

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE MEETING OF 8th April 2019

PUBLIC REPORT: Y / N

EXEMPT REPORT: Y / N

Report Title	Communications Strategy 2019-2021
KEY DECISION	Yes
Report Author	Ann Marie Hawkins - Head of Communities
Purpose of Report	For the Executive to consider the Communications Strategy 2019-2021 and to recommend that Council adopt the Strategy.
Reason for Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents across the district will be well informed about the Council and its services. • Through a proactive approach to communications will ensure information is shared in a timely way and reaching the right audience. • Planned communication will ensure opportunities to promote the good work of the Council.
Portfolio (holder)	Councillor Neil Bannister – Leader and Portfolio for Strategic Communications
Corporate Priorities	<p>PLACE: an enterprising, vibrant place CO 1 Keeping the District a great place to live</p> <p>PEOPLE: a healthy, inclusive and engaged community CO 6 More-accessible Services available 24/7 CO 9 Stronger Communities CO 8 Support Vulnerable People</p>
Financial Implications	None directly arising from this report
Risk Management Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reactive and unplanned communications could lead to negative media coverage which may impact on the reputation of the Council. • Missed opportunities to engage with our residents across the district through unplanned communications.
Environmental Implications	None directly arising from this report
Legal Implications	None directly arising from this report
Equality Implications	Particular care will be taken to accommodate the particular needs of minority and ethnic communities, people with disabilities and those who do not have English as their first language, as well as those who are unable to access information electronically.
Data Protection Implications	None directly arising from this report
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Portfolio Holder has been consulted. • The Corporate Delivery Plan and Team Plans have informed this Strategy. • Feedback from the Residents Survey has been used to inform this Strategy. • Feedback from the Strategic Communications Review 2018

Options	No other options to consider as a Communications Strategy is required.
Background Papers	There are no background papers.
Recommendation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Communications Strategy set out in Appendix A is recommend to Council for adoption; and 2. To recommend that Council delegate authority to the Joint Chief Executive (NP) to make future changes to the key messages and actions referred to in Appendix A in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, only when it is necessary to update the key activities inline with the approved priorities of the Council.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council undertook a Strategic Communications Review in early 2018.
- 1.2 During 2018, the majority of recommendations from the strategic communication review have been implemented successfully.
- 1.3 Ongoing implementation and monitoring of communications across the organisation will continue – this will ensure communications remains embedded within the organisation.
- 1.4 An outcome of the strategic communications review was to develop a Communications Strategy to provide the Council with a plan of all key communications and engagement activities across the Council, linked to the Council's Priorities and Corporate Delivery Plan.

2. Key Facts

- 2.1 The Communications Strategy 2019-21 supports the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan by identifying the Council's strategic service priorities and associated key communications actions and provides an overview of key activity across the authority. Alongside this Strategy, the Communications Team will continue to manage and deliver on the day to day communication activity across the Council.
- 2.2 The Communications Strategy outlines the key service priorities for the Council, together with messages, audiences, timings and potential risks. Each service priority has been linked to the appropriate corporate priority/priorities to demonstrate the links that need to be made to ensure clear and consistent corporate messages are conveyed across all activity, albeit tailored for each situation.
- 2.3 To ensure effective communications, this Strategy enables the Council to be strategic in its approach to communications by:
 - identifying the risks associated with key activities and plan their mitigation
 - identifying opportunities to support corporate messages and plan accordingly
 - noting milestones and use these to seek recognition when projects are complete
 - considering not just the essential, but also the valuable

- 2.4 Strategic service priorities will be reviewed by the Corporate Management Team and the Communications Team. The Communications Strategy will be updated as appropriate to ensure it remains relevant.