

**REPORT TO THE SCRUTINY PANEL for
14th July 2011**

Status: Draft
Title: Communication Strategy
Originator: *Rachael Abbott, Communication & Consultation Manager*
Where from: Scrutiny People November 2010
Where to next: Staff Consultation then to Executive

Objective:

To review the Council's refreshed Communication Strategy and ensure it is fit for purpose.

1. Outcome sought from Panel

1.1 To support the refreshed strategy to ensure it is fit for purpose.

2 Background

2.1 The Council's mission as noted in the strategy of 2006 was to provide through partnership and consultation – 'innovative, accessible and responsive services' that ensured the district of Harborough was a healthy and happy place to live, work and visit.

Community engagement in Harborough district was driven by the Harborough District 2010 Vision, our core values and the priorities in the council's business plan. Our core values underpin the services we provided and how we consulted and communicated with the public and all our partners.

The Communication and Consultation Strategy 2006 was to demonstrate how our corporate values would be translated into clear principles and standards for effective communication and consultation to support our commitment to community engagement.

3 Points for discussion

3.1 Our role as a Council is not just to deliver services to the highest possible standard but also to ensure that our residents can:

- Find out the information they need
- Find out about changes in existing services and influence new services

- Provide comment(s) on the services they receive

The Communication Strategy will ensure our residents receive information in a clear and targeted way which would be accessible to all.

- 3.2 The strategy addresses the use of the Council's website and intranet by developing this service further and by offering on-line services which will ensure more cost efficient communication by reducing paper, postage and the cost of capturing of data and meet the needs of those hard to reach or those with a disability or access concerns.
- 3.3 The Strategy also addresses social media which is more accessible to young people and those on the go or working.
- 3.4 Communications are a powerful way of helping people understand what the Council is seeking to achieve. Communication can not only set out what is happening or going on but also why they are happened, which helps create awareness and comprehension of the council's activities.

4 Equality Impact Assessment Implications/Outcomes (attach completed EIA)

- 4.1 A draft EIA has been produced and will be completed as part of the adoption of this Strategy.

5 Impact on Communities

- 5.1 The revised communication strategy will assist the council in targeting the needs of its residents through more accessible and cost efficient forms of communication. This will lead to improved services in the areas identified by the service users in the Access Consultation carried out in February 2011.

6 Legal Issues

- 6.1 Local Government White Paper (Strong and Prosperous Communities). The aim of this White Paper is to give local people and local communities more influence and power to improve their lives. It is about creating strong, prosperous communities and delivering better public services through a rebalancing of the relationship between central government, local government and local people. Since the launch of the White Paper the Government has produced

Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 - seeks to introduce

a range of devolutionary and deregulatory measures to ensure a local government

system in England that:

- gives local people more influence over the services and decisions that affect their communities;

- provides effective and accountable strategic leadership;
- Operates in a performance framework – for local authorities working alone or

in

partnership – which supports citizen empowerment and secures better outcomes for all; and

- leads local partnerships to provide better services for citizens.

7 Resource Issues

- 7.1 The Communications and Consultation Manager will manage and monitor this strategy to ensure that unnecessary duplication of time and resources.
- 7.2 The production of all communication information meets the corporate branding guidelines and media protocol and is the most effective/timely way of communicating.
- 7.3 Everyone in the council has a duty to think about what they say and how they say it to ensure that the recipient of any information is clear on what is being said and the council's reputation does not suffer from is being said.

8 Community Safety Implications

- 8.1 There are no relevant community safety issues in writing these strategies. If/where they may arise they will be implemented in line with the councils Community safety policy.

9 Carbon Management Implications

- 9.1 Electronic communication and better use of the website/intranet will reduce the excessive production of paper and postage.

10 Risk Management Implications

- 10.1 Failure to ensure a truly representative cross section of the community communicated with, using their preferred method.
- 10.2 The staff and members do not commit to the implementation of this strategy could result in an uncoordinated approach to communication and branding/style

11 Consultation

- 11.1 This draft strategy will be shared internally with Management Board and Managers and staff.

12 Background Papers

None

Previous report(s): Y – Scrutiny Report (People) – November 2010

Information Issued Under Sensitive Issue Procedure: N

Appendices:

A. TEN Performance Management Data (Compulsory) - attached

B. Summary Budget Information

C. Communication Strategy – draft attached

APPENDIX A

Planned Action	Status Colour	Q1 Status	Q2 Status	Q3 Status	Q4 Status	Predicted Start Date	Predicted End Date	Lead Officer
CCS 32 Implement the 'Tell Us Once' initiative in conjunction with the County Council and the DWP						Fri-1-Apr-11	Fri-30-Sep-11	Rachael Abbott
CCS 33 Have an effective Service Level Agreement in place between the new Revenues and Benefits Partnership and Customer Services.						Wed-1-Dec-10	Wed-1-Jun-11	Rachael Abbott
CCS 34 Improve the on line consultation system on the web site						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-31-Mar-12	Rachael Abbott
CCS 35 Implement the web site action plan						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-31-Mar-12	Rachael Abbott
CCS 36 To introduce an Intranet system that integrates with the web site.						Sat-1-Jan-11	Thu-30-Jun-11	Rachael Abbott
CCS 37 Implement the outcomes of the Communications and Consultation Strategy						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-31-Mar-12	Rachael Abbott
CCS 38 Review the system for monitoring of Complaints						Thu-1-Sep-11	Mon-31-Oct-11	Rachael Abbott
CCS 39 Open the new Service Shop within Lutterworth Library						Thu-1-Dec-11	Wed-1-Jun-11	Rachael Abbott
CCS 40 Promoting alternative methods of payment						Wed-1-Jun-11	Sat-31-Mar-12	Rachael Abbott
CCS 41 Implement new working arrangements in Customer Services.						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-31-Mar-12	Rachael Abbott
CCS 42 Review all Business Continuity Plans						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-31-Mar-12	Rachael Abbott
CCS 43 Put systems in place to ensure that the Telephony system is resilient						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-31-Dec-11	Rachael Abbott
CEC 04 Address the outcomes of the Localism Bill - (Community Empowerment)						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-31-Mar-12	Rachael Abbott
CEC 05 Develop an in house Citizens Panel						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sun-31-Jul-11	Rachael Abbott
CSE 06 Review all Emergency Plans						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-31-Mar-12	Rachael Abbott
CSE 07 Participate in at least one major Emergency Planning Exercise						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-31-Mar-12	Rachael Abbott
TP COM 01 Develop and implement data sampling techniques for the team's highest risk data						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-31-Mar-12	Rachael Abbott
TP COM 02 Develop an in-house electronic database for capturing and analysing data from consultations						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-30-Jun-12	Rachael Abbott

Select alternative view: [(none)]

Equality Impact Assessment	Current Status Colour	Q1 Status	Q2 Status	Q3 Status	Q4 Status	Predicted Start Date	Predicted End Date	Lead Officer
CCS EIA 01 Access to Services						Fri-1-Apr-11	Sat-31-Dec-11	Rachael Abbott