

Subject: COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN **Status:** FOR PUBLICATION

Report to: CABINET

Date: 7TH JUNE

Report of: HEAD OF CUSTOMER SERVICES AND E-GOVERNMENT

Portfolio

Holder: CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES

Key Decision:

YES (Please highlight)

Forward Plan

General Exception

Special Urgency

"X" In Relevant Box

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To update Members on changes to the Draft Communications Strategy following the recent two month Public Consultation Period and the Council's annual budget setting meeting.
- 1.2. As a result of the consultation exercise the focus on improving Customer Satisfaction has been strengthened and additional actions have been included in section 5 of the action plan relating to communication with Members.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 The matters discussed in this report are linked to and support the following corporate priorities:

2.1(a) **CUSTOMERS**

The Strategy demonstrates a positive linkage between resident's satisfaction with the Council and the amount of information they have about the Council. Implementing the Communication Strategy will help to raise customer satisfaction.

2.1(b) **IMPROVEMENT**

The Internal Communications action plan will play an important part in helping to raise staff morale and providing information to enable staff to do a more effective job on behalf of the authority.

Members will play a key part in helping to deliver parts of the Communication strategy. Information services for members will be improved and the strategy will help to raise the profile of members enabling them to fulfil their community leadership role more effectively.

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 4.1.1 Following an extensive period of consultation the Communications Strategy is now ready to be adopted.
- 4.1.2 Failure to adopt a Communications Strategy will have a detrimental impact on our CPA result and customer satisfaction.
- 4.1.3 The Communications Action Plan is a 'living' document which will be updated regularly to reflect new issues and priorities as and when they arrive.

5. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

- 5.1 No adverse comments received.

6. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

- 6.1 No adverse comments received.

7. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

- 7.1 No adverse comments received.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The Communication Strategy will help to improve resident's knowledge and understanding of the Council, provide important information for customers, improve the image of the borough, engage local residents and provide better internal communication to Members and Staff.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 9.1 Members are recommended to approve the attached Communications Strategy and Action Plan

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 10.1 Council Leader, Chief Executive, Portfolio Holder, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny, local residents and business through the Council's website.

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No background papers (*delete where applicable*)