

## **Policy & Communications Officer**

### Secondment Scheme

#### Overview

As the national representative body for 36 county and county unitary authorities, the County Councils Network (CCN) is at the cutting edge of the debate on the future of public services in England. Over the past six years, CCN has developed into a major national stakeholder on local government policy, becoming the leading voice for counties and a key advocate for the wider local government sector.

CCN is now looking to the next stage of our development, during what are unprecedented political times in Westminster. As part of this, CCN is launching a new rolling secondment opportunity for an ambitious and aspiring officer to join our team at the heart of the national debate on the future of our sector.

With our national profile and reach increasing, our policy development, public affairs and communications activity has expanded rapidly over recent years; particularly in the past eighteen months. Alongside this, we have improved our membership offer through a broad range of officer network groups, and our formal support arrangements for the Association of County Chief Executives (ACCE). Our Business Plan 2019/20 (download [here](#)) provides an overview of the work of the network; our most high-profile successes; and our plans for the current year.

Whether you are a policy or communications officer working in a corporate or service environment, or part of a council graduate scheme, this is a unique opportunity for an aspiring, flexible and ambitious individual wanting to gain experience in the world of national public policy development and advocacy. The secondee will support our Head of Policy & Communications, Senior Policy, Public Affairs and Media Officers across a wide range of activity; from research and policy support, to communications and marketing, and public affairs in the corridors of Westminster.

For the member council, they will benefit from their staff being able to tap into the national insights and intelligence to feed into their corporate policy and communications functions, while providing an excellent training and development opportunity for the successful individual.

**If you would like to discuss this opportunity informally before applying, please contact James Maker, Head of Policy & Communications**  
[james.maker2@local.gov.uk](mailto:james.maker2@local.gov.uk).

**Closing Date:** Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019

**Interview Date:** Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019 (please hold this date if you apply)

## Personal Specification

### **The ideal candidate will be someone with;**

- A can-do attitude with an interest in national policy making, politics and advocacy.
- A good knowledge of local government policy and key national issues facing the sector.
- An awareness of the role and activity of the CCN.
- Exposure to corporate policy and/or communications activity.
- Good communication (written and oral) and numeracy skills
- Excellent research skills and the ability to analyse government data.
- Proficient IT skills, with a creative eye for presenting information in publications and on social media (i.e. infographics).
- An awareness of the role of external/public affairs and some knowledge of the national political process and Houses of Parliament.

### **The key activity of the new role would consist of;**

- Provide primary and secondary research support to Senior Policy Officers in order to support the development of policy positions, papers, publications and wider communications and public affairs activity.
- Produce policy briefings and contribute to CCN papers and publications.
- Contribution to the writing, development and distribution of CCN monthly internal and external communications, including newsletters and Chairman/Director's updates.
- Weekly proactive parliamentary monitoring and intelligence gathering.
- Supporting our networks of senior officer meetings in Westminster.
- Attend meetings with senior Whitehall Officials and Ministers, alongside CCN Council & Executive Meetings.
- Support the delivery of CCN's programme of events and Annual Conference in November.

## Secondment Arrangement

- This opportunity as an exclusive secondment arrangement with our member councils.
- The secondment is being offered on a full-time (37 hours) basis. The secondment would require travel into central London (Westminster) for a minimum of three days a week and CCN would be willing to discuss a financial arrangement to cover travel expenses.
- While our preference is for a full time secondment, we would willing to explore a part time arrangement, or flexibility for the individual to continue their existing role one day in per week in their council.
- CCN would be willing to cover a salary up to £34,788 pro-rata (SCP15 or NJC29).
- A minimum commitment of six months from the individual and member council would be required, with a period of up to 12 months considered.
- CCN has a positive approach to equalities and welcomes applications from all sectors of the community.

CCN is a cross-party special interest group of the LGA and represents 36 English councils that serve counties. CCN membership includes both upper tier and unitary authorities who together have over 2,500 councillors and serve 26 million people (47% of the population) across 85% of England.

CCN is a member-led organisation which develops policy, undertakes innovative research and makes representations to government on behalf of this significant proportion of the country outside the big conurbations. We also provide a range of support services to councils and promote service innovation through the sharing of best practice.

### *Application Process*

To apply for this opportunity please provide a CV with a covering note – no longer than two pages - outlining why you are applying for the role, relevant experience and future ambitions to [james.maker2@local.gov.uk](mailto:james.maker2@local.gov.uk).

**Closing Date:** Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019

**Interview Date:** Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019

If you intend to apply, please hold 24<sup>th</sup> October in your diary for a potential interview. If you are unable to make this date, we can explore alternatives.

Please provide details of the relevant line manager in your authority to discuss specific secondment arrangements.

### **Start date & CCN Conference;**

CCN would work with the successful candidate and their member councils to agree a start date, in line with their notice period and the requirements of the member council.

However, we ask that any candidate applying for the role be able to attend the CCN Annual Conference taking place between Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November and Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November in Guildford Surrey.