

Director of Communications and Engagement



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Welcome Letter from Joanna Killian

Dear Candidate

Councils are at the heart of their communities, playing an indispensable role in shaping the places where we live, work, and grow.

The Local Government Association (LGA) is uniquely placed to promote, improve and support the sector and our great work continues to be evidenced through positive feedback from councils; the continuing detailed conversations with government at official and Ministerial level and recognition of our improvement offers throughout the sector.

We're committed to making a real difference and empowering councils to deliver for their residents. We believe that when local government thrives, so do the communities they serve.

However, the significant challenges facing councils are well-documented, with many experiencing financial constraints, increased and more complex demands for services, and wider technological, environmental and societal changes.

As councils have had to adapt their operations to meet these challenges, the LGA is also adapting.

As the LGA comes to the end of its current three-year strategy it presents a valuable opportunity to embark on the next phase of our evolution, which will see us strengthen efforts to promote, improve and support the sector, adapting to changing member needs in an evolving political and economic climate.

We're reviewing our functions to ensure our offer remains relevant for the sector we represent and continues to offer value for money to our membership.

We must also be ready to respond to the shifting priorities in how central government operates so that we can lobby and influence on behalf of all our councils in the most effective way.

Through our organisational wide change initiative – Future LGA, we continue to work towards a resilient and fit-for-the future, responsive organisation that continues to support members with agility and innovation.

It is an exciting time to join our organisation as we work to represent councils and communities of all shapes, sizes, geography and political make-up.

In a fast-moving and ever-changing environment, you will work with our political leadership and senior management team bringing energy, vision, and expertise to our work with the sector and inspiring our workforce. Your work both inside and outside the organisation will help ensure that local government's voice is heard and our communities get the deal they deserve.

**Joanna Killian,
Chief Executive**



About the LGA

Whilst this is a challenging time for our sector with councils experiencing cost and demand pressures across services, it is also a time of great opportunity. Local, national and global events are impacting on our communities like never before. We have a new government, and the next spending review is due in the Spring. As the national membership body for local authorities this is a great time to demonstrate our passion for supporting the vital work of councils. The Local Government Association has recently welcomed a new Chief Executive who is leading a new change programme to ensure the LGA is fit for whatever the future brings and to allow us to be as agile as possible to serve our member councils across the country. As part of this new programme we are looking for a new **Director of Communications and Engagement** with the necessary drive and determination to help us achieve this fresh approach and ensure we deliver our mission to support, improve and promote local government.

There has never been a more difficult time for local government. Rising demand and costs have meant the toughest of choices for councils, with less to spend on the services that communities value. Yet the sector continues to show great resilience and continues to innovate. Local government is the key to solving some of our biggest national challenges. We work at the front line of people's daily lives. We shape places, provide vital services which hold our communities together, keep people safe, and create the conditions for prosperity and wellbeing.

From Westminster and Whitehall, to councils and communities of all shapes, sizes, geography and political make-up, you will understand how to advocate for local government and the millions of people that our sector supports and serves. In a fast-moving and ever-changing environment, you will work with our senior leadership team, our political leadership and senior management team to bring new energy, vision and expertise to our work with our sector and our workforce. Your work both within our organisation and externally with our valued stakeholders will help ensure that local government's voice is heard and our communities get the best services possible in such challenging times.



LGA's benefits

The Local Government Association aims to create a working environment in which the resources of experienced and motivated individuals promote and support a better local government. These are some of the benefits for working at the LGA:

Salary

If you are appointed to a grade that is paid on the nationally negotiated salary scale, then every year you should expect your salary to go up by one spine point until you reach the top spine point for your grade. You will normally be paid on 12th of each month by BACS transfer to your nominated bank account.

Pension

As an employee, you will automatically join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) where we will pay a generous contribution.

Flexible working

We recognise the importance of providing employees with a balance of home and work life. This can include working home based, flexible hours or part-time working.

Annual leave

LGA annual leave entitlement is 29 days, rising to 31 days after three years' service and to 33 days after five years' service, plus all UK public holidays (pro rata for fixed term and part-time contracts). If seconded to a role, annual leave entitlement will remain as per current employment terms and conditions.

Travelling to work

Our head office is 18 Smith Square, is in the heart of Westminster and provides a base for staff and our members with the UK Parliament and Government departments on our doorstep. Our building is located close to Westminster, Pimlico, Vauxhall and St James's Park Underground stations, as well as Victoria, Vauxhall and Charing Cross railway stations.

Family friendly

We offer a range of family friendly policies, including 39 weeks' paid maternity leave – which is enhanced for eligible employees – and up to two weeks' paid paternity leave for eligible employees.

Learning and development

The LGA is committed to supporting all colleagues in their personal, professional and career aspirations by providing a range of development opportunities. We foster a culture that encourages you to develop your talent and strengths throughout your journey with us.

Health and wellbeing

The LGA is committed to improving health and wellbeing and raising awareness of mental and physical health issues. We encourage participation in healthy lifestyle practices, and provide resources for employees to improve their lifestyle, in and out of work.

Staff networks

The LGA is an equal opportunity employer and staff currently have access to five staff networks, which provide support, advice and a sounding board in a safe space to help foster an inclusive work environment.

The networks are:

- BAME Network
- Disability & Neurodivergent Network
- Women's Network
- LGBTQIA+ Network
- Early Careers Network



Diversity & Inclusion at the LGA

At the LGA, we are committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace where everyone feels valued and respected. We believe that diversity in all its forms enriches our organisation, fostering creativity, innovation, and collaboration. We actively seek to create an environment where every individual has the opportunity to thrive.

We are proud to have a number of staff networks that play a vital role in supporting our diverse workforce. These include our BAME, Disability and Neurodivergent, Early Careers, Women's, and LGBTAIQ+ networks. Each of these networks is a tremendous asset to the organisation, offering valuable insights, support, and engagement opportunities for colleagues. Their contributions help us shape a more inclusive and supportive culture across all areas of our work.

The LGA has been on a meaningful EDI journey, underpinned by a robust EDI action plan and strategy. Our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion remains at the core of everything we do, and as we develop our next EDI strategy and action plan, we want our senior leaders to play an integral role in supporting and advancing this agenda.

We are proud to have been highly commended for our EDI work at the PPMA (Public Sector People Managers' Association) Excellence in People Management Award for 2024, but we know there is more to do. As we move into the next stage of our EDI journey, we are looking for senior leaders who are passionate about promoting diversity and inclusion and will champion our efforts to create a workplace where everyone feels they belong. All of our leaders will be pivotal in taking this journey forward, ensuring the LGA continues to lead the way in fostering an inclusive and diverse organisation.



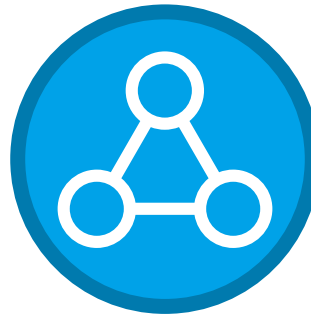
LGA Values and Behaviours

“Everyone achieves more together”



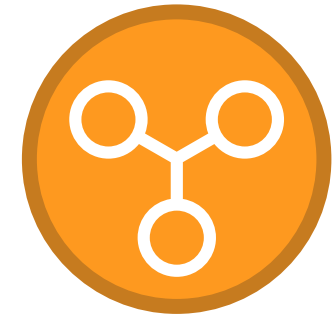
Inclusive

We ensure that our work is inclusive of all voices



Ambitious

We are ambitious for councils and their communities and are committed to striving for excellence in all that we do to support our colleagues, our membership and the sector to deliver the best possible outcomes



Collaborative

We bring together the expertise and skills needed, working as one team

Job description

Reports to: Director of Strategy and Policy
Directorate: Strategy and Policy
Grade: Grade 10

Job Summary:

As the Director of Communications and Engagement at the LGA, you will be at the heart of our commitment to be the national voice for local government at an exciting time for both the sector and the organisation. You will be accountable for shaping and leading a world class function, always focussed on continuous improvement. You will shape and deliver on our strategic objectives through your leadership of our communications team and the communications and engagement profession across the LGA. You will be seen as an advocate and ambassador for the profession across local government and the wider public sector.

You will bring passion and determination to ensure that, with the LGA Board and our key stakeholders, we shape the future of local government. You will do this by bringing a growth mindset which ensures that the LGA is at the forefront of communications and engagement practice across all disciplines from campaigns and public affairs to media relations and social media. You will support the organisation and its leaders to develop their impact and effectiveness.

You will be recognised as a credible, influential voice for local government and the LGA in media and public policy debates. You will be an authoritative leader of communications and engagement in the local government sector and internally within the LGA, among its partners and key stakeholder groups building the reputation of the organisation.

You will be part of the Strategy and Policy Directorate and sit on the extended Strategic Leadership Team, working with the Chief Executive and with the Chair and LGA Board, providing them with support and advice.

As a member of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) you will:

- i. **Lead with Impact, Integrity & Inclusivity:** As a key player on the Strategic Leadership Team, your influence will shape the LGA's strategic direction, making sure our vision is not just bold, but transformative. You will also embody the LGA's values and behaviours by ensuring every voice is heard and respected. Your leadership sets the tone for a workplace where everyone feels valued, empowered to contribute and focussed on the measurable impact we make for councils. You will manage budgets to maximise value and efficiency, increasing income to benefit those we serve.
- ii. **Inspire, Energise & Collaborate:** As a Senior Leader, inspire your team to bring their best selves to work every day. Create an environment of trust where everyone is encouraged to develop their skills and broaden their knowledge. Your energy and passion will ignite the same in others, driving the LGA to new heights. Actively promote, and embed, collaboration where skills and knowledge are shared freely across the organisation. Embrace agreed standard operating processes and procedures so we do things once, well, and together, as 'one LGA' to maximise our effectiveness.
- iii. **Drive Ambition & Excellence:** Uphold the LGA's commitment to excellence by pushing the boundaries of what's possible. Encourage your team to innovate and take pride in their work, while maintaining a realistic and honest approach to achieving our goals. Use your SLT platform to be the voice of local councils, driving policy change with sharp insights that make a real measurable difference. Your insights and leadership will influence national policy, support councils, and drive meaningful outcomes for communities and should be led by data and stories of impact.
- iv. **Be the Ambassador:** Represent the LGA with integrity, showcasing our commitment to inclusivity, excellence, and collaboration. Your role as an influencer will amplify the LGA's reputation as a modern, forward-thinking leader in local government, driving positive change across the sector. Lead by example in fostering external partnerships that not only enhance the LGA's profile with Government but also deliver exceptional measurable value to councils and communities. You will build and maintain strategic relationships that elevate the LGA's profile and deliver substantial measurable value to councils and communities. Your leadership in this area will ensure the LGA remains a trusted and influential partner.

As Director of Communications and Engagement you will:

- v. As a member of the extended Senior Leadership Team, you will provide leadership to ensure delivery of the overall ambition, vision, and culture of the Local Government Association.
- vi. Own the strategic communications strategy, plans, and delivery system plans, leading their development, implementation, and review, ensuring alignment to the LGA's organisational strategy and business plan and to the sector.
- vii. Inspire, motivate, and develop staff, to create an equal, equitable, inclusive, and diverse culture that enables staff to perform at their best and therefore

both deliver excellent services, as well as retain and attract the best talent for the LGA.

- viii. As the Head of the communications profession bring the latest knowledge and understanding across communications practice into the organisation and the sector, embedding a growth mindset across communications professionals in the LGA encouraging experimentation, creativity, and an openness to learn and share with communications professionals from both the public and private sector.
- ix. Strengthen the positive image of local government, and the LGA, by delivering robust communications and engagement through the right channels and models targeted at key external audiences, across national, mainstream, regional, local and specialist targets, having regard to the diversity of the LGA's membership.
- x. Maximise the communication and engagement we have with our partner Councils. Mayors, MCA, FRA so we can leverage our impact with them, tailor what we do for them, and harvest the best practice and knowledge to amplify their impact.
- xi. Develop and maintain effective relationships with key partners, stakeholders, and opinion formers, including central government, think tanks, and the 'Westminster village' more widely to lead, influence and be on top of the local government policy debate.
- xii. Be a high-level ambassador for local government, being a highly effective public face on key issues as appropriate and maintaining a similarly effective profile among the local government communications community.
- xiii. Develop and maintain networks and intelligence gathering capabilities, and dissemination channels, with members, councils, partners, and other external bodies to ensure local government and the LGA is as informed as possible about the issues affecting it and can share knowledge and best practice.
- xiv. Advise both the Chair and Chief Executive of the LGA on key communications issues, strategy, and tactics, covering both proactive campaigning and reputation management, and be responsible for this more widely with the political groups.
- xv. Build and embed a new operating model for the comms and engagement function, ensuring that skilled, multidisciplinary teams, work in an integrated way, using new practices, processes, and platforms to support the delivery of a responsive tailored account management model – inside the LGA and for our key strategic stakeholder.

- xvi. Operate to a campaigns-based model, supporting and empowering people from across the organisation, including the Board, to focus on the deep impact from sustained, multi-channelled, clearly curated programmes.
- xvii. Build a clear quantifiable, reportable, real time impact assessment model to enable strong performance reporting and pivoting of effort, as required.
- xviii. Commission, and implement best in class technologies, platforms, digital, data, tools, and applications to ensure that we can communicate, listen, and engage, across all our audiences, in the most modern, cost effective and seamless ways, ensure that our approach is capable of rapid iteration and change.
- xix. Build and manage the operating processes, procedures, and protocols to ensure compliance with new ways of working, including on new platforms, making sure our legal duties on the management and governance of information and data are met.
- xx. Build a strengthened engagement model so we use best practice to listen, involve, 'appreciate', enquire; using the data and insights we glean to deliver higher impact in our research, design, and communication work.
- xxi. Establish world class co-design/collaboration models so we can engage users, including those with lived experience, as we support change in councils, the LGA, as well as in commercial solutions we might offer – especially in relation to digital service design.
- xxii. Ensure Communications resources (staff, resources, assets, budgets) are managed in the most efficient and effective way, delivering excellent value for money, and driving continuous improvement to deliver impactful results against priorities.
- xxiii. Any other duties as may be required commensurate with the level of the post.

Relevant Contacts:

Local Authorities

Portfolio holders and other lead members
 Senior Officers
 Sector experts/professional bodies.

Central Government Departments

Civil Servants

LGA

Lead members
 Programme Heads
 Strategic Leadership Team colleagues and the
 Corporate Leadership Team

Other

News agencies
 National, regional and media
 Third Sector
 Private Sector partners
 Parliamentarians
 Peers
 Opinion formers
 Think tanks.

Person specification

Qualifications

- Recognised qualification in public relations or equivalent experience.

Knowledge and experience

- Track record of successfully leading significant communication teams in a high-profile, high-pressure environment.
- Can demonstrate an ability to navigate political sensitivities at national, regional, and local levels and direct experience of campaigning and lobbying.
- Has managed, motivated, and developed significantly sized teams of communications professionals.
- Has managed significant budgets in cost effectively and accountably.
- Experience of working in a large, complex organisation with conflicting demands and multiple clients and stakeholders.
- Significant understanding of local government and local government issues.
- Ideally has experience of working in the public sector, possibly in central / regional / local government.
- Senior experience of handling news media and organisations, preferably at a national level.

Skills and abilities

- A natural leader with the ability to sell a vision, empowering others and inspiring confidence, energy, and enthusiasm.
- A strategic thinker, able to generate ideas to shape the future of local government and public service.
- Ability to lead and motivate high performing teams and acting as a role model in this way.
- Successful at managing effective relations with stakeholders at national and local levels, particularly in the government and wider public sector.
- Able to contribute significantly to the delivery of corporate and strategic objectives and play a key role in the leadership team of the organisation in this way.
- Personal resilience and ability to manage competing priorities in a complex, high-pressure environment.
- Able to analyse multi-faceted issues and to develop and implement clear

strategic solutions.

- Personable, open, and clear with a focus on delivery and a positive approach to what is possible to achieve.
- Leadership, advocacy, and management skills at senior management level.
- Excellent presentational and communication skills including effective public speaking skills.
- Strong influencing, diplomacy and relationship building skills as a means of lobbying and engaging effectively with stakeholders and maintaining partnerships and networks.
- Attention to detail, with a clear focus on priorities and outcomes.
- Excellent written and verbal skills, and ability to present professionally and effectively.
- Creative, lateral, and energetic thinker, who can translate good ideas into positive media coverage.
- Team player, but also a self-starter, willing to be hands-on when more routine tasks need to be done.
- Willing to work antisocial hours and away from home, as appropriate.
- Good IT skills and familiarity with standard office applications and mobile devices.
- Familiarity with online tools and processes.
- Practical experience of financial and project management.

*This job description is intended to outline the key responsibilities and qualifications of the **Director of Communications and Engagement** at the LGA. It is not exhaustive and may be subject to change in line with the needs of the organisation.*

Contact

For a private and confidential discussion, please contact:

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Martin Tucker

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Tel: 0121 592 2165

Indicative Timetable:

Closing date for applications: Friday 31 December 2024, 12pm (Midday/Noon)

Preliminary Interviews (via Teams): w/c 13 January 2025

Officer and Stakeholder Interviews: w/c 27 January 2025

Group Leader Final Interview: Thursday 30 January 2025

(these dates may be subject to slight change)

Apply

To apply for this role please visit www.fajerfield.co.uk/lgacomms and find the Apply button at the bottom of the page. When prompted, please submit your CV and a Supporting Statement. Your supporting statement should be no more than 900 words in total answering the following questions:

- What skills and experience would you bring to this role?
- How would you build an effective and inclusive team culture as a leader?

Disability Confident

Please note we are a Disability Confident Employer so candidates who wish to be considered under the scheme and meet the essential criteria will automatically be invited to interview. Please note, that should you require any adjustments through the process, we will accommodate as much as possible. Please contact the recruitment team for further information if required.

