



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

SLT	15 October 2024
Executive	6 November 2024
Scrutiny Commission	12 December 2024

Wards affected: all wards

Communications Strategy 2024 - 2028

Report of Director Corporate Services

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To seek approval for the revised Communications Strategy 2024 – 2028.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That members review and approve the revised strategy.

3. Background to the report

3.1 The Communications Strategy sets out the strategic direction for communication over the next four years. It builds on progress and achievements made since the last strategy was published in 2019 and sets out the opportunities and challenges we face and how we plan to tackle those challenges. It also identifies the key areas of focus for communication activity in the period to 2028.

3.2 Since the last communications strategy was published in 2019, the communications landscape has changed dramatically, in part due to changes in technology but also as a result of the pandemic which accelerated changes to the way all businesses communicate with their customers. At the same time there have been substantial changes in the ways customers choose to receive and consume news, continuing the shift away from traditional and print news sources towards digital and social media platforms.

3.3 The five key areas of focus for communication activity in this strategy will be:

1. Accelerating the shift of communication activity online by increasing the use of e-mail marketing, e-newsletters and further developing our presence on social media for customers who prefer this method of communication.
2. Continue to make our communications and promotional campaigns insight-driven.
3. Providing a professional media office service to our media partners and to the authority's own service areas.
4. Ensuring that whatever method we use to reach our customers, our communication continues to be timely, informative, engaging, accessible and factual.
5. We will continue to make accessibility the foundation of our communication activity.

4. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

4.1 none

5. Financial implications [IB]

5.1 None

6. Legal implications [ST]

6.1 None

7. Corporate Plan implications

7.1 The strategy underpins communication activity under the three aims of people, places and prosperity.

8. Consultation

8.1 The Corporate Equality Steering Group has been consulted.

9. Risk implications

9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

9.3 The following significant risks associated with this report:

Management of significant (Net Red) risks

Risk description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Damage to reputation/adverse publicity	Communication strategy. Media implications assessed and reported regularly. Communications planned and reported.	Bill Cullen

10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

10.1 The communication strategy has regard for the general and specific duties as set out in section 149-159 of the Equality Act 2010.

11. Climate implications

11.1 The communications strategy aims to reduce the reliance on printed materials while remaining accessible appropriate to the needs of the customer.

12. Corporate implications

12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data protection implications
- Voluntary sector

Background papers: Communications strategy 2024-2028

Contact officer: Jacqueline Puffett, ext 5630

Executive member: Council Leader Stuart Bray