

FOR PUBLICATION

**OVERVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT
ON EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: 29 JULY 2014

REPORT BY: POLICY AND SCRUTINY OFFICER

WARD: ALL

COMMUNITY FORUM: ALL

KEY DECISION REFERENCE (IF APPLICABLE): FORWARD PLAN ENTRY REF: KEY DECISION NO 34

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BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR PUBLIC REPORTS: Report to Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum held 19 June 2014.

TITLE: Scrutiny Project Group Report on External Communications

LOCATION: Scrutiny Office

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present for consideration by Cabinet the report and recommendations of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on External Communications.
- 1.2 To provide the statutory written notice that must be given by Statutory Scrutiny Committees to Cabinet to take required action as at 3.2 below.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet consider the recommendations of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum as set out below : -
- 2.2 That the Council adopts clear branding and a 'one council approach'.
- 2.3 A review be undertaken to look at how better coordination of marketing and communication activities can be achieved to enable the objectives of the new communications strategy to be delivered. This may involve the need for a review of the organisational structure.
- 2.4 That analytics (the discovery and communication of meaningful patterns in data) are used to guide web content and to be able to better predict and improve performance.
- 2.5 That the Council consider adopting a 'digital first approach' to all its external communication.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum appointed a Scrutiny Project Group to look into the council's approach to external communications. Further information and background detail of the review are contained within the Scrutiny Project Group's report attached at Appendix 1. The Project Group's report provides the purpose of the review and its findings.
- 3.2 Statutory Scrutiny Committees are also required to provide written statutory notice to Cabinet requiring action in response to its scrutiny report and recommendations. These actions require Cabinet to :-
 - (i) consider the attached report and recommendations;
 - (ii) indicate the actions it proposes to take if any; and
 - (iii) publish its response within 2 months of the receipt of the report.With regard to (i) and (ii) above the Council's Constitution provides for Cabinet to consider the report at the earliest practicable opportunity.

4.0 SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUP REPORT

- 4.1 The report of the Scrutiny Project Group was considered by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 19 June 2014 (Appendix 1). The recommendations presented were approved by the Scrutiny Forum for submission to Cabinet .

- 4.2 It is intended that these recommendations and the Scrutiny Project Group's work and report will inform the development of a corporate communications strategy.
- 4.3 The Councils Communications and Marketing Manager is currently working on such a strategy which is to be presented at a subsequent Cabinet meeting.

5.0 RISK CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Consideration may need to be given to stakeholder support for the proposed new approaches and branding.

6.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Implementation costs of recommendations in this report will be contained within existing agreed budgets, including that agreed under Great Place, Great Service. If a review of marketing and communication activities is undertaken, a further report would outline any financial considerations there may be.

7.0 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no legal considerations arising from the recommendations in this report.

8.0 EQUALITIES CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 An equalities impact assessment is yet to be completed.

9.0 HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 There are no human resources considerations arising directly from the recommendations in this report. If a review of marketing and communication activities is undertaken, a further report produced would outline any impact on human resources.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That Cabinet consider the recommendations of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum as set out below : -
- 10.2 That the Council adopts clear branding and a 'one council approach'.
- 10.3 A review to look at how better coordination of marketing and communication activities can be achieved to enable the objectives of

the new communications strategy to be delivered. This may involve the need for a review of the organisational structure.

10.4 That analytics (the discovery and communication of meaningful patterns in data) are used to guide web content and to be able to better predict and improve performance.

10.5 That the Council consider adopting a 'digital first approach' to all its external communication.

11.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To help ensure the production of the new External Communications Strategy is customer focused and embraces new technology and communication methods.

ANITA CUNNINGHAM
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You can get more information about this report from Anita Cunningham (Tel. 01246 345273).