

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Policy and Campaigns Officer**

Our mission at Victim Support Scotland is to ensure that those affected by crime receive high quality support that will help them to recover from their experiences. We want victims and witnesses to be at the heart of everything we do so they have improved health and well-being, feel safer, more secure and informed and that we are an effective organisation, that makes a lasting difference. We aim to do this by adhering to our own organisational values of being supportive, striving for excellence and offering personalised and accessible services and these are reflected in the behaviours expected of all staff and volunteers.

**Job Purpose**

The Policy and Campaigns Officer is an integral part of Victim Support Scotland's (VSS) Communications and External Affairs Team, which in turn is part of the Development and External Affairs Directorate. The purpose of the role is to build the profile, influence, and credibility of VSS's work at a local and national level with Scottish politicians, political parties, and opinion formers. The postholder will develop and influence policies and practices that deliver positive and lasting change for victims and witnesses.

The main aspects to the role are:

- drafting and devising policy responses.
- parliamentary engagement and lobbying and briefings.
- Campaigns.

**SCOPE OF THE ROLE**

Working closely with the Head of Communications and External Affairs, the Communications and External Affairs, and teams within the Development and External Affairs Directorate, and colleagues across the wider organisation, the post holder will proactively and reactively develop and promote policy positions and positive interventions that contribute to improving the lives of people affected by crime.

The post is high-profile and front-facing and involves engagement with a wide range of senior stakeholders that are key to the success of VSS delivering on its main aims. It is therefore expected that the postholder will be confident and knowledgeable in their approach to handling relationships with partners and has a willingness to work alongside and collaborate with colleagues in the Development and External Affairs Directorate.

**Key Accountabilities**

- Identify, monitor, and evaluate policy issues appropriate to VSS. Horizon scanning for opportunities, and making recommendations to senior staff for areas of policy to engage in.
- Use pertinent information, data and research, analysis of the policy issue and a strong understanding of the external environment to draft formal responses to consultations, ensuring the rights and wellbeing of victims and witnesses is foremost.
- Provide intelligence and advice to senior staff about effective Parliamentary influencing approaches to enable VSS to develop and maintain meaningful relationships with key local and national politicians.
- Clearly communicate VSS's policy positions, to seek maximum influence for VSS, victims and witnesses. This may include drafting consultation responses, developing key messages, representing the organisation on working groups, providing evidence at the Scottish Parliament, writing blog posts, and interacting with parliamentary committees.
- Provide political and policy analysis, intelligence, and advice for senior managers to inform VSS's strategy, policy, and service delivery.
- Identify opportunities to engage effectively with and influence other organisations, academics, public and civil servants on social justice issues and others, to help promote the rights of victims.
- Work with colleagues across VSS, to ensure VSS's external policy work complements other work within the organisation. Create briefings for staff and stakeholders on policy issues; collaborate with

colleagues to summarise and communicate complex data (scientific, technical, and economic) and policy ideas to engage stakeholders.

- Contribute to building the capacity of local services to fully maximise opportunities to work effectively with local MSPs, whilst observing political impartiality and electoral law and to influence local health, social justice, and planning partnerships.
- Contribute to strategic planning for the policy and campaigning function.
- Contribute to and support the work of policy influencing groups, such as Victims Organisations Collaboration Forum Scotland, devising agendas, ensuring regular communication with members, providing secretariat support where needed.
- Lead on devising joint responses to consultations from Victims Organisations Collaboration Forum Scotland (VOCFS) members.
- Work with the Communications and External Affairs Team and colleagues in the Development and External Affairs Directorate to promote and support VSS's policy positions and key messages through the media, web, and social media.

#### **Campaigns**

- Work alongside victims and witnesses, staff, and volunteers to devise campaign topics and activity for both VSS and VOCFS.
- Devise and deliver campaign and activity plans with the Communications and External Affairs Team.

#### **Administration and Communication**

- Maintain calendar of key dates, for example stages of Bills and when consultations commence and end.
- Clearly record activity, outputs, and outcomes.
- Responsible for keeping VSS Lobbying Returns up to date and accurate.
- Produce and circulate daily information on key topics.
- Produce regular newsletters and maintain contact database.

The post holder may be required to travel occasionally within Scotland.

The postholder may be required to undertake any other general duties set out by their line manager.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS**

**Internal:** CEO, Executive and Corporate Leadership Teams, Development and External Affairs Directorate, Regional Teams, Head office staff, Executive Board, and volunteers.

**External:** Victims and witnesses of crime, professionals and other agencies, victim support organisations, Victims Organisations Collaboration Forum Scotland, Scottish Parliament, and Scottish Government, MSPs and their office staff, political advisors, local government, and influencers.

KEY REQUIREMENTS			
1.	Qualifications		EVIDENCED
	Undergraduate degree in relevant subject, professional qualification or SVQ level 4 or equivalent experience.	E	
	Experience in a similar role.	D	
2.	Skills / Abilities		
	Track record of contributing to policy and influencing projects that achieve results.	E	
	Knowledge and/or working experience in parliamentary, public affairs, campaigns, policy research or related role, evidenced by working on major projects focused on rights issues for a high-profile organisation.	E	
	A demonstrable understanding of social policy, criminal and community justice issues in Scotland and how Parliament works.	E	
	Up-to-date understanding of equality and diversity and its application to communications and campaigning work.	E	
3.	Experience		
	Experience of horizon scanning and identifying key issues of focus.	E	
	Proven ability to prioritise a busy workload, producing consistent, accurate work to tight deadlines.	E	
	Experience of working productively with internal teams to meet organisational priorities.	E	
	Demonstrable experience of working effectively with partners and stakeholders.	E	
	Experience of working either within or closely alongside a Communications team would be desirable.	D	
4.	Knowledge		
	Excellent written and oral communication skills.	E	
	Strong communications and effective and confident influencing skills.	E	
	Ability to analyse and synthesise complex issues clearly, quickly, and succinctly.	D	
	Empathy towards / experience of involving the views of people who use services.	D	
5.	Behaviours		
	Ability to work within a complex organisation and encourage awareness of public affairs at all levels.	E	
	An understanding of the role of the voluntary sector, and the role voluntary sector organisations play in advocating and lobbying for change.	E	
	Ability to cope with rapid and sustained change and competing demands	E	
	Honesty and integrity	E	
	Strong approach to performance management with the ability to define and measure outcomes of success	E	
	Strategic thinker, able to deliver a vision of the future organisation	E	
	Willing to be flexible in working hours and able to travel as required	E	