

Chichester District Council

Cabinet

7 September 2021

Communications Strategy 2021-2026

1. Contacts

Report Author:

Sarah Parker – Communications Manager
Telephone: 01243 534537 E-mail: sjparker@chichester.gov.uk

Cabinet Member:

Alan Sutton – Cabinet Member for Housing, Communications, Licensing and Events
Telephone: 01798 342452 E-mail: asutton@chichester.gov.uk

2. Recommendation

2.1 Cabinet adopts the draft Communications and Digital Strategy 2021 – 2026.

3. Background

3.1 As a council we recognise that effective communications and engagement are central to the delivery of all of our services. We want to make sure that our priorities, objectives, values and ambitions are understood by our residents, workforce, partners, local businesses and stakeholders. In response to this, we have produced a communications and digital strategy that aims to:

- integrate communications into the Council's planning process;
- provide a consistent approach to our delivery of key messages;
- create a brand narrative, explaining to residents what we stand for, our ambitions and the part that our residents can play in this;
- make sure that our communications are open, honest, clear, concise and accessible; and,
- set out our digital vision for the Council.

3.2 The strategy recognises that although communications and technology are constantly changing, putting the 'customer first' will always be at the forefront of our approach. This is highlighted within our 10 point plan, which is a commitment that our communications will be:

- Customer centred;
- Accessible to all;
- Conversational;
- Engaging;
- Focused on Audiences;
- Digital First;
- Insight driven;

- Cross-promoted;
- Fully evaluated; and
- Cost effective.

- 3.3 The strategy also outlines the Council's commitment to working with our partners to drive improvement and access to services through the Local Digital Declaration. This is a shared ambition for the future of local public services in the internet age, and our commitment to realising it.
- 3.4 The strategy provides a framework from which communications can continue to be enhanced and developed to meet our customer and stakeholders' needs. A detailed work plan will be produced annually each year, which will outline the actions and milestones that will take place on an operational level to ensure the key principles outlines in the strategy are delivered.
- 3.5 It is proposed that this strategy will be delivered over the next five years and reviewed as and when necessary.
- 3.6 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the strategy at its meeting on 15 June 2021. The members overwhelmingly voted in favour of referring the strategy to Cabinet to be adopted.

4. Outcomes to be Achieved

- 4.1 To deliver effective, inclusive and timely communications to help deliver the council's corporate priorities.
- 4.2 To fully utilise all of the communication channels available in a targeted and planned way, in order to make sure that our residents, businesses and stakeholders are able to access the services they need and they feel well informed, involved and engaged.
- 4.3 To provide quality digital services and content and to encourage our customers to make the most of our digital opportunities.

5. Proposal

- 5.1 Effective communications and engagement are vital to delivering the council's corporate priorities and supporting our communities.
- 5.2 The proposal is to adopt the draft Communications and Digital Strategy.

6. Alternatives Considered

- 6.1 Do not adopt the Communications and Digital Strategy.

7. Resource and Legal Implications

- 7.1 There is no anticipated additional resource or legal implications associated with this report.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 We have consulted with key services areas including ICT and Customer Services, all of whom have given their support to this strategy.
- 8.1 We regularly consult with residents to ask how they would like us to communicate with them and this is reviewed each year. This feedback has been taken account of while producing this strategy.
- 8.2 A Task and Finish group also looked at Consultations in 2019. The feedback and findings from this have also been taken account of within the strategy.
- 8.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed and commented on the Communications Strategy and referred it to Cabinet to be adopted.

9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks

- 9.1 The development of the Communications and Digital Strategy should have a positive impact on the community.

10. Other Implications

Crime and Disorder		No
Biodiversity and Climate Change Mitigation		No
Human Rights and Equality Impact		No
Safeguarding and Early Help		No
General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)		No

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Communications and Digital Strategy

12. Background Papers

None