

# CASE STUDY

**Client:** Southern Water

**Position:** Senior Public Affairs Manager

**Point of Contact:** Director of Corporate Affairs &  
Head of Public Affairs.

**Process duration:** 8 weeks from commencement to  
appointment



## THE CLIENT

Southern Water is the private utility company responsible for the public wastewater collection and treatment in Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, West Sussex, East Sussex and Kent, as well as the public water supply and distribution for approximately half of this area.

## THE CHALLENGE

The Corporate Affairs team had considered a number of people for the vacant role of Senior Public Affairs Manager, but **had not found the right candidate**, despite using a variety of channels including direct work, MSP and other agency support. As such, **the vacancy had been open for a number of months**, becoming a critical requirement.

Our engagement coincided with the arrival of a new Head of Public Affairs. The company brought us in to explore the challenges it had experienced, and to help it attract and secure the right talent. We concluded that the main hurdles were a limited interest in the water sector (owing to prevailing sector issues) and the company's location in Worthing.

## THE APPROACH

Our strategic approach involved working closely with the Head of Public Affairs and internal recruitment team to ensure a **thorough understanding of expectations and operations**. We then embarked on a two-week period of **market mapping and comprehensive candidate qualification** before presenting a curated shortlist. Given the importance and urgency of the role, it was imperative to manage the timeframe and transition seamlessly, so all core milestones and interview dates were pre-agreed.

Since the role had been on the market for several months, the most obvious candidates had already been approached. Consequently, our search required a more thorough and strategic approach. Additionally, we discovered that the role's prolonged vacancy was well known, causing initial hesitation or uncertainty among many candidates.

Through our thorough and strategic search process, we identified multiple highly-qualified candidates. A **well-structured interview process led to the successful placement of an outstanding candidate** - someone with proven credibility in parliament and prior experience in the water sector, as well as a strong ability to navigate and integrate public affairs engagement within a commercial setting.

## KEY STATS



Five CVs were sent to the hiring manager for review.



Four people were selected for first stage interview.



The process took eight weeks from commencement to appointment.

## MORE ABOUT MURRAY MCINTOSH

Founded in 2015, Murray McIntosh was established to offer a research-led, specialist recruitment service. Since then, we've earned a reputation as a trusted partner, working with clients ranging from innovative start-ups to global multinationals to secure the talent needed to deliver.

Our Policy, Public Affairs, Strategic Comms & Economics team deliver highly targeted support, backed by genuine insight and sector knowledge. Our consultants are fully equipped to provide a first-class recruitment service.

We also offer strategic, complimentary advice across recruitment process design, employer branding, and workforce planning. Our services cover both permanent and contract recruitment, tailored to meet the specific needs of each client.

We remain embedded in our markets by actively participating in industry events, panels, and working groups, keeping us informed, engaged, and always one step ahead.

## GET IN TOUCH



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