

## COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Cabinet - 21 April 2016

Report of: Chief Executive

Status: For Consideration

Also considered by: Policy & Performance Advisory Committee - 1 March 2016

Key Decision: No

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**This report supports the Council's promise to provide value for money**

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Fleming

**Contact Officer** Lee Banks Ext. 7161

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### **Recommendation to Policy & Performance Advisory Committee:**

Cabinet are recommended to adopt the Communications Strategy.

### **Recommendation to Cabinet:**

The Council's Communications Strategy is adopted.

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**Reason for recommendation:** To ensure that the Council's Communication Strategy is in accordance with Members priorities and is making the most effective use of the Council's resources.

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### **Introduction and Background**

- 1 Communications activity across local government has seen a significant rise in profile in recent years as Councils continue to manage the impact of funding cuts. As a result local authorities have sought to increase dialogue with their residents, local businesses and other stakeholders to prioritise savings and efficiencies that reflect community wants and needs, and also ensuring the community is well informed about services and the value provided by the local authority.
- 2 The Council's Communication Strategy has been reviewed in recent years, with the significant support of a Members Working Group, to reflect the changing priorities for the Council and has been improved to clearly reflect the purpose of all communications activity for the Council and set a clear framework for the remit of the Communications team.

- 3 In response to this changing environment for local authority communications it is considered important that Members consider and comment on the current strategy (provided as Appendix A).
- 4 Members may also wish to consider the proposed work plan (provided at Appendix B) that will support officers to deliver the aims and objectives set out in the strategy. The work plan should reflect the significant projects the Council will undertake during the coming year and highlight work required within Council services to ensure strong communications with customers.

### **Other Options Considered and/or Rejected**

- 5 None.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

- 6 None. Delivery of the Communications Strategy and work plan as set out are within the existing financial resources allocated to the communications function.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

- 7 There are no legal implications arising from this report. The risk of not having a properly considered and documented strategy and work plan for communications activity may result in resources being directed at areas that are not a priority for the Council.

#### Equality Assessment

- 8 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

### **Conclusions**

- 9 The Communications Strategy and Work Plan are reported to Members for their consideration and to ensure that the focus of the Communications team is appropriate and in priority areas for the Council.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A - Communications Strategy

Appendix B - Communications Work Plan

### **Background Papers:**

None

**Dr Pav Ramewal**  
**Chief Executive**