
Agenda Item:	Communications Report
Meeting Date:	Monday, 24 March 2025
Contact Officer:	Communications & Community Engagement Officer

Background

The purpose of this report is to update councillors on general communication matters and progress made since the last meeting of the Stronger Communities Committee.

Current Situation

Annual Newsletter Update

The newsletter has been issued and has been out for delivery since commencing 3rd March. A batch for Windrush Place has already been delivered separately by hand and there are responses to surveys coming in already.

A check with officers and members has revealed some sporadic delivery for others. Many areas have received theirs and other have not. This is problematic and seems to be something connected with how Royal Mail sorts and delivers by postcode. It does not work for us when some people rely on paper communications for their information, and this is not delivered in a timely manner.

Next year officers will enquire if the hand delivery company used for Windrush Place this year has the capacity and resources to take on the whole delivery.

The Council partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to assist them with a 'shopping habits' survey and that too has received a number of early responses. The data for this survey will be provided to them on request or after the closing date of 1 May. Please fill this in if you get a chance and encourage as many as you can to do it to as the more data they get, the better.

The Communications & Community Engagement Officer has downloaded a contrast checker tool and is creating templates for use by all those using Canva, to ensure that all our future printed materials meet the WCAG AAA requirements as a minimum. In addition to this, guidelines from RNIB are being used to ensure that we make use of white spacing and colour contrast combinations that work well for people with sight loss and colour vision deficiency (CVD) to make text and graphics easier to see.

Welcome to Witney Guide

Officers have a format which they believe will meet the requirements for the Welcome to Witney guide. It is designed to be accessed via the website and Canva now offers a public viewing link which means officers will be able to add short clips of video which will appear in a very professional manner when viewed this way.

[Welcome to Witney Guide](#)

Social Media Policy

Officers will be bringing an updated version of the Social Media Policy to the next meeting. It has been in place for a number of years and is likely to need a considerable update. Currently it consists of:

- Statement of Purpose
- Responsibilities of Officers
- Responsibilities of Members
- General Terms of Use

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – The newsletter is delivered to every household in paper format and published digitally online. The digital version is available to visually impaired to be read by a digital reader, can be made larger and the colours amended per the WCAG 2.2.AA legislation. The newsletter will advise to contact the Town Hall if another format is required. The fact it is delivered to every household ensures the hardest to reach residents are reached.
- b) Biodiversity – none
- c) Crime & Disorder – The Council continues to share information concerning crime and disorder on its social media pages.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – The Council has to balance the need to communicate effectively with all residents against harm to the environment. This year, officers have requested the newsletter is not printed on glossy paper.

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.

- There is no direct risk. The sporadic delivery of the newsletter may mean some residents are not advised of the Town Council precept 2025-26 and the Annual Town Meeting date.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Effective communication with residents enhances the relationship between local government and the community, fostering trust and engagement.

The Welcome to Witney guide will be a free resource available to everyone. The copy will be downloadable but is not a regular print size.

Financial implications

➤ There are no financial implications.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report.