



## **POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND**

Corporate Communications Officer

Assessor Information and Guidance

**Interview Dates:** Monday 14th May 2018 to Friday 18th May 2018

### **Panel Members:**

[REDACTED] Corporate Communications Branch - Chairperson  
[REDACTED] - Crime Operations Department  
[REDACTED] - Crime Operations Media

s.F40(2)  
s.F40(2)(a)  
s.F40(2)(b)  
s.F40(3)(A)  
s.F40(3)(A)(a)

### **Setting the Scene:**

The panel will assess suitability for the role of Corporate Communications Officer.

You will be assessing 23 candidates. Interviews may be quality assured by an independent member of Resourcing Branch.

### **Panel Preparation Phase:**

Panel members should familiarise themselves with the following:

- Interview questions
- Personal behaviours
- Performance recording documentation

Please ensure an awareness of the following:

- 'Halo/horns' effect i.e. someone you think is great or terrible based on first impressions and not the quality of their performance.
- 'Like me' effect, whereby you are overly harsh or lenient on someone because they remind you of you.
- Primacy and recency effect, whereby you judge a candidate not on their own performance but based on the first person who had an impact on you, or the most recent individual you interviewed.
- Your own internal prejudices or pet hates e.g. the physical make-up of someone, an accent, the way someone dresses etc.
- A need for empathy - although the process will be structured and must be consistent, remember the candidates will be nervous and allowances should be made for this.

- The assessment environment, candidates may be present so please be careful about any discussions you may have outside of the interview room.

### **Time Management:**

- The presentation and interview will last approximately 45 minutes – 5 minutes for the panel to assess the candidate's communication plan, 5 minutes for the candidate to deliver their communication plan and 10 minutes for questions from the panel plus an interview of 20 minutes (5 minutes per question) and an additional 5 minutes for the open and close.
- There will be 1 main question (and probes) for each of the 4 personal behavioural areas:

**Serving the Public**  
**Working with Others**  
**Professionalism**  
**Leading Change**

- A clock is provided. It is the panel's responsibility to manage the time available for each question.

### **Interview Phase:**

- Each candidate should be asked exactly the same main questions verbatim.
- A bank of probes is provided, these should be used if the candidate is not providing a full account e.g. does not provide an actual example, does not outline their role in it, does not provide an outcome etc.
- The number of probes used will vary dependent on the responses of the candidate.
- Care should be taken to ensure consistency of style of probing.
- Any member of the panel can probe.
- No additional probes should be used aside from those needed to clarify e.g. WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN '*what date was that?*' *How much did you say?*', *Where did this happen?*

### **Presentation Topic and Questions:**

Provided in assessor pack

**Presentation will assess 1 personal behavioural area:**

**Decision Making**

### **Assessment Phase:**

#### Personal Behaviours

A copy of the personal behaviours is provided in each panel members' file. It is advised not to be prescriptive about candidates covering all descriptors, however you should have a good understanding of the personal behaviour in general.

## Observation & Recording Phase:

When the candidate is delivering their presentation, panel members should only record exactly what was said/ done; at this stage no evaluation should take place. This also applies when candidates are answering interview questions and questions on their presentation. The panel member asking the subsequent questions is only required to take brief notes. Blank Panel Notes are provided for assessors to record evidence.

Please note that your written notes should not be about what you think of the candidate's performance – it is simply an account of what has been observed only.

Candidates can ask to see these notes and so it is important to consider the appropriateness of what you record and that the notes only reflect what was observed.

## Evaluation of Evidence:

Rating Scale	
1	Significant weakness in this criterion
2	Some areas of weakness in this criterion
3	Generally acceptable – occasional shortcomings in evidence
4	Acceptable performance – the standard expected to meet this criterion
5	Exceeds the requirement of the criterion
6	Markedly exceeds the requirement of the criterion
7	Demonstrates an exceptionally strong level of skill in this area

## Discussing and Agreeing Marks:

- Each personal behaviour is addressed in turn.
- Panel members will initially review their Panel Notes for the personal behaviour in question.
- The Chair will ask the assessors for their evaluation of the evidence. Do not be afraid to challenge the other assessors evidence and conclusions
- One member of the panel should record the context i.e. main theme for the questions and should document all evidence presented for all questions in the given personal behaviour area.
- The panel should award a single score for each personal behaviour area. The panel should take turns as to who initially suggests a score.
- If any individual marks are changed the Chair should note these on the Summary Form and date and sign the Form.

The summary sheet is used to provide feedback to the candidate, in scanned format, therefore it is important that the information recorded is accurate, legible and meaningful. The purpose of the feedback report is to provide evidence of the candidate's performance and

justify the marks awarded – to give the candidate constructive advice on strengths and areas for development. It needs to be fair, objective and factually correct.

**Quality Assurance:**

The purpose of quality assurance is to ensure a fair, objective and consistent approach is taken and to be able to address any issues experienced immediately.

**Conflicts Of Interest:**

All panel members must declare if they have a conflict of interest at the beginning of the process.

**Conducting Assessment:**

To ensure that all interviews are consistent, assessors should ensure that all candidates are given the same information. An example script incorporating this information is outlined below. Assessors may amend this to fit with their personal style but the same information should be conveyed.

*“Good morning/afternoon. Please take a seat whilst I explain what will happen.*

*As you will be aware, this process is to assess candidates for the role of Corporate Communications Officer.*

*First of all I would like to introduce the panel to you. I am [REDACTED] (Corporate Communications Branch) and with me are my colleagues [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (Crime Operations Department) and [REDACTED] (Crime Operations Media)”*

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s.F40(2)(a)  
s.F40(2)(b)  
s.F40(3)(A)  
s.F40(3)(A)(a)

The assessor should introduce either [REDACTED] as the Quality Assurer from Human Resources and explain that they are there to observe the process and are not part of the assessment of the candidate.

*The presentation and interview will last for a total of 45 minutes. We have assessed the content of your communication plan. You will deliver your communication plan for 5 minutes, after which we will ask you questions for a further 10 minutes. The interview will follow directly after for 20 minutes and there will be four questions across the remaining personal behaviour areas.*

*We may follow any questions up with some supplementary probing questions before moving on to the next core question and may occasionally need to interrupt you to do this. Please do not let this put you off as it enables us to help you provide more evidence. When we move on from each personal behaviour, we will tell you what the next one we are focusing on is.*

***We will be making notes; again, don't be put off by this. It is to ensure we have captured everything you say in order that we can make an accurate evaluation at the end.***

***We will manage the time within the interview to ensure you get an opportunity to answer all of the questions. Therefore, we may sometimes look at the clock or interrupt you to move on. This is only to assist you in making the best use of your time; there is also a clock in front of you to help you manage your time.***

***If we ask you a question you are unsure about please seek clarification. Please also take a moment to consider your answer before responding if you wish.***

***Are you ready to begin?"***

The Chair should pause for a moment and answer any procedural questions that the candidate may have.

Start both stop-clocks; one for the candidate and one for the assessors. The candidate should be invited to commence their communication plan. At the end of 5 minutes, the candidate should be stopped and advised there will be 10 minutes of questions. Start both stop-clocks again. Assessors should then ask appropriate questions, whilst also signposting the personal behaviour areas. After 10 minutes, this part should conclude. Candidates should then be advised that they are now moving to the interview part of the process. Start both stop-clocks again. After 20 minutes of the interview, please say:

***"Thank you for your responses. That is the end of the process. Just before we finish, can I ask my colleagues if there is anything that they wish to clarify?"***

Chair to pause for the other assessors to ask any final questions. If the Chair has any final questions then they should ask them at this point. Chair should then say to the candidate:

***"Is there anything that you would like to clarify from the process today?"***

Pause for the candidate to clarify anything and for the assessors to respond to these.

***"That completes the assessment. Thank you."***

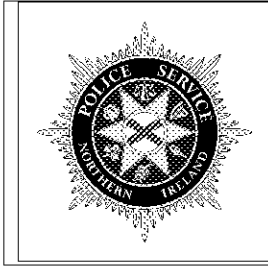
#### **Guidance on Probing Questions within the assessment process:**

Assessors will use a mix of both types of questions (past behaviour and hypothetical/future focussed) to provide a good balance between what candidates have done and what we can be confident they could do in future.

#### **Useful Probing Questions:**

These questions have been provided as a guide and reminder of some effective probing questions:

- How did the situation arise?
- What was your role?
- How did x help you to achieve y?
- What factors did you consider?
- What other alternatives did you consider?
- What difficulties did you encounter?
- How did you overcome these difficulties?
- What was the outcome?
- What would you do differently next time?
- Have you had any experience of doing this in your work to date? (for hypothetical/future-focussed questions)
- How might you go about that as a future leader in the service? (for past behaviour questions)



## **POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND**

Senior Press Officer

Assessor Information and Guidance

**Interview Dates:** Monday 4th June 2018 to Friday 8th June 2018

### **Panel Members:**

[REDACTED] – Corporate Communications Branch - Chairperson  
[REDACTED] – Corporate Communications Branch  
[REDACTED] – Crime Operations Department

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s.F40(2)(b)  
s.F40(3)(A)  
s.F40(3)(A)(a)

### **Setting the Scene:**

The panel will assess suitability for the role of Senior Press Officer.

You will be assessing **19** candidates. Interviews may be quality assured by an independent member of Resourcing Branch.

### **Panel Preparation Phase:**

Panel members should familiarise themselves with the following:

- Interview questions
- Personal behaviours
- Performance recording documentation

Please ensure an awareness of the following:

- 'Halo/horns' effect i.e. someone you think is great or terrible based on first impressions and not the quality of their performance.
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- A need for empathy - although the process will be structured and must be consistent, remember the candidates will be nervous and allowances should be made for this.
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#### **Time Management:**

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- There will be 1 main question (and probes) for each of the 4 personal behavioural areas:

**Serving the Public**  
**Leading People**  
**Working with Others**  
**Leading Change**

- A clock is provided. It is the panel's responsibility to manage the time available for each question.

#### **Interview Phase:**

- Each candidate should be asked exactly the same main questions verbatim.
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- Any member of the panel can probe.
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#### **Presentation Topic and Questions:**

Provided in assessor pack

#### **Presentation will assess 2 personal behavioural areas:**

- **Professionalism**
- **Decision Making**



## Assessment Phase:

### Personal Behaviours

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## Observation & Recording Phase:

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***(Corporate Communications Branch) and with me are my colleagues [REDACTED]***

s.F40(3)(A)

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***[REDACTED] (Corporate Communications Branch) and [REDACTED]***  
***(Crime Operations Department)”***

The assessor should introduce the **Quality Assurer** from **Human Resources** and explain that they are there to observe the process and are not part of the assessment of the candidate.

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- What would you do differently next time?
- Have you had any experience of doing this in your work to date? (for hypothetical/future-focussed questions)
- How might you go about that as a future leader in the service? (for past behaviour questions)



## JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Senior Press Officer/Team Leader

**Grade:** Staff Officer

**Reports to:** Media Centre Manager

### Job Summary:

Under the oversight of the Media Centre Manager, the Senior Press Officer will deliver Planned communications activity that achieves operational outcomes, increases public safety and confidence, and assists the delivery of priority Service projects, including organisational change initiatives.

The role-holder should ensure communications strategies are developed and delivered Across multiple channels including traditional, online and social media, and internally to officers and staff at all levels, ensuring all stakeholders receive the information they need, by the most appropriate method.

The role-holder will manage the communications approach for more complex issues, act as a mentor for colleagues and provide effective leadership and supervision to press officers within their section.

### The Police Service of Northern Ireland

#### Vision: "To help build a Safe, Confident & Peaceful Society"

Northern Ireland continues to develop and thrive. It is the role of the Police Service of Northern Ireland to support and work with the Northern Ireland Executive, Business, Community and Voluntary groups to build a Safe, Confident and Peaceful Society.

#### Purpose: "Keeping People Safe"

As a Police Service, we will all work with partners and communities to Keep People Safe, either through frontline service delivery or by enabling services, by:

**Preventing harm** through working with partners to increase trust and citizen involvement, reduce offending, reduce vulnerability and prevent crime.

**Protecting our citizens and communities**, particularly the most vulnerable, through delivering professional policing operations and services in accordance with Human Rights standards.

**Detecting offences and investigating suspects**, working with justice partners to carry out professional investigations and deliver prompt visible and fair outcomes which build the confidence of victims, witnesses and communities.



### **How: “Policing With the Community”**

We are at our strongest when we work in partnership with communities and when we involve those communities in policing. We best achieve this by demonstrating the following behaviours:

#### **1. Accountability**

Accountability is the fundamental building block to securing trust and legitimacy for any Police Service. It is the way to earn public co-operation, collaboration and information. Accountability helps us achieve our policing purpose of Keeping People Safe.

#### **2. Acting with Fairness, Courtesy and Respect**

Fairness, Courtesy and Respect are the minimum standards of how we treat others, both inside and outside the organisation. These standards are non-negotiable no matter the context or provocation to act otherwise, and are key to securing our communities' confidence and trust.

#### **3. We will be Collaborative in our Decision Making**

Decisions are often too important, complex or far-reaching to be left to the Police alone, which is why Collaborative Decision Making is vital. Collaborative Decision Making is based upon the concepts of partnership and engagement, but takes it a step further and outlines the critical need for clear decisions to be made. This process has at its core collective responsibility and accountability. Involving others shares the opportunity behind every challenging and important decision.

These behaviours will also guide how we treat each other within the Organisation.

### **Who: The Police Service of Northern Ireland**

We are a diverse group of people who strive to be representative of the communities we serve in both our staff profile and culture.

We are proud to serve the people of Northern Ireland and to work as part of an organisation which is committed to Keeping People Safe within this society.

### **Main Activities**

The main duties and responsibilities associated with the role include the following.

- To assist the Media Centre Manager in the day-to-day running of the press office, coordinating the provision of a timely and relevant news service to the media, public and colleagues on day-to-day policing activity, providing updates on incidents and crimes, promoting operations and successes, and disseminating urgent information. The role-holder will use their professional knowledge and experience to proactively and effectively provide solutions and implement the best communications approach for arising issues.
- Ensuring excellent customer service is delivered to internal and external stakeholders by everyone in the team by quickly and accurately disseminating news releases and responding positively to media enquiries. Delivering an effective day-



to-day news monitoring and analysis service, considering both traditional and social media, disseminating this information to relevant senior colleagues thereby

- ensuring that the Service is kept abreast of emerging news issues and can respond quickly if required. Ensure information is gathered for major incidents or criminal disclosure purposes.
- Supervising a team of Press Officers including training, development and performance management to assist them in delivering a high quality service on behalf of the department and quality assuring outputs of team.
- Assessing the nature of incidents and advising/directing staff on how to approach issues in terms of the information which may be released to the media and public, and which should be withheld for operational and/or legal reasons.
- Advising and influencing police officer and staff colleagues generally up to Superintendent and equivalent level on the best communications approach to manage reactive incidents and emerging issues.
- Encouraging and overseeing the use of 'direct-to-audience' and digital communications in the press office, ensuring the department is not overly-reliant on distribution of information via the media.
- Liaising with other organizations for multi-agency issues. This includes planning for emergencies and events, for example Royal visits, and ensuring consistency when providing information about incidents where other agencies have involvement. Establishing and maintain professional and positive working relationships with key stakeholders, including media organisations, partners and community based organisations to enhance and extend the reach of police communications e.g. DoJ, NIPB, PBNI, NIO, PONI, NCA, HMRC etc.

## **Contacts and Communication**

### ***Internal***

To provide advice, guidance and support on media related matters to officers and staff; ensuring attention is paid to legal, privacy, investigative and policy restrictions.

To seek and obtain information to assist with the development of press releases and statements to ensure clarity and accuracy of information.

### ***External – Other Government Organisations***

The roleholder will work with outside agencies and organisations in responding to press and media queries and to obtain information regarding current issues. The purpose of the contacts would be to gather and co-ordinate information regarding situations involving partner agencies to ensure accurate, consistent and timely messaging e.g. DRD, NIFRS, NIAS, Environmental Agency, HMRC, Policing Board, PONI, DoJ, NCA, CJNI, and EIS



### ***External –Other non-Government Organisations***

The role holder will have frequent contact with a wide range of external contacts and organisations. This contact will take place with journalists from external media sources on a local, national and international level, community groups and partner organisations such as charities and businesses. The purpose of contact will be to provide information in the form of press releases and media statements on behalf of PSNI.

The role holder will be the primary point of contact for media contacting the PSNI regarding enquiries about incidents, issues and the corporate activity of the organisation. The role holder will assess enquiries and information relating to Incidents / operations / investigations and provide appropriate and legally sound responses.

### **Problem Solving**

The majority of problem solving demands made upon the role holder will relate to the provision of media and press responses, relating to complex, contentious or politically sensitive matters, on behalf of PSNI. The role holder will be required to

- ensure that all information they provide is factual, accurate and meets the needs of the intended audience.
- conduct research to ensure accuracy of information, develop appropriate responses and present to senior officers for approval.
- deal with challenging situations on a daily basis. Often these situations will involve dealing with media individuals e.g. journalists who are keen to get their 'story'.
- analyse complex issues often at very short notice and resolve any issues immediately to counteract negative publicity.
- oversee the work of the Press Officers and analyse and resolve more complex or sensitive media communications

### **Impact**

The roleholder can contribute significantly to the success of the organisation by ensuring that the relevant and appropriate information in relation to PSNI activities is released on behalf of the organisation. This will ensure that the organisation is represented appropriately externally throughout media channels.

The roleholder plays an important part in promoting a positive image and accurate representation of PSNI. They contribute to raising public confidence in PSNI by ensuring that reassurance messages are issued to the public. The role holder will also ensure that any inaccurate information is challenged and rectified.

The roleholder has a critical responsibility for identifying and managing emerging reputational issues through monitoring all media coverage, including social media and recognising FOI queries which potentially carry risk for PSNI.

*The main duties and responsibilities reflect the main elements of those associated with this position. It is not intended to be exclusive or exhaustive. The role holder will undertake other duties commensurate with the nature of the role.*

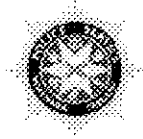




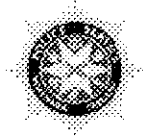
## PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION

**Job Title:** Senior Press Officer  
**Department:** Corporate Communications

CATEGORY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<b>Qualifications and Experience</b>	<p>A degree or equivalent qualification + 2 years' experience in a relevant area such as Journalism or Media Communications</p> <p>OR</p> <p>2 A- levels plus 4 years' experience in a relevant area such as Journalism or Media Communications Experience must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to assert personal authority and professional influence, in both formal and informal settings, with internal and external stakeholders to achieve the best professional outcomes.</li> <li>• Experience of managing people, including appraising, developing, coaching, supporting and motivating individuals.</li> <li>• Ability to nurture a cohesive team culture to ensure performance in a busy area where demand sometimes may outstretch capacity.</li> <li>• Ability to work under pressure and to deadlines whilst prioritising multiple and sometimes conflicting demands;</li> </ul>	<p>A formal qualification in a related discipline such as Communications or Public Relations</p> <p>An understanding of the issues facing PSNI</p>



	<p>personally managing more complex issues while delegating others to team members, to ensure all critical tasks are delivered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good knowledge of media law and integrity considerations, to ensure the legality and integrity of all communications activities, particularly avoiding any adverse impact on criminal proceedings.</li> <li>• Sound knowledge of national/local news and current affairs including external issues and pressures likely to impact on the PSNI and its public reputation.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Specialist Skills / Knowledge</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly-developed interpersonal skills, including experience of influencing and negotiating.</li> <li>• Excellent written and verbal communications skills, including the ability to write concisely, quickly, accurately and engagingly for a variety of audiences and media.</li> <li>• Sound knowledge of national/local news and current affairs including external issues and pressures likely to impact on the PSNI and its public reputation.</li> <li>• Excellent research and analytical skills including the ability to quickly access information from a variety of sources and to assess what is important, verified and suitable for release to the public.</li> <li>• Sound problem solving skills and ability to make good</li> </ul>	



	<p>decisions quickly and sometimes autonomously using their experience and skill to identify and advise on approach to reactive issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good online and social media skills including ability to update website content management systems and use social media.</li> <li>• IT literate specifically in the use of the Microsoft Office suite (including MS Word, MS PowerPoint and MS Outlook and social media platforms)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Other</b></p>	<p>Applicants must have a driving licence and a car available for official business, which will allow them to meet the requirements of the post in full.</p>	

Short listing will be carried out on essential criteria. Please note in some instances, e.g. where there is a high volume of applicants, desirable criteria may then be used.



<b>Personal Behaviours</b>	<b>Serving the public</b>	Demonstrates a real belief in public service, focusing on what matters to the public and will best serve their interests. Ensures that all staff understands the expectations, changing needs and concerns of different communities, and strive to address them. Builds public confidence by actively engaging with different communities, partners and stakeholders. Welcomes being held to account for the service delivered, proactively tells what we are doing, appropriately shares information and is open to critical challenge. Identifies the best way to deliver services to different communities. Understands partners' perspectives and priorities, and works co-operatively with them to deliver the best possible overall service to the public.
	<b>Leading Change</b>	Positive about change, adapting to changing circumstances and encouraging flexibility in others. Identifies and implements improvements to service delivery, engaging people in the change process and encouraging them to contribute ideas. Finds more cost-effective ways to do things, taking an innovative approach to solving problems and considers radical alternatives. Adheres to governance and accountability frameworks.
	<b>Leading People</b>	Inspires people to meet challenging goals, maintaining the momentum of change. Gives direction and states expectations clearly. Talks positively about policing, creating enthusiasm and commitment. Motivates staff by giving genuine praise, highlighting success and recognising good performance. Gives honest and constructive feedback to help people understand their strengths and weaknesses. Invests time in developing people by coaching and mentoring them, providing developmental opportunities and encouraging staff to take on new responsibilities.
	<b>Managing Performance</b>	Translates strategy into specific plans and actions, effectively managing competing priorities with available resources. Takes a planned and organised approach to achieving objectives, defining clear timescales and outcomes. Promotes the IPR process for managing performance and undertakes all reporting officer and countersigning officer activities within required timescales. Identifies opportunities to reduce costs and ensure maximum value for money is achieved. Demonstrates forward thinking, anticipating and dealing with issues before they occur. Delegates responsibilities appropriately and empowers others to make decisions. Monitors progress and holds people to account for delivery, highlighting good practice and effectively addressing underperformance.



	<p><b>Professionalism</b></p>	<p>Acts fairly and with integrity, in line with the values and ethical standards of the Police Service. Acts on own initiative to address issues, showing energy and determination to get things done. Treats others with courtesy and respect. Takes ownership for resolving problems, demonstrating courage and resilience in dealing with difficult and challenging situations. Upholds professional standards, acting as a role model to others and challenging unprofessional conduct or discriminatory behaviour. Asks for and acts on feedback, learning from experience and continuing to develop own professional skills and knowledge. Remains calm and professional under pressure, defusing conflict and being prepared to make unpopular decisions or take control when required.</p>
	<p><b>Decision making</b></p>	<p>Gathers, verifies and assesses all appropriate and available information to gain an accurate understanding of situations. Considers a range of possible options, evaluating evidence and seeking input from partners, stakeholder and others as appropriate. Establishes when it's best for police or partners to lead or when decisions should be shared. Makes clear, timely, justifiable decisions, reviewing these as necessary. Balances risks, costs and benefits, thinking about the wider impact of decisions. Exercises discretion and applies professional judgement, ensuring actions and decisions are proportionate and in the public interest.</p>
	<p><b>Working with others</b></p>	<p>Builds effective working relationships with people through clear communication and a collaborative approach. Maintains visibility by regularly interacting and talking with people. Consults widely and involves people in decision-making, speaking to people in a way they understand and can engage with. Treats people with respect and dignity regardless of their background or circumstances, promoting equality and the elimination of discrimination. Treats people as individuals, showing tact, empathy and compassion. Sells ideas convincingly, setting out the benefits of a particular approach, and striving to reach mutually beneficial solutions. Expresses own views positively and constructively, and fully commits to team decisions.</p>



## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Senior Press Officer</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Belfast
<b>Department:</b>	Corporate Communications
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	Normal working hours cover seven days per week between 06.30 and 20.30 and working one weekend in three or as department needs require. These hours are subject to ongoing review to reflect business needs. The post attracts allowances in which appropriate rates will be applied.
<b>Job Background:</b>	<p>The Corporate Communications Department has undergone a recent restructure exercise and has the following key functional areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>News and Media</b> – This function responds to events that impact or reflect upon the PSNI and devises proactive media strategies taking into account organisational aims and objectives. This function is subdivided into three areas; Press Office, Crime Ops &amp; Legacy and District &amp; Operational Policing.</li> <li>• <b>Corporate Communications</b> – This function focuses on proactive communications for the organisation, as well as strategies and campaigns to promote strategic corporate priorities. It also, manages critical incidents within Districts and matters of organisational reputational risk. Digital Communications Officers are dedicated to enhancing the quality of this area (internally and externally) for the PSNI across a range of platforms and will lead and coordinate the implementation of a best-in-class social media content strategy.</li> <li>• <b>Internal Communications</b> – This function is responsible for the effective engagement across a large and complex organisation and is critical to enable us to be a successful police service. It also ensures that police officers and staff are kept up-to-date with what is happening across the Service at a strategic and operational level, whilst ensuring that we have the communication tools and platforms to enable us to do so.</li> </ul>
<b>Salary:</b>	£29,317 to £31,446
<b>Pension Scheme:</b>	Generous Pension Scheme. The Board operates a Voluntary Contributory Pension Scheme. Full details will be provided to successful candidates
<b>Sick Pay Scheme:</b>	An occupational sick pay scheme is in operation
<b>Environmental Allowance:</b>	£574 per annum



<p><b>Additional Information</b></p>	<p>Successful candidates, upon appointment, will be a direct recruit of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. As such the position is subject to successful Police and Security vetting.</p> <p>Paragraph 8 of Schedule 3 to the Police Act states a person is disqualified from being an independent member of a District Policing Partnership if he/she is (b) a member of the police support staff.</p> <p>Successful candidates may on occasions be required to travel throughout and outside of Northern Ireland for business purposes.</p>
<p><b>Substance Testing</b></p>	<p>As an employer, PSNI is required to provide a safe working environment and safe systems of working for both employees and those who are not in their employment but with whom they come into contact. This includes ensuring staff are fit to carry out their duties safely and effectively.</p> <p>Given the growing problem with substance misuse within our society, PSNI must recognise that this is a culture that has the potential to impact upon PSNI as an organisation. Misuse of any substance impairs judgement, slows reactions and increases the potential for risk of injury to staff and others. In addition the use of illicit substances provides increased opportunity for compromise through either coercion or inducement, leaving staff and the PSNI vulnerable and bringing into question the integrity of individuals.</p> <p>As a result the PSNI has a substance misuse policy which includes testing of biological material for history of use of substances listed under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Therefore, all successful applicants will be required to undergo a drug screening test prior to being offered an appointment as a police staff member with the PSNI. The biological material to be sampled as part of the pre-appointment process will usually be hair. Those who return a positive result will not be offered an appointment within PSNI. Refusal to offer an appointment will not prevent applicants from applying for future recruitment processes for PSNI.</p> <p>The substance misuse testing will be managed by an independent contractor.</p>
<p><b>Annual Leave</b></p>	<p>25 days plus 12 statutory holidays rising to 30 days after 5 years' service</p>

## Scoring Guidelines

- All candidates should be scored on the sheets provided and any notes attached to each sheet. Notes should be concise and relevant. Any policy decisions made by the panel regarding the scoring process should be documented. Final score should then be placed on the grid provided, in order of merit.
- The scoring mechanism will be based on that set out in Home Office circular 104/91.

1 = Significant weakness in this criterion

2 = Some areas of weakness in this criterion

3 = Generally acceptable – occasional shortcomings in evidence

4 = Acceptable performance – the standard expected to meet this criterion

5 = Exceeds the requirements of the criterion

6 = Markedly exceeds the requirement of the criterion

7 = Demonstrates an exceptionally strong level of skills in this area

**Candidates must score a total of 24 to move on to the next stage. Candidates who receive a score of 3 or less in any behaviour will be eliminated from the competition.**

- **External Resourcing along with the stakeholder will have agreed the most appropriate way to separate tied scores prior to the commencement of the process.**
- **After the scoring process has been completed the candidates should be placed on the merit sheet provided**



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6 = Markedly exceeds the requirement of the criterion

7 = Demonstrates an exceptionally strong level of skills in this area

**Candidates must score a total of 20 to move on to the next stage. Candidates who receive a score of 3 or less in any behaviour will be eliminated from the competition.**

- **External Resourcing along with the stakeholder will have agreed the most appropriate way to separate tied scores prior to the commencement of the process.**
- **After the scoring process has been completed the candidates should be placed on the merit sheet provided**



## JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Corporate Communications Officer

**Grade:** Staff Officer

**Reports to:** Communications Manager

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### Job Summary:

The role holder will develop and deliver planned communications to support organisational policing priorities under the oversight of the relevant Communications Manager, utilising a wide range of channels appropriate to a variety of audiences including campaigns, public relations, internal communications, digital communications, traditional and social media communications. The role holder will also be responsible for providing advice and guidance to internal stakeholders, on issues affecting the reputation of the organisation.

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### The Police Service of Northern Ireland

#### Vision: “To help build a Safe, Confident & Peaceful Society”

Northern Ireland continues to develop and thrive. It is the role of the Police Service of Northern Ireland to support and work with the Northern Ireland Executive, Business, Community and Voluntary groups to build a Safe, Confident and Peaceful Society.

#### Purpose: “Keeping People Safe”

As a Police Service, we will all work with partners and communities to Keep People Safe, either through frontline service delivery or by enabling services, by:

**Preventing harm** through working with partners to increase trust and citizen involvement, reduce offending, reduce vulnerability and prevent crime.

**Protecting our citizens and communities**, particularly the most vulnerable, through delivering professional policing operations and services in accordance with Human Rights standards.

**Detecting offences and investigating suspects**, working with justice partners to carry out professional investigations and deliver prompt visible and fair outcomes which build the confidence of victims, witnesses and communities.

#### How: “Policing With the Community”

We are at our strongest when we work in partnership with communities and when we involve those communities in policing. We best achieve this by demonstrating the following behaviours:



### **1. Accountability**

Accountability is the fundamental building block to securing trust and legitimacy for any Police Service. It is the way to earn public co-operation, collaboration and information. Accountability helps us achieve our policing purpose of Keeping People Safe.

### **2. Acting with Fairness, Courtesy and Respect**

Fairness, Courtesy and Respect are the minimum standards of how we treat others, both inside and outside the organisation. These standards are non-negotiable no matter the context or provocation to act otherwise, and are key to securing our communities' confidence and trust.

### **3. We will be Collaborative in our Decision Making**

Decisions are often too important, complex or far-reaching to be left to the Police alone, which is why Collaborative Decision Making is vital. Collaborative Decision Making is based upon the concepts of partnership and engagement, but takes it a step further and outlines the critical need for clear decisions to be made. This process has at its core collective responsibility and accountability. Involving others shares the opportunity behind every challenging and important decision.

These behaviours will also guide how we treat each other within the Organisation.

### **Who: The Police Service of Northern Ireland**

We are a diverse group of people who strive to be representative of the communities we serve in both our staff profile and culture.

We are proud to serve the people of Northern Ireland and to work as part of an organisation which is committed to Keeping People Safe within this society.

### **Main Activities**

Main activities include the following.

- Develop and deliver proactive, intelligence-driven, outcome-focused communication strategies and initiatives using a wide range of communication channels, ensuring compliance with organisational priorities. Make best use of appropriate technology and good communication practices to devise innovative, effective communication solutions to deliver targeted communications and key messages.
- Provide advice and guidance to officers and staff generally up to Superintendent and equivalent level on the best communications approach for a range of planned proactive and reactive issues including attending meetings and advising officers/staff on more complex issues which would impact on the organisation's reputation or affect public confidence in policing.
- Lead, under the oversight of Communications Manager, on specific areas of operational communications, and develop a range of external and internal communications to deliver awareness, understanding, engagement or behavioural change depending on the characteristics of the issue in question.



- Make use of “direct-to-audience” and digital communications ensuring projects delivered are not overly-reliant on traditional methods such as printed material or news releases.
- Deliver a horizon-scanning service so that planned communications are delivered when they can be most effective and are co-ordinated with national activity e.g. other partner agencies and UK Police Forces. As part of a team develop research tools and techniques to identify the best tactics and implement an evaluation regime to evidence the impact of communications activity.
- Establish and maintain professional and positive working relationships with key stakeholders, including media organisations, partners and community-based organisations to enhance and extend the reach of police communications eg DoJ, NIPB, PBNI, NIO, PONI, NCA, HMRC etc.
- Effectively brief and manage external suppliers of communication services, such as design agencies and digital agencies to ensure strategic fit when they are used for projects managed by the post holder.
- Consult with both internal and external stakeholders to identify emerging reputational risks and develop consequence management plans to mitigate against reputational damage including monitoring of all FoI requests.
- Contribute to Corporate Communications Department's delivery of communications and media training to colleagues outside the Department in line with the Service's Media Policy and guidelines.
- Contribute to Corporate Communications Department's planning and organising of PSNI events and associated media coverage.

## **Contacts and Communication**

### ***Internal***

To provide advice, guidance and support on media related matters to officers and staff; ensuring attention is paid to legal, privacy, investigative and policy restrictions.

To seek and obtain information to assist with the development of press releases and statements to ensure clarity and accuracy of information.

### ***With Government Organisations***

The role holder will work with outside agencies and organisations in responding to press and media queries and to obtain information regarding current issues. The purpose of the contacts would be to gather and co-ordinate information regarding situations involving partner agencies to ensure accurate, consistent and timely messaging e.g. DRD, NIFRS, NIAS, Environmental Agency, HMRC, Policing Board, PONI, DoJ, NCA, CJNI, and EIS



### ***With External Organisations***

The role holder will be responsible for liaising with a wide range of external organisations to gather and collate accurate information, develop problem profiles, thoroughly research issues, and accurately identify emerging risks in order to develop robust communication plans either to influence behavioural awareness or provide reassurance and to mitigate potential negative PR. Contacts include voluntary and Community Groups, Charities and local businesses. Contacts are generally at junior to senior management level

### **Problem Solving**

The role holder will need to have the ability to proactively identify organisational or reputational risks and offer solutions and advice to Officers and Staff within the organisation to assist with appropriate management of identified risk.

The role holder will be required to use their professional knowledge and experience to proactively, confidently and quickly suggest the best communication approach for identified issues

### **Decision Making**

The role holder will be expected to display creativity in developing and delivering communications products to support the policing priorities. They will be expected to work on their own initiative and be able to react to often swiftly changing circumstances. The role holder will also use professional knowledge and experience to pro-actively, confidently and quickly suggest the best communications approach in dynamic environments.

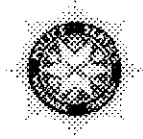
### **Impact**

The role holder has a critical responsibility in supporting operational policing to keep people safe. They make a key contribution to proactively identifying and managing emerging reputational issues and for ensuring, where possible, that effective interventions are developed and implemented to protect the PSNI brand and to promote public confidence

The role holder plays an important part in promoting a positive image and accurate representation of PSNI. They contribute to raising public confidence in PSNI by ensuring that reassurance messages are issued to the public. The role holder will also ensure that any inaccurate information is challenged and rectified.

The role holder has a critical responsibility for identifying and managing emerging reputational issues through monitoring all media coverage, including social media and recognising FOI queries which potentially carry risk for PSNI.

*The main duties and responsibilities reflect the main elements of those associated with this position. It is not intended to be exclusive or exhaustive. Posts vary in content depending on particular circumstances and areas of work. Different posts therefore will contain different combinations of the above activities. Some posts will contain only a few main activities; others may contain a wider range. Actual activities may vary over time, and from post to post, depending on priorities and circumstances. All required activities will be subject to operational need. The role holder will undertake other duties commensurate with the nature of the role.*



## PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION

**Job Title:** Corporate Communications Officer  
**Department:** Corporate Communications

CATEGORY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<b>Qualifications and Experience</b>	<p>A degree or equivalent qualification + 2 years' experience in a relevant area such as Journalism or Media Communications</p> <p>OR</p> <p>2 A- levels plus 4 years' experience in a relevant area such as Journalism or Media Communications Experience must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly-developed interpersonal skills, including experience of influencing and negotiating.</li> <li>• Ability to assert personal authority and professional influence, in both formal and informal settings, with internal and external stakeholders to achieve the best professional outcomes.</li> <li>• Experience of managing people, including appraising, developing, coaching, supporting and motivating individuals.</li> <li>• Ability to nurture a cohesive team culture to ensure performance in a busy area where demand sometimes may outstretch capacity.</li> </ul>	<p>A formal qualification in a related discipline such as Communications or Public Relations</p> <p>An understanding of the issues facing PSNI</p>



<p><b>Specialist Skills / Knowledge</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly-developed interpersonal skills, including experience of influencing and negotiating.</li> <li>• Excellent written and verbal communications skills, including the ability to write concisely, quickly, accurately and engagingly for a variety of audiences and media.</li> <li>• Experience of creating content for a variety of communication channels including print, broadcast, features and digital and social media and ability to provide advice to internal stakeholders on the most appropriate channels, depending on context.</li> <li>• Excellent research and analytical skills including the ability to quickly access information from a variety of sources and to assess what is important, verified and suitable for release to the public.</li> <li>• Sound problem solving skills and ability to make good decisions quickly and sometimes autonomously using their experience and skill to identify and advise on approach to reactive issues.</li> <li>• Good online and social media skills including ability to update website content management systems and use social media.</li> <li>• IT literate specifically in the use of the Microsoft Office suite (including MS Word, MS PowerPoint and MS Outlook and social media platforms)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Other</b></p>	<p>Applicants must have a driving licence and a car available for official business, which will allow them to meet the requirements of the post in full.</p>	

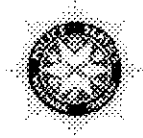
Short listing will be carried out on essential criteria. Please note in some instances, e.g. where there is a high volume of applicants, desirable criteria may then be used.







<p><b>Personal Behaviours</b></p>	<p><b>Serving the public</b></p>	<p>Demonstrates a real belief in public service, focusing on what matters to the public and will best serve their interests. Ensures that all staff understands the expectations, changing needs and concerns of different communities, and strive to address them. Builds public confidence by actively engaging with different communities, partners and stakeholders. Welcomes being held to account for the service delivered, proactively tells what we are doing, appropriately shares information and is open to critical challenge. Identifies the best way to deliver services to different communities. Understands partners' perspectives and priorities, and works co-operatively with them to deliver the best possible overall service to the public.</p>
	<p><b>Leading Change</b></p>	<p>Positive about change, adapting to changing circumstances and encouraging flexibility in others. Identifies and implements improvements to service delivery, engaging people in the change process and encouraging them to contribute ideas. Finds more cost-effective ways to do things, taking an innovative approach to solving problems and considers radical alternatives. Adheres to governance and accountability frameworks.</p>
	<p><b>Leading People</b></p>	<p>Inspires people to meet challenging goals, maintaining the momentum of change. Gives direction and states expectations clearly. Talks positively about policing, creating enthusiasm and commitment. Motivates staff by giving genuine praise, highlighting success and recognising good performance. Gives honest and constructive feedback to help people understand their strengths and weaknesses. Invests time in developing people by coaching and mentoring them, providing developmental opportunities and encouraging staff to take on new responsibilities.</p>
	<p><b>Managing Performance</b></p>	<p>Translates strategy into specific plans and actions, effectively managing competing priorities with available resources. Takes a planned and organised approach to achieving objectives, defining clear timescales and outcomes. Promotes the IPR process for managing performance and undertakes all reporting officer and countersigning officer activities within required timescales. Identifies opportunities to reduce costs and ensure maximum value for money is achieved. Demonstrates forward thinking, anticipating and dealing with issues before they occur. Delegates responsibilities appropriately and empowers others to make decisions. Monitors progress and holds people to account for delivery, highlighting good practice and effectively addressing underperformance.</p>



	<p><b>Professionalism</b></p>	<p>Acts fairly and with integrity, in line with the values and ethical standards of the Police Service. Acts on own initiative to address issues, showing energy and determination to get things done. Treats others with courtesy and respect. Takes ownership for resolving problems, demonstrating courage and resilience in dealing with difficult and challenging situations. Upholds professional standards, acting as a role model to others and challenging unprofessional conduct or discriminatory behaviour. Asks for and acts on feedback, learning from experience and continuing to develop own professional skills and knowledge. Remains calm and professional under pressure, defusing conflict and being prepared to make unpopular decisions or take control when required.</p>
	<p><b>Decision making</b></p>	<p>Gathers, verifies and assesses all appropriate and available information to gain an accurate understanding of situations. Considers a range of possible options, evaluating evidence and seeking input from partners, stakeholder and others as appropriate. Establishes when it's best for police or partners to lead or when decisions should be shared. Makes clear, timely, justifiable decisions, reviewing these as necessary. Balances risks, costs and benefits, thinking about the wider impact of decisions. Exercises discretion and applies professional judgement, ensuring actions and decisions are proportionate and in the public interest.</p>
	<p><b>Working with others</b></p>	<p>Builds effective working relationships with people through clear communication and a collaborative approach. Maintains visibility by regularly interacting and talking with people. Consults widely and involves people in decision-making, speaking to people in a way they understand and can engage with. Treats people with respect and dignity regardless of their background or circumstances, promoting equality and the elimination of discrimination. Treats people as individuals, showing tact, empathy and compassion. Sells ideas convincingly, setting out the benefits of a particular approach, and striving to reach mutually beneficial solutions. Expresses own views positively and constructively, and fully commits to team decisions.</p>



## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Corporate Communications Officer</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Belfast
<b>Department:</b>	Corporate Communications
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	Normal working hours cover seven days per week between 06.30 and 20.30. These hours are subject to ongoing review to reflect business needs. The post attracts allowances in which appropriate rates will be applied.
<b>Job Background:</b>	
<p>The Corporate Communications Department has undergone a recent restructure exercise and has the following key functional areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>News and Media</b> – This function responds to events that impact or reflect upon the PSNI and devises proactive media strategies taking into account organisational aims and objectives. This function is subdivided into three areas; Press Office, Crime Ops &amp; Legacy and District &amp; Operational Policing.</li> <li>• <b>Corporate Communications</b> – This function focuses on proactive communications for the organisation, as well as strategies and campaigns to promote strategic corporate priorities. It also, manages critical incidents within Districts and matters of organisational reputational risk. Digital Communications Officers are dedicated to enhancing the quality of this area (internally and externally) for the PSNI across a range of platforms and will lead and coordinate the implementation of a best-in-class social media content strategy.</li> <li>• <b>Internal Communications</b> – This function is responsible for the effective engagement across a large and complex organisation and is critical to enable us to be a successful police service. It also ensures that police officers and staff are kept up-to-date with what is happening across the Service at a strategic and operational level, whilst ensuring that we have the communication tools and platforms to enable us to do so.</li> </ul>	
<b>Salary:</b>	£29,317 to £31,446



<b>Pension Scheme:</b>	Generous Pension Scheme. The Board operates a Voluntary Contributory Pension Scheme. Full details will be provided to successful candidates
<b>Sick Pay Scheme:</b>	An occupational sick pay scheme is in operation
<b>Environmental Allowance:</b>	£574 per annum



<p><b>Additional Information</b></p>	<p>Successful candidates, upon appointment, will be a direct recruit of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. As such the position is subject to successful Police and Security vetting.</p> <p>Paragraph 8 of Schedule 3 to the Police Act states a person is disqualified from being an independent member of a District Policing Partnership if he/she is (b) a member of the police support staff.</p> <p>Successful candidates may on occasions be required to travel throughout and outside of Northern Ireland for business purposes.</p>
<p><b>Substance Testing</b></p>	<p>As an employer, PSNI is required to provide a safe working environment and safe systems of working for both employees and those who are not in their employment but with whom they come into contact. This includes ensuring staff are fit to carry out their duties safely and effectively.</p> <p>Given the growing problem with substance misuse within our society, PSNI must recognise that this is a culture that has the potential to impact upon PSNI as an organisation. Misuse of any substance impairs judgement, slows reactions and increases the potential for risk of injury to staff and others. In addition the use of illicit substances provides increased opportunity for compromise through either coercion or inducement, leaving staff and the PSNI vulnerable and bringing into question the integrity of individuals.</p> <p>As a result the PSNI has a substance misuse policy which includes testing of biological material for history of use of substances listed under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Therefore, all successful applicants will be required to undergo a drug screening test prior to being offered an appointment as a police staff member with the PSNI. The biological material to be sampled as part of the pre-appointment process will usually be hair. Those who return a positive result will not be offered an appointment within PSNI. Refusal to offer an appointment will not prevent applicants from applying for future recruitment processes for PSNI.</p> <p>The substance misuse testing will be managed by an independent contractor.</p>
<p><b>Annual Leave</b></p>	<p>25 days plus 12 statutory holidays rising to 30 days after 5 years' service</p>