

Business Plan for Resident Information & Consultation (May 2011 to September 2013)

1. Introduction

1.1 The Service's key responsibilities are:

- To support council services in ensuring residents are consulted and informed about council services, policies and plans, in a timely and accessible way.
- To provide business development support to the council's strategic partnerships, Chief Executive, Cabinet, Civic Office and Lieutenancy as they work to meet the needs of the Island community and to support the Youth Council in its active engagement in council decision making and in championing the views of young people on the Island.

1.2 National Context

- Growth of personal and social media fuelling expectations from the public for faster, accessible information.
- Equality Act 2010 places increasing emphasis on ensuring we recognise and respond to different needs and to give everyone the opportunity to participate regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, gender or sexual orientation.
- Greater transparency – move to publish local information around council expenditure, need for increased explanation to promote understanding of expenditure costs incurred.
- Updated Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity (31 March 2011) which sets out a clear code of practice around the principles and lawfulness of local authority publicity and particularly changes in respect of publications.
- The Localism Act 2011 which sets out a variety of legislative changes to give greater empowerment and rights to local communities as well as the ability for local authorities to exercise greater freedom from central government constraints over decisions made locally.
- The proposed changes to health & social care and policing reforms emphasise the importance of partnership working, informing residents, greater personal choice, public involvement and accountability – all of which have implications for the way in which we communicate with our residents.
- The Open Public Services White paper which aims to ensure that everyone has access to the best possible public services through a process of opening up the provision of public services to greater competition, choice and accountability and ensuring the public has greater choice, control and influence to drive improvements and better services.
- “The power of information: Putting all of us in control of the health and social care information we need” – Department of Health ten-year strategy framework for transforming information for health and care
- Positive for Youth which sets out a new approach to cross-Government policy for young people aged 13-19 in England to ensure partnership working to support families and improve outcomes for young people, particularly those that are most disadvantaged and vulnerable

1.3 Local Context

- Ongoing budget constraints leading to significant changes in delivery and commissioning of all services across the council highlight the importance of clearly communicating changes, promoting understanding and acceptance, encouraging participation in consultation activities to influence decision making, internally and externally among staff and the community.
- Partnership context – reform of the NHS brings with it changes at a local level, including dissolution of the PCT, the formation of a local health foundation trust, the development of Clinical Commissioning Groups (GP groups) and the transfer of Public Health to the local authority and, in a similar vein, regional policing changes which will impact locally on policing measures. The importance of maintaining a good level of communication with strategic partnerships as these changes develop is crucial to the continued commitment to the Island’s community strategy.
- Changing role of parish and town councils – the move to devolve decision making to a local level and to empower communities brings with it an opportunity and greater responsibility for parish and town councils. Sharing information with these organisations will be crucial if we are to assist them in their choices around local expenditure and priorities but we need to find a way to do so, that is both cost effective and yet timely.
- Similarly, the role of the voluntary sector looks set to become increasingly important and locally, the council has funded arrangements for a Voluntary sector Forum to be established to ensure the voice of this important sector is heard at both a strategic and tactical level.
- Arrangements for the Health & Wellbeing board are well-established on the Island and the work of this important body will help set out a clear strategic direction and framework for responding to the needs of the Island (set out in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment). Critical to this process will be the community’s voice, represented on the board currently by the LINK and Patients Council and from April 2013 by Healthwatch, the Island’s new consumer champion
- Access to information; as set out in the Cabinet paper of December 2010 (Future shape and direction of the organisation), the council set out a clear statement of intent that “the public will increasingly resolve their issues through the internet without need of personal contact with council staff. When they do need personal contact, we will resolve their issues at the first point of contact ie the customer service centre.” Figures for internet usage on the Island are not currently clearly defined although a recent survey by the County Press found 78% of Islanders aged over 15 have access to the internet (with email, shopping, research and education cited as the most popular reasons for using it (June 2012). Further general research is planned to establish internet usage and this information will need to inform the communications and web strategy ensuring that residents are able to access information about council services, policies and plans.
- Residents currently receive (and prefer to receive) information about council services and plans through One Island magazine, local media is also a prime source of information, in particular from Isle of Wight County Press and Isle of Wight Radio (Residents Survey findings published in January 2010) and these will continue to be important vehicles for communicating with residents.
- Consideration also needs to be given to the communication needs of the elderly, given that the Isle of Wight has an increasing elderly population, with significant increases in the numbers of over 65s projected, in the region of a 40% increase throughout the next 15 years (Source: ONS 2008 based Population Projections)
- The Island also has a substantial transient visitor population, there were approximately 2,600,000 visits recorded in 2010 with approximately 94% being accounted as of domestic origin. During the year there was some improvement seen in numbers of foreign visitors reported for the

peak season although still only representing 6% of the total numbers for that quarter. Numbers of visits made to friends and relatives demonstrated a rise across all four quarters (Source: Island Breaks, Tourism Quarterly Bulletins).

All the above activities are carried out with due consideration being given to the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (which are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage/civil partnership; pregnancy/maternity; race; religion/belief; sex and sexual orientation) in accordance with the public sector duty in the exercise of its functions to give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct; advance the equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people. For changes to strategy, policy or service delivery/redesign, an equality impact assessment will be undertaken.

2. Key Business Objectives

Number	Business Objective	Linking to Corporate Priority or Directorate Plan
1	Develop & implement a resident information strategy and workplan for 2011-13 focused around the council's corporate priorities	Delivery of budget savings through changed service provision
2	To develop and improve digital and web communications as a key resource for staff, members and residents for information about council services, policies and plans.	Delivery of budget savings through changed service provision
3	To improve the quality of consultation and increase residents' perceptions of their ability to influence council decision making	Delivery of budget savings through changed service provision
4	Develop and implement a framework of support to council strategic partnerships, ensuring the effective delivery of the community strategy.	Delivery of budget savings through changed service provision
5	To further improve a cost-effective and efficient approach to council print, publications and advertising	Delivery of budget savings through changed service provision
6	To ensure the CX, Cabinet and Youth Council are provided with efficient and effective support to perform their role and functions	Delivery of budget savings through changed service provision

3. Key Business Objectives Details:

Key Business Objective 1: Develop & implement a resident information strategy and work plan for 2011-13 focused around the council's corporate priorities

Key Activities to support the objective	Success Factors	% Complete	Target Completion Date
1. Robust communications plan for each of the corporate priorities incorporating media, consultation, events, publications, web and internal comms as appropriate.	Each priority area has a communications plan in place		30-09-2013
2. Pre-agreed communications objectives for a focused set of other directorate priorities/activities (stemming from director 1:1 meetings).	Each directorate has clearly identified schedule of communication priorities.		30-09-2013
3. Implement framework of a) Quarterly meetings with all cabinet members and b) Directors to plan and review key communications priorities and progress made.	Regular meetings are held and communications priorities are reviewed.		30-09-2013
4. Identify approach to cost-effectively evaluating resident satisfaction with information communicated by the council.	Clear framework of statistics to guide and influence service development		30-09-2013

Risks

Risk that Island residents are not being communicated to or receiving the correct information from the Council

Performance Measures

Informal Indicators:

- (TBC) Percentage (%) of residents who are aware of the council priorities
- (TBC) Percentage (%) of residents who feel informed about the council priorities
- (TBC) Percentage (%) of staff who are aware of the council priorities
- (TBC) Percentage (%) of residents who feel informed about the range of council services available
- Feedback from the Health & Wellbeing Board consultation (2-stage process)

(TBC – methodology and monitoring arrangements to be confirmed)

Key Business Objective 2: To develop and improve media digital and web communications as a key resource for staff, members and residents for information about council services, policies and plans.

Key Activities to support the objective	Success Factors	% Complete	Target Completion Date
1. In partnership with ICT, develop, manage and implement the council's web strategy and website refresh with specific regard to improving news currency, online services and accessibility.	Number of services who have updated and populated their A-Z content Clear editorial plan against which changes to the site (including the wider web refresh) have been effectively delivered Increased web traffic (ICT proxy indicator) Increased take-up of online services (ICT proxy indicator) Increase in the % of transactions done online (ICT proxy indicator) iweight.com is a portal for information about council services, decisions and plans		30-09-2013
2. Develop other digital communications channels inc social media (as appropriate), customer services screens etc to help increase cost-efficiency of communications	Increased take up of digital and e-communications as a source of information about council services, policies and plans for Island residents Positive feedback from customers in the Newport help centre in relation to screen content		30-09-2013
3. Development of intranet (and extranet) site and e-communications to ensure they are more widely valued and used by staff and members as communications tools	Increase in staff and member usage of the intranet as a primary source of info and business support		30-09-2013
4. Build media profile in regional and local government press to highlight innovative practice and build knowledge of the council's positive progress towards commissioning and performance against its corporate priorities	Increased reputation across region, one article a month in either MJ/LGC or positive news story on regional radio or television (balanced spread over full year)		30-09-2013

Risks
Risk of internal communication not being managed effectively
Effective management of responses to the media and management of the council's profile in the media at a local, regional and national level.
Failure to increase usage of the content of the council's website and social media (and reduce reliance on face-face telephone contact)

Performance Measures
Percentage (%) of transactions completed online compared to telephone / face-to-face (ICT copy measure)
<p>Informal Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (TBC) Staff survey and Café Conversations feedback • (TBC) Percentage (%) of staff who are aware of the council priorities • (TBC) Percentage (%) of staff using electronic communications as their source of information about the council • (TBC) Media coverage (number of positive articles/stories in regional/national news) • (TBC) Increase in number of Facebook fans • (TBC) Increase in number of Twitter followers • (TBC) Number of Facebook fans who feel informed (use in-built 'question' feature on Facebook) • (TBC) Number of updated A-Z areas completed <p>(TBC – methodology and monitoring arrangements to be confirmed)</p>

Key Business Objective 3: To improve the quality of consultation and increase residents' perceptions of their ability to influence council decision making.

Key Activities to support the objective	Success Factors	% Complete	Target Completion Date
1. Implement and monitor a corporate consultation and engagement strategy	A consistent and best practice approach to consultation and engagement is embedded across the council to mitigate any potential challenge. Consultation is carried out in a quality assured way, reflecting best practice.		30-09-2013
2. Publish supporting guidance and implementation plan including staff training/briefing, development of consultation and events calendar and plan, templates and hosting facilities on the web.	Staff feel supported in their abilities to conduct consultation effectively and thoroughly within an agreed set of best practice procedures The team are able to plan and manage their support to service area consultation activity		30-09-2013
3. Implement a unified approach with partner organisations to broaden the usage of the strategy as a partnership tool to reduce the consultation burden on local residents	The consultation strategy is jointly owned and a single partnership consultation annual plan/calendar is in place.		30-09-2013

Risks

Failure to give people the opportunity to engage with the council regarding changes to services, policies and plans as appropriate.

Performance Measures

Informal Indicators:

- (TBC) Consultation stats; participation, feedback forms, feedback questions at the end of each consultation survey etc, absence of successful legal challenge etc, perception data (all tools for evaluating this have yet to be determined in the absence of the residents' survey – see objective 1)

(TBC – methodology and monitoring arrangements to be confirmed)

Key Business Objective 4: Develop and implement a framework of support to council strategic partnerships, ensuring the effective delivery of the community strategy.

Key Activities to support the objective	Success Factors	% Complete	Target Completion Date
1. Support the Health & Wellbeing Board, Exec Board and Strategic Partnership Boards to develop and consult on a clear work plan and set of priorities	The council and its partners have a clear and stated set of priorities based on data evidence (JSNA) and wider consultation and engagement with the community		30-09-2013
2. Develop and implement a monitoring framework to ensure delivery against community strategy and work plans, promoting joint working and inclusivity.	Monitoring framework in place and agreed with partners. Positive progress against outcomes determined and reported Improved collaboration, thereby avoiding duplication of effort and activity. Voluntary sector forum established and actively engaged		30-09-2013
3. Support and monitor the ongoing work plan, of the Local Involvement Network (LINK) and ensure it maintains its efforts to encourage wider community participation and assist in the development of a transition plan in preparation for local Healthwatch in 2013)	Effective contract management in place. Wider participation from community including minority groups. Effective delivery of LINK workplan (through Help & Care) Contract specification is tailored to deliver agreed outcomes, particularly those around engagement and inclusion. Written transition plan is in place and LINK volunteers are aware of and feel a part of the process to establish local Healthwatch		30-09-2013
4. Maintain an active involvement in the Healthwatch pathfinder and work to establish an effective framework and specification (informed by community consultation) for local Healthwatch, leading to procurement of an Isle of Wight local Healthwatch by April 2013	Good levels of engagement in the consultation around establishing local Healthwatch Effective procurement and establishment of a Local Healthwatch Clear workplan in operation Increased awareness of the LINK and Healthwatch as the Island consumer champion for health and social care issues		30-09-2013

Risks

Failure to effectively support council strategic partnerships in delivering their objectives
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Performance Measures

Informal Indicators:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• (TBC) % of participants involved in strategic partnership boards who felt that the board had a clear plan and focused set of priorities• (TBC) Local Healthwatch successfully in place by April 2013 |
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(TBC – methodology and monitoring arrangements to be confirmed)

Key Business Objective 5: To further improve a cost-effective and efficient approach to council print, publications and advertising

Key Activities to support the objective	Success Factors	% Complete	Target Completion Date
1. Analysis of PCN (publication code numbers) to determine a plan of publications (statutory, grant funded and non-statutory) for the year ahead that can be agreed with Directors	Quantifiable plan of publications activity which manages the level of activity in council print budgets The authorisations panel is only required for monitoring exceptional requirements		30-09-2013
2. Review of volume printing, inform staff of the need to divert large digital print volumes to the print unit and reduce MFD and desktop printing and explore with IT the use of direct technological solutions to drive volume printing to the print unit	Reduction in MFD copier volumes Technological solution successfully piloted		30-09-2013
3. Continued work to reduce printing costs, branded materials and advertising to drive down council expenditure	Overall reduction in council print expenditure placed with external suppliers Print Unit operations continue to be cost neutral. Increased value for money of council advertising		30-09-2013
4. To secure advertising income and effectively manage printing contracts to enable the production of a cost-neutral residents' magazine four times per year	Continued delivery of cost-neutral residents' magazine four times per year (<i>note – consider pre-election period implications and impact on achieving this target</i>)		30-09-2013

Risks
Failure to provide an efficient and cost-effective print unit within the Council
Risk that Island Residents are not being communicated to or receiving the correct information from the Council.

Performance Measures
Informal Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (TBC) Residents' magazine is delivered cost-neutral at year end (monitor 'forecasted spend' on quarterly basis) • (TBC) Print Unit operations are cost-neutral at year end (monitor 'forecasted spend' on quarterly basis – clicks vs costs) • Advertising spend vs volume ratio (or position - TBC) (TBC – methodology and monitoring arrangements to be confirmed)

Key Business Objective 6: To ensure the CX, Cabinet and Youth Council are provided with efficient and effective support to perform their role and functions

Key Activities to support the objective	Success Factors	% Complete	Target Completion Date
1. Support the CX, cabinet members, the Chairman and Vice Chairman and Lord Lieutenant with regard to diary management, correspondence (including MP) and events particular to their individual roles, duties and responsibilities	CX, cabinet, Chairman and Vice Chairman are supported with regard to all their admin requirements. CX is supported in delivering the annual leadership and management events Chairman and Vice-Chair are supported in executing their civic duties including annual civic events and in addition, in 2012, arrangements for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations Lord Lieutenant is supported in his role as the Queen's representative on the Island and in addition, in 2012, for the Queen's visit to the Island, together with a number of other royal visits		30-09-2013
2. Support the CX with regular horizon scanning reports highlighting any major issues regarding new developments/legislation from central government.	High quality and timely reports are provided to the CX regarding emerging issues & opportunities for local government.		30-09-2013
3. Provide business support by maintaining the business continuity plan, health & safety advice and representation.	Robust business continuity plan is in place. All staff in the team are aware of health & safety issues and the team is effectively represented at the HSLO meeting.		30-09-2013
4. Monitor and respond to complaints and freedom of information requests for CX and the Resident Information and Consultation Team.	Complaints and FOI requests are responded to within corporate and statutory deadlines.		30-09-2013
5. Develop the role of the youth council and their contributions to council decision making and support them in their work to represent and engage all young people on the Island	Clear workplan and priorities for the youth council Active contribution and/or participation in council committee meetings (as appropriate) Wider, inclusive engagement of young people within the community		

Risks

Risk of Internal Communication not being managed effectively.

Effective management of responses to the media and management of the council's profile in the media at a local, regional and national level.
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Performance Measures

Informal Indicators:

- (TBC) Number of letters outstanding for CX (monthly)
- (TBC) Informal and formal feedback (CX, Cabinet, Chairman and Vice Chairman).
- (TBC) Response to FOI's and complaints within the deadlines.
- (TBC) Number of meetings attended by youth council members (or items submitted)
- (TBC) Youth council membership (representation by other groups of young people eg Children in Care, SEN, etc)

(TBC – methodology and monitoring arrangements to be confirmed)
