



**Causeway
Coast & Glens
Borough Council**

Communications and Consultation Strategy September 2017

Adopted by Council September 2017



Our Communications context

- Effective communication is the responsibility of all Elected Members and Officers across the Council.
- Communication is a key consideration for all service areas.
- This strategy needs everyone's co-operation and support.
- The Corporate Communications Team is responsible for developing and setting the strategic framework for delivering the Council's communications.

Key principles

- Placing our ratepayers and all who live, work and visit the Borough at the centre of our activities.
- Ensuring corporate communications is an integrated function embedded in all service areas.
- Achieving value for Council and our community in all our communications activities.
- We will communicate clearly, openly, accurately and regularly, at appropriate times, with residents, visitors, businesses, and all partner organisations.

- Communication between service areas and the Corporate Communication Team has improved and has contributed to a positive increase in Council's profile.
- The Council's profile has also been aided by increased use of the Council's website and social media, and an emphasis on more timely communication.
- Communications activity is, at times, fragmented. A more coherent approach would benefit all.
- All communications activity should be channelled through the Corporate Communications team which should be at the centre of all communication activities, working collaboratively with services areas to deliver Council's vision.

These should be incorporated into all communication activities



Work with internal and external partners to:

- Communicate effectively to promote Council's work in all service areas.
- Maintain a strong corporate brand and identity across all services and events.
- Promote understanding of the Council Strategy and how we fulfil it.
- Highlight how Council's work makes the area a great place to live, work, visit.
- Engage and inform decision making.
- Highlight the role of the Mayor and Elected Members as community leaders.
- Address the challenge of countering negative publicity.

Who communicates and how we communicate

Target Audience	Corporate Communications partner	Communication Actions
The Mayor	Chief Executive The Mayor's Office	Chief Executive briefings, Council minutes and agendas, press releases, photo opportunities, speeches
Elected members	Chief Executive Democratic Services	Council minutes and agendas, press releases, text alerts, monthly forecast of events, briefing notes
Council Staff	SMT	Staff newsletter, staff portal, employee app, a consistent internal cascade of management Information
Citizens and community groups	All departments	Corporate website, social media, press releases, bi-annual newsletter, Emails, public meetings, advertisements, publicity material
Visitors	All departments	Visit website, corporate website, social media, press releases, advertisements, publicity material
Key Partners Business Community Statutory and Voluntary Agencies Partner Organisations	All departments	Corporate website, social media, network opportunities, working with partners

Enhanced use of digital communication

- Utilising and developing Council's website and social media accounts to communicate efficiently and effectively.

By working as one team

- Co-ordination of communication and consultation across all service areas, using a joined-up approach to create consistent promotion of Council Strategy, recognising strengths across all departments and being open and transparent.

Internal communications

- Adopting a consistent and structured approach to enhance connections across all service areas.

Media relations

- Maintain media relationships to uphold a positive public profile.

Key considerations

- All service areas must recognise the importance of co-ordinating their messages through corporate communications.
- Utilise digital communications and social media but recognise the role of other communication avenues.
- All communication must adhere to information governance guidelines and data protection legislation.
- All communication must adhere to Council's Policy for the Provision of Accessible Information (currently in draft – to be appended to adopted Communications Strategy).

Next steps

- Nurture an ethos of working together and mutual respect by establishing a Communications Liaison Group involving a communications liaison partner from each Service areas (nominated by their Heads of Service) and develop an associated terms of reference and Communications Protocol.
- Continue to seek opportunities to raise awareness of our corporate identity.
- Utilise all opportunities to enhance Council's positive public profile.
- Build on our use of social media and digital communication channels and Undertake an audit of current social media presence.
- Encourage two-way dialogue with ratepayers and partner organisations, by engaging with service areas, to inform a Customer Engagement Strategy.