Local Government House, Cardiff

About the Role

This is a new role within the WLGA, which will be integral in refocusing and reshaping the WLGA's approach to business to align with and deliver the new Corporate Strategy and ambitious new Communications Strategy.

Working closely with the Chief Executive, Senior Management Team and WLGA political leadership, the Communications and Public Affairs Manager will advise, manage and deliver the organisation's corporate communications and public affairs activity in order to secure positive change on behalf of local government.

The Communications and Public Affairs Manager will manage an expanded Communications Team and will identify and develop opportunities and relationships with key stakeholders. The post-holder will seek to coordinate and develop a community of council communications practitioners to contribute and support WLGA campaigns and promote positive and the reputation of local government collectively.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Manage and deliver the WLGA's corporate communications and public affairs team and activity in order to secure positive change on behalf of local government and WLGA.
- Plan and co-ordinate WLGA's communications activities, and oversight of communications and public affairs strategy
- Devise and plan effective public affairs activities and campaigns which support the delivery of the WLGA's Corporate Strategy and business plan priorities and help promote the reputation of local government
- Support the Chief Executive and senior management in identifying opportunities to engage with key stakeholders, notably Assembly Members and Members of Parliament
- Liaise with colleagues to align communications with policy work and consultation responses, including high quality written material to help ensure the consistency of WLGA messaging through speeches and written evidence
- Draft speeches for the Leader and other senior spokespersons, in liaison with policy colleagues
- Advise and support to WLGA senior members, including any development and training needs including presentation skills and media interviews
- Oversee the development and maintenance of the WLGA website as an effective, user-friendly primary communications channel
- Develop a WLGA Social Media Policy and coordinate the WLGA's social media activity

- Oversee the WLGA's approach to internal communications, to ensure WLGA employees understand, inform and are engaged in delivering the WLGA's corporate priorities
- Coordinate and develop a community of council communications practitioners to contribute and support WLGA campaigns and promote positive and the reputation of local government collectively.
- Maintain effective working relations with LGA colleagues in the development and delivery of consistent or complementary local government campaigns.
- To undertake any other duties commensurate with the grade and responsibilities of the post as required by the Chief Executive or the WLGA political leadership.

Person Specification

Essential

- Demonstrable experience of public affairs or a senior communications role
 - Ability to be creative and innovative, with a commitment to delivering positive results and outcomes
 - Experience of working with a Senior Management Team and elected politicians or a Board
 - Experience and wide-ranging knowledge of working in a political or public policy environment
 - Experience of managing a team with excellent interpersonal skills, a team-player with an ability to network, communicate and work with people at all levels
 - Self-motivated, able to manage own workload with an ability to balance conflicting demands in a highly pressured environment
 - Commitment to local democracy, public service and promoting diversity and equality
 - Educated to degree level or equivalent professional qualification with a commitment to continual personal and professional development
 - A fluent Welsh Speaker, with excellent oral and written communication skills in both English and Welsh
 - Excellent IT skills
 - Willingness and ability to travel across Wales and other parts of the UK as necessary
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About the WLGA

The Welsh Local Government Association represents the interests of local government and promotes local democracy in Wales.

Our aim is to **promote, protect, support and develop democratic local government** and the interests of local authorities in Wales.

We are a politically led, cross party organisation that seeks to give local government a strong voice at a national level. The WLGA is a membership organisation that represents all 22 local authorities in Wales, the 3 fire and rescue authorities and the 3 national park authorities as associate members.

We believe that services are best provided within a democratic framework of local accountability and that the people who use public services should have as much of a say in the way they are organised, managed and funded as possible. Local government is seen as being the tier of government closest to service users and best able to respond to their needs. We support the role of the Welsh Government in setting the strategy for public services nationally but believe that it is down to local government to interpret strategy to deliver services based on local circumstances and local priorities.

Much of our work is focused on the National Assembly for Wales, the Welsh Government and other national stakeholders and partners. We also liaise with the Wales Office and UK Government and work closely with the LGA in London in seeking to influence non-devolved policies and legislation and, in particular, responding to developments around Brexit.

Our work involves engagement with Ministers, National Assembly Members, and other national and governmental organisations. We promote the important role of local government to Assembly Members and seek to enhance and protect councils' reputation and secure positive change to legislation. The WLGA's lobbying work is therefore extensive.

Our Values

In working towards its primary purposes, we seek to be:

- **Ambitious** in our expectations and in our vision for local democracy and local services
- **Accountable** to our members and member authorities
- **Proactive** in our defence and promotion of local democracy, our policy development and our engagement with members
- **Receptive** through listening to and considering the range of views of our membership, partners and stakeholders
- **Responsive** through our services and support to our members and member authorities
- **Collaborative** in our approach to governance and partnership working with Welsh Government and other stakeholders

We also work towards upholding and promoting equality, diversity and human rights; including promoting diversity in democracy and supporting councillors in their role as democratically elected local representatives.

We are committed to equality and fairness and although we are not a statutory body, we operate in the spirit of legislation such as the Equalities Act, Freedom of Information Act and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

Our Aims and Priorities

Our priorities are underpinned by our core aims to secure:

- **Reform, continuous improvement and a commitment to partnership** - we believe in local government reform and seeking continuous improvement as a process for delivering better outcomes and services for the people of Wales, and in ensuring that resources are used as effectively and as efficiently as possible;
- **Fair and flexible funding** – councils need greater fiscal autonomy and flexibility to respond to local needs and priorities. Specific grants should be transferred into the settlement, after an agreed period of time, and the Welsh Government should fully cost and fund any new national initiatives and/or legislation and should commit to multiyear financial settlements, so councils can plan more effectively;
- **Commitment to the principle of Subsidiarity** – the Welsh Government and the National Assembly should commit to the European Charter of Local Self Government and the principle of subsidiarity, where the presumption is that power is transferred to the level of government closest to the people. The Welsh Government has a clear national strategic role, but councils want to see momentum behind the devolution of powers beyond Cardiff Bay to local government and to local communities.

We will also:

- **Promote the role and prominence of councillors and council leaders**, emphasising their equal democratic mandate with national politicians.
 - **Ensure maximum local discretion in legislation or statutory guidance** where councils and regions have flexibility in determining regional priorities, services and governance arrangements.
 - **Promote sector-led improvement**, with an emphasis around digital and innovation, supporting authorities in sharing best practice, developing workforce skills and developing a new corporate peer review programme.
 - **Encourage a vibrant local democracy, promoting greater diversity** and enhanced democratic engagement and supporting councillors' development and training.
 - **Support authorities to effectively manage their workforce** through our role as the Employers' Organisation.
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Benefits: Working at the WLGA

The WLGA is an exciting place to work.

Based in Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff Bay, our offices are accessible and conveniently located amongst Cardiff Bay's old canal network, within walking distance of Cardiff Bay and Cardiff City Centre; Cardiff is one of the most diverse, thriving and vibrant cities in the UK.

We seek to offer staff a friendly, supportive and flexible working environment and staff are entitled to a range of benefits including:

- Incremental pay rises and contributory local government pension scheme
- 26 days annual leave, rising to 29 after 3 years then rising to 32 after 5 years of service, plus 8 days bank holiday
- Agile working policy which encompasses Flexitime, flexible working including options to work from home.
- Cycle to work scheme, travel loan facilities and free staff car park
- A range of supportive policies, including career breaks, job share, leave purchase scheme and other leave arrangements.
- Generous maternity, adoption, paternity and shared parental leave
- Centrally located office in the heart of one of the UK's most vibrant cities

Terms of Employment

Association employees are employed on the conditions of service of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, amended by local agreements. The principal provisions are outlined below:

Salary:

Salary is payable calendar monthly by bank credit on or about the 15th of each month.

Hours of Work:

The working week is 36 hours. Office opening hours are 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday although the demands of the post may necessitate a variable working pattern.

Flexible Working Time:

The Association offers a flexi time policy to all grades up to Head of Policy Level.

Travel and Subsistence:

It is a condition of appointment that staff will be prepared to work on occasion anywhere within Wales, the rest of the United Kingdom or Europe. Travelling and subsistence expenses will be payable, in accordance with the Association's scheme, when staff work away from their fixed centre.

Annual Leave:

The annual leave entitlement for a full year (the leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March in the following year) will initially be 26 days, in addition to statutory holidays. Existing local government employers may attract additional leave based on continuous local government service

Pension:

The successful candidate will automatically be admitted to the Local Government Pension Scheme. This is a contributory scheme which has defined benefits for employees.

<https://mpfmembers.org.uk/content/members-currently-contributing-lgps>

Period of Notice:

The period of notice which staff are required to give is one calendar month, commencing on any day in the month. Staff will also be entitled to receive one calendar months' notice, or the current statutory notice period, whichever is greater.

Terms of Secondment (if applicable)

The successful candidate will remain an employee of their current employer which, will continue to pay their salary and the Association will reimburse the salary to the employer. In addition, their terms and conditions of employment will remain unchanged. The Association will reimburse business travel and expenses incurred on secondment. Interested applicants will need to be aware of their organisation's secondment policy and obtain prior approval of their employer.

WLGA Politically Restricted Posts:

The WLGA will not appoint as an employee or worker in any capacity, any Councillor who is currently a Member (including co-opted member) of a local Authority or any other member body of the WLGA e.g. National Park Authority or who had been a Member in the previous 12 months (s.116 Local Government Act (LGA) 1972).

The following posts are considered to be politically restricted (in line with those local authority roles as specified in Section 2(1) of the 1989 Act¹:

- All members of Senior Management Team
- All officers paid above Spinal Point 30
- Other officers giving advice to local authorities on a regular basis
- Any officers with a role which involves speaking on behalf of the WLGA to the media.

The Association is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

¹ Part I of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Politically Restricted Posts) (Wales) Regulations 2008

Apply Now!

For an initial discussion about the role and the organisation, please contact Daniel Hurford, Head of Policy on 029 20468615.

To apply, please send a covering letter with a completed application form by the closing date of 20th September 2019 - 5PM to:

HR Manager
Welsh Local Government Association
Local Government House
Drake Walk
Cardiff, CF10 4LG
e-mail recruitment@wlga.gov.uk

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview on 1st October 2019 at Local Government House, Cardiff. Shortlisted applicants may be requested to undertake a task before attending for interview, as well as pre-interview tasks on the day, followed by an interview with a selection panel.