



**Tauranga**City

## Job description

<b>Title</b>	Head of Communications & Engagement
<b>Number</b>	5CE205 / 100760
<b>Group</b>	Strategy, Partnerships & Growth
<b>Division</b>	Communications & Engagement
<b>Reports to</b>	General Manager: Strategy, Partnerships & Growth
<b>Direct reports</b>	Team Leader Communications: City Development and Partnerships, Team Leader: Strategic Community Relations, Team Leader: Client Management, Team Leader: Community Relations
<b>Date</b>	23/09/2025

### Job holder commitment

The job holder accepts as a fundamental requirement of their employment that they must demonstrate a personal commitment to:

- modelling organisational values at all times
- a safe and healthy work environment
- assisting the Council to fulfil its Civil Defense responsibilities

At TCC, we are committed to upholding the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This includes engaging in an effective and meaningful partnership with tangata whenua, and developing our knowledge and understanding of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, Mātauranga Māori.

### Job purpose

As the Head of Communications and Engagement, you will play a pivotal role in shaping and delivering TCC's strategic narrative and engagement approach. Your responsibilities will be instrumental in enhancing the Council's reputation and building trust and confidence both within the community and among our internal stakeholders.

The Head of Communications and Engagement will drive innovative approaches to communication, consultation, and engagement, aligning all activities with Council's strategic priorities and values, and enhancing Council's digital presence.

Your role as the Head of Communications and Engagement is not just about communication but about fostering genuine connection with the community. You will ensure that communities and customers are well informed, and their insights inform our planning and decisions. Your innovative and deliberate approach to community engagement will help us reach a broader audience in an engaging and meaningful manner.

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Given the unique nature of this role, a direct working relationship with the Chief Executive on priority matters is a key aspect of the position. The role is expected to coordinate activity with the Mayoral Office, and also to involve elected members in communications and engagement where appropriate.

## Key outcomes

<p><b>A strategic communication and engagement approach that is effective, impactful, and continuously improving.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead the development and implementation of practical, innovative and impactful Communications and Engagement strategies, which are aligned to Council's strategic direction and prioritise these strategies to target investment and effort proportional to our risk, priority, and community impact.</li> <li>• Evaluate the effectiveness of communication and engagement strategies and initiatives, reporting on results and identifying opportunities for continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Lift community perception and experience through proactive, easy to understand communications, engagement plans and activities.</li> <li>• Build trust and confidence in Council decision making by ensuring timely and quality information is provided to the community, promoting transparent processes and closing the loop on engagement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>You skillfully lead TCC's response to public interest matters and enquiries.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactively identify and address high public interest matters that present opportunities to enhance community connection or to manage and mitigate reputational risk.</li> <li>• Manage media enquiries and significant community enquiries, supporting the CEO and senior leaders with a strategically considered response, capitalising on opportunities and managing risks. This includes making timely, accurate public statements and announcements, as well as collaborating with specialists in your team.</li> <li>• Anticipate and address contentious matters early to minimise impact on Council's reputation; provide clear, plain English explanations.</li> <li>• After an incident, review what happened and follow through on improvement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>You are a trusted and relied upon advisor to the Mayor, Elected Members, CEO and Executive Team.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide timely, strategic advice on communications, engagement and emerging issues.</li> <li>• Identify and enable opportunities for Civic Leadership connection with communities.</li> </ul>

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	<p>Proactively work with the Mayoral Office to ensure effective co-ordination and alignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep leaders informed on risks and opportunities so there are no surprises.</li> <li>• Prepare clear briefings, speeches and talking points as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Tangata Whenua, Government, and external partners are engaged purposefully</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Together with the Takawaenga Team, develop and implement appropriate communications and engagement approaches for Tangata Whenua and ensure they are translated into an organisational approach.</li> <li>• Develop and implement a key stakeholders engagement plan, including Ministers' offices, key external agencies, community organisations and media.</li> <li>• Maintain a forward calendar and briefing packs; align positions early with the right internal experts and Takawaenga.</li> </ul>
<b>Digital channels and content perform.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage and improve digital channels (web, social and email) so content is current, engaging, accessible (WCAG), easy to find (SEO) and useful.</li> <li>• Showcase TCC's work through proactive storytelling and events.</li> <li>• Maximise opportunities to utilise AI tools to improve efficiency and consistency (e.g., drafting, summarising, listening) with clear rules for privacy and fairness; use analytics to improve results.</li> </ul>
<b>The Communications and Engagement Team is led in an integrated and effective way.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With Team Leaders, plan and coordinate priorities and delivery across engagement and communications, maintaining strong linkages with Takawaenga.</li> <li>• Ensure the team has the appropriate skills and experienced and is structured optimally to achieve the desired communications, engagement and reputational outcomes.</li> <li>• Provide clear leadership, support and development for your team; manage budgets and suppliers well.</li> </ul>

The job description is not an exhaustive list of requirements; the job holder will be required to perform tasks assigned to them that are not explicitly described in this document.

## Person specifications

Essential
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A degree in communications, engagement, public relations, journalism, public policy, marketing or a related field (or equivalent experience).</li><li>• Significant senior level experience in communications and/or engagement in large or complex, public-facing environments, including work with elected officials, government agencies, community organisations and media.</li><li>• IAP2 training/qualification (or comparable engagement credentials or experience).</li><li>• Proven experience designing and delivering digital communication and engagement across web, email and social; confident using analytics to improve outcomes.</li><li>• Demonstrated expertise in issues/crisis management and media relations with calm, accurate and empathetic responses.</li><li>• Proven ability to manage multiple stakeholders with competing priorities; good political judgement.</li><li>• Strong resilience, optimism and empathy; excellent written and visual communication skills; ability to simplify complex topics.</li><li>• Commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and effective partnership with tangata whenua; experience partnering with iwi/hapū.</li><li>• People leadership experience, including coaching and vendor/supplier management.</li><li>• Experience in local/central government, infrastructure, regulatory or emergency contexts.</li><li>• Familiarity with WCAG, NZ Privacy Act, LGOIMA/OIA and Public Records requirements.</li></ul>

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## Our values

### **Pono / Integrity**

We do what we say we will do

### **Manaakitanga / Respect**

We listen to all views and show we care

### **Whāia te tika / Service**

We do the right thing for our community  
and each other

### **Whanaungatanga / Collaboration**

We work together and create connections