

# STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

**Date:** Monday, 3 June 2024  
**Title:** Communications Report  
**Contact Officer:** Communications & Community Engagement Officer

## Background

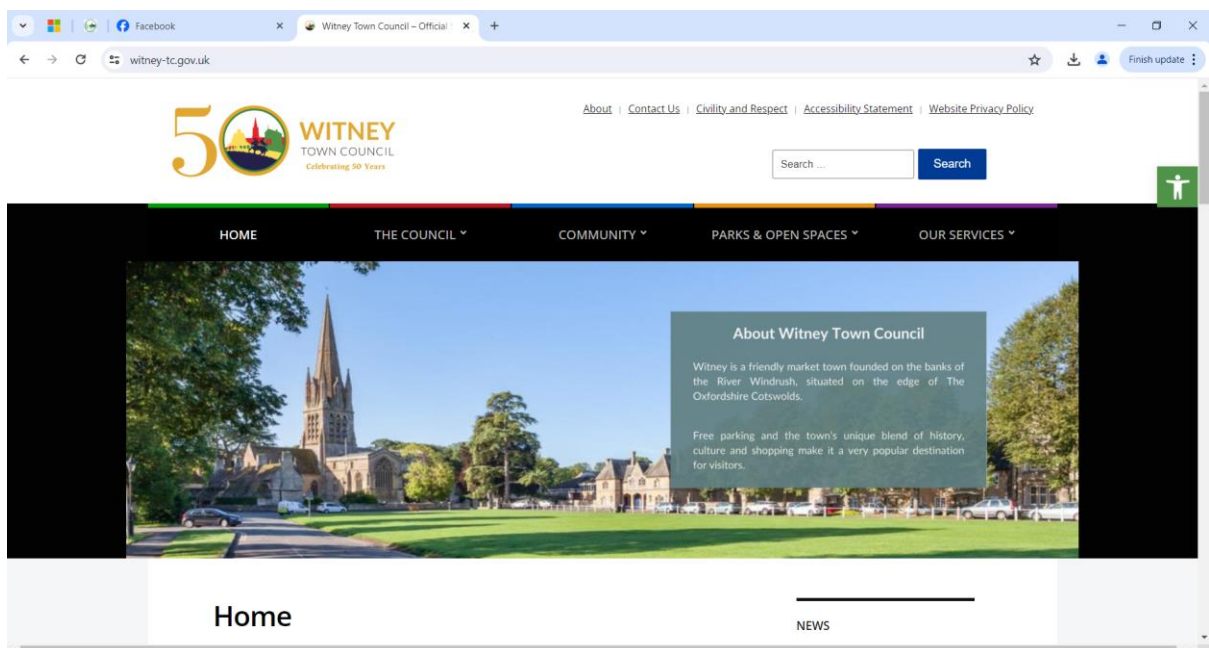
This report explains the current status of elements of Witney Town Council’s Communication Strategy.

## Current Situation

### Website

The Communications Officer and Business Administration apprentice have made a start on implementing the new theme as approved by members at the last meeting.

A new site map has been created and existing pages are being reviewed and attached in the correct places or removed if no longer needed. At such a busy time it is necessary to schedule in time to work on the website when possible. While underway, this work is not yet completed. Members are asked to view the changes ahead of the meeting and provide feedback. <https://www.witney-tc.gov.uk/>



## **Newsletter**

The summer newsletter will be issued at the end of June digitally. Please advise the C&CEO if there are any items which Members feel should be included.

## **Survey and Analysis**

The delivery of the newsletter was, on the whole much more successful than last year, though one or two staff and councillors received theirs a good bit later than most.

The survey has received the most responses (442) since the 2016 survey record of 531. The 2016 survey had a slightly different purpose and title. Rather than being an Annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey it was The Corporate Plan Survey designed to help TC Plan for 2016- 2021.

Of the 442 responses almost half (205) have, for the first time ever, come in from young people in Witney's secondary schools and the college. The reason for this may be timing, or because this is seen as a potential GE year, or it has fitted in some other way with a syllabus or curriculum. The approach was made to schools via email and the survey has been left open as there are still a few entries coming in from the under 17 category and it would be a shame not to have them. A full analysis will be prepared for the next cycle of meetings, ahead of budget-setting in the autumn.

## **Disabling Comments on Facebook**

Recently (during the pre-election period), the ability of commenting on Council Facebook posts was disabled when suspected that comments might include or encourage hate speech, be unhelpful or of a personal nature.

While there is no wish to stifle debate or prevent residents from having their say, the Facebook page is intended to provide information, the Council offers other channels to enable residents to – such as the admin office which is open for face-to-face drop ins, the councillors at the café events and a dedicated email address. Members are asked to consider whether this is an approach which should be adopted for some or all posts in the future.

## **Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

## **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

## **Financial implications**

Described here or as stated in the report above.

The re-design, mapping and theme of the Website has cost officer time.

### **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. That feedback be provided on the Council's website and whether the new theme and mapping meet its needs.
2. That any items for the next Council newsletter are forwarded to officers.
3. That analysis of the Council's satisfaction survey be provided to the next meeting.
4. That Councillors decide whether to allow Facebook comments or limit comments on some, or all posts.