

Communications and Marketing Service Plan

1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Head of Service signature	
Date	24/02/2022
Peer Review signature	
Date	25/02/2022
Director signature	
Date	28/02/2022

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1. Introduction

Name of Service	Communications and Marketing
Included Service Units	Communications Multi-media Borough Marketing Bangor Regeneration Communications
Directorate	Chief Executive's Section
Purpose of Service	<p>The Communications and Marketing Service aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Protect and enhance the Council's reputation by challenging negative perceptions;</i> • <i>promote Council activities through effective engagement and communication;</i> • <i>promote the Borough as an appealing destination to visit and invest in.'</i> <p>The key functional areas of the Service are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communications strategy • corporate and borough marketing • brand identity management • PR and media relations • digital marketing including website and social media management • arts and heritage marketing • tourism marketing • stakeholder engagement and consultation • employee/internal communication • graphic design and multi-media services • technical event support <p><i>At present leisure marketing is not centralised and is delivered by staff reporting to the Operations Manager for Leisure.</i></p> <p>The Service comprises 13 staff and sits within the Chief Executive's Office.</p> <p>Under the Local Government Act 1972 councils have a statutory duty to share necessary information with stakeholders and under the 2014 Act, with the addition of community planning, to consult and engage in an effective manner.</p>
Key customers/ stakeholders and their needs	<p>Our key customers are other Council services – who are essentially our clients. The level of support required varies but requests often outstrip available resources and/or channels. In 2022/23 priority customers have been identified as CLT (key corporate initiative); Regeneration; Tourism; Economic Development; Arts and Culture; Waste and Recycling; Democratic Services (civic events); and internal/ external recovery initiatives.</p> <p>Our key stakeholders include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employees

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected Members/politicians • Media/social media influencers • Key comms partners (local and regional) • Capital project partners • AND Residents • AND Businesses • AND Arts/Heritage Sector • Visitors • Investors <p>More detailed analysis is in Appendix 1.</p>
<p>Context, challenges & key assumptions</p>	<p>Context: Corporate Communications was designated a ‘critical service’ during the COVID-19 pandemic. The volume of work delivered by the communications team during the lockdown period, continuing through recovery and in preparation for further waves has been significant and team members are to be commended for their resilience throughout.</p> <p>The pandemic has increased our reliance on digital communication and increased our audiences on social media channels and websites. The Service must continue to innovate to grasp the opportunities this presents, while recognising that not all our audiences are comfortable with digital solutions.</p> <p>The pandemic has significantly increased the amount of partner support activity we deliver. This must be carefully managed moving forward as business-as-usual activity is now essentially fully operational, although the Council is very committed to developing both local and regional partnerships.</p> <p>In October 2021, Council agreed additional resources for the Bangor Waterfront Redevelopment project, which will deliver over £70M of investment into the town over the next 10 years. This included a dedicated resource for communications and engagement. This will significantly increase the capacity of the team to deliver effectively for this flagship BRCD initiative.</p> <p>In December 2021, Council agreed to a transformation project, which would see the expansion of the unit to become a centralised Communications and Marketing Service (excluding leisure marketing at this time). In February 2022, the Council’s Borough Marketing and Tourism Marketing functions transferred to the central team. Staff from these transferring functions will continue to work closely with colleagues in tourism/ economic development and regeneration but economies and efficiencies are anticipated as communications and marketing activities for the Council and Borough become more aligned during the 2022/23 year. This helps to deliver on the Council’s commitment to ‘Growing Better Together’ in terms of reviewing our service models including opportunities for greater use of partnerships across the Council.</p> <p>A full PESTLE analysis is included in Appendix 2.</p> <p>Specific challenges/areas of focus include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Balancing customer demand (internal) against resources. The breadth of work delivered across the Council is ever increasing and communication/marketing is required to a greater or lesser degree across all of it. Over the past year capital projects, in particular, have increased in number and profile

and are going to require very significant strategic comms/ engagement support (note: dedicated resource is only secured for Bangor Waterfront). Prioritisation against corporate outcomes is required.

2. **Resourcing an increase in earned media coverage.** With pressure on budgets, there is a requirement for more earned vs paid for media. Earned media requires significant resources for relationship building/creative writing and design. Prioritisation against corporate outcomes is required.
3. **Supporting the digitisation agenda.** Via social media and web development the Service already contributes to the Council's digital presence, however, resident feedback is seeking more online access. In the coming year a new .gov.uk website will be developed, which will make a very positive contribution. It is recognised that digital solutions do not work for all audiences.
4. **Promoting better communications planning.** Educating all service areas to the benefits of involving communications at the start of projects and the requirement to work to appropriate timescales in order that appropriate resources can be allocated. The team will make efforts to demonstrate the value of this to internal partners throughout the year.
5. **Developing innovative engagement opportunities.** Genuine engagement that will allow key stakeholders to become more involved in a) shaping how the Council works for the Borough and b) how specific projects will be delivered, continues to be a priority. The new dedicated comms resource for the Bangor Waterfront Redevelopment will enable trialling of more innovative engagement opportunities for this project that may be replicated in other areas in due course.

Strengths: The Service has knowledgeable, resilient and capable staff who are motivated to deliver for the Council and the Borough. They benefit from working in a team that reaches across all Council directorates and so have a unique insight into the full remit of the organisation and a strong understanding of the political and social environment. The team enjoys good working relationships internally and externally.

Weaknesses: The historical structure of the team has been a weakness with the Corporate Communications Manager being too involved in day-to-day activity, to the detriment of strategic planning and the development of the wider staff team. The recent restructure will help to address this.

Opportunities: The recent restructure that has merged Borough and Tourism Marketing with Communications presents opportunities for economies and efficiencies as communications and marketing activities for the Council and Borough become more aligned. The creation of a dedicated resource for regeneration in Bangor presents an unprecedented opportunity to trial more innovative engagement activities – that, once tested, can be applied to other projects across the Borough.

Threats: The biggest threat to the service comes from internal and external stakeholders not being willing to work in true partnership – either by deciding to deliver marcomms activity themselves with no reference to the central team or alternatively by trying to present any type of engagement for their project as the responsibility of Communications and Marketing.

	<p>Assumptions: Not all communications/marketing budgets are centralised. The assumption must be made that, where appropriate, individual services have made sufficient budget provision for Corporate Communications to deliver their proposed campaigns/activities.</p> <p>That some form of hybrid working will continue due to the efficiencies that have been gained from staff working from home and with more flexible hours.</p>
<p>Reflection on previous performance – successes and lessons learned</p>	<p>During the past year, the outworking of the service has continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Restrictions have limited our ability to plan and deliver communications/ marketing activity to both internal and external stakeholders. This has had detrimental impacts internally that we will seek to reverse, working with colleagues in Organisational Development, through more face-to-face and team engagement opportunities across all services areas in 2022/23.</p> <p>During the period, there were significant staffing challenges due to sickness; maternity leave and secondments. For a period of around 6 months 1/3 of the roles in the unit were not filled/ filled with temporary cover, which severely impacted continuity of service. Day to day delivery had to be prioritised over some more strategic initiatives (e.g., development of a communications prioritisation process) but any such KPIs have been rolled into the 2022/23 plan.</p> <p>Successes</p> <p>Despite the above the Service has once again very effectively delivered against core communications objectives such as building Council reputation, growing our social media presence and developing effective partnerships. The team has demonstrated significant adaptability in the face of changing circumstances.</p> <p>Our most recent formal feedback from residents (2021) demonstrates good progress is being made against our core purpose - to protect and enhance the Council's reputation. Figures in some cases are a few percentage points lower, which is understood to result from diminished service provision to the public across a range of Council services due to pandemic pressures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 88% satisfaction with the Council website (ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk) • 72% satisfied with how the Council keeps residents informed about the services and benefits it provides • 71% found it easy to get information on Council services or initiatives • 68% were satisfied with the level of engagement the Council offers • 71% rated the reputation of the Council as either excellent or good. <p>A client survey was undertaken in February 2022. Feedback was very positive in relation to the breadth of support provided, quality of the work – including innovative solutions offered – and the ability of the team to deliver to tight deadlines. There is a direct correlation between effective working relations with internal teams and satisfaction levels i.e., where the Service is involved from the beginning with a project, we can provide a more comprehensive and effective service.</p> <p>During the year, the Council received a limited assurance audit for social media management. The Communications Service co-ordinated responses to the audit but is not directly responsible for the management of all Council social media channels. Four priority two findings were identified and one priority three.</p>

Several Heads of Service have been tasked with addressing areas of non-compliance: in particular the development of a Social Media Policy for staff (Human Resources). Actions have already been taken to address concerns relating to staff training/ customer service and guidance documentation.

Key Learning

Despite strenuous efforts around effective planning, the communications element of the service is predominantly reactive – to various internal and external pressures. This has been highlighted in particular over the past two years of pandemic working. While there is an aspiration for the section to be more strategic and transformational and KPIs will reflect this aspiration, this can be undercut by environmental factors beyond the team’s control. This way of working can be frustrating for staff and is something we will seek to monitor and report on more comprehensively in 2022/23.

2. How does our Service contribute to community planning outcomes and PEOPLE priorities?

The Corporate Communications Service can be expected to have a direct impact on the following:

Community Planning Outcome	PEOPLE priority
ALL	Excellence: We will work to be a high performing organisation, innovating and partnering to make a sustainable, positive difference for our Borough.

PEOPLE Objective 2020-24	Service Objective 2022/23
<p>Growing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing our customer service including supporting online/mobile service offerings Improving resident engagement <p>Better:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing our policies, practices and systems on our priorities, customer service, agile working and a culture of continued performance improvement Adopting recognised models such as Customer Service Excellence and Investors in People Adopting a more commercial approach <p>Together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing our service models including opportunities for greater use of partnerships across the Council and beyond Planning our services collaboratively each year, aligned to the Corporate Plan 	<p>Growing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing excellent communications, marketing and multi-media services in support of our PEOPLE priorities Delivering effective engagement with residents (and other key stakeholders) to support our corporate plan and other key service strategies Introducing new digital platform(s) to support of better communication and engagement around the Bangor Waterfront Redevelopment. Developing a new, robust and accessible (easily navigated by users of all abilities) .gov.uk website to support digital communications across the organisation Enhancing our approach to audience development/marketing of the visitor/investor experience and cultural offering in AND <p>Better:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing, in consultation with internal stakeholders, a comms/marketing prioritisation process that aligns resources with our PEOPLE priorities Delivering on Our People Plan promises in support of our IIP re-accreditation Working with other key services to review the Council's approach to advertising to both identify savings internally and commercial opportunities externally <p>Together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining a healthy team environment including through regular team meetings, service workshops, planning and Pride in Performance conversations Providing opportunities for non-centralised marketing staff to work together and share best practice Actively contributing to regional communications networks including Belfast Region City Deal/Cabinet Office Communications Network.

3. Key activities for 2022/2023

SERVICE:	Communications and Marketing			
Community Plan Outcome:	ALL			
Corporate Plan PEOPLE priority(ies):	Excellence: We will work to be a high performing organisation, innovating and partnering to make a sustainable, positive difference for our Borough.			
Council KPI(s):	% Resident satisfaction % Staff reporting ANDBC is a great place to work			
Service Objective:	Protect and enhance the Council/ Borough's reputation through effective engagement, communication and marketing			
What difference will it make?	More effective use, more understanding and more support for Council services and investments; and greater profile for the Borough as a place to live, work visit and invest in.			
Underpinning strategies:	Our People Plan / Internal Communication Framework / External Communications Strategy (under review) Integrated Arts and Heritage Strategy / Bangor Waterfront Communications and Engagement Plan (in development) / Borough Marketing and Communications Strategy			
Business as Usual activities we will deliver in 2022/2023 (actions)		Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
• Undertake regular planning meetings with all Council services to ensure communication and marketing needs are met/maximised		Ongoing	BMM/ BRCM CCO/ MMO	Internal clients
• Identify opportunities for integrated communications and marketing through issue-led rather than service-led campaigns		Ongoing	BMM/BRCM/ CCO	Internal clients/ external partners
• Maintain a healthy working environment including effective planning, engagement and communication, teamworking, celebrating success etc		Ongoing	HCM/ BMM/ BRCM	HR Service
• Review and reinvigorate internal communication channels to build better engagement, wellbeing and morale across all employee groups with a focus on face-to-face opportunities		Ongoing	CCO/ CA-I	OD Team/ H&W Committee
• Support managers to communicate better with their teams by providing relevant training, channels and content		Ongoing	HCM/ CA-I	HOST/SUMs OD Team
• Build positive reputation through the effective use of corporate and service-specific social media channels in line with the Council's Social Media Policy		Ongoing	CA-D/ TMO	HR – policy review Internal/ key comms partners
• Support the effective management of service-specific digital platforms in line with the finding of the social media audit to maintain effective communication to key customer groups		Ongoing	HCM	Staff responsible for SM channels

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a robust proactive/ reactive media relations service for all directorates in line with agreed corporate priorities 	Ongoing	CCO/ CA-E	Internal Clients
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with key stakeholders to maximise positive profile for key capital investment projects incl Bangor Waterfront, Queen's Parade, Whitespots and Greenways 	Ongoing	HCM/ BRCM	Internal Clients/ External partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop proposals for more innovative and effective methods of consultation and engagement with residents and stakeholders 	Ongoing	HCM/BRCM	Internal Clients/ External partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalise current proactive promotion of Arts and Heritage in the Borough through the development of a comprehensive Audience Development/ Marketing Plan 	Ongoing	AMA	Arts/Heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Borough Marketing and Communication Strategy Tourism Destination Action Plan (associated KPIs in Tourism Service Plan for 2022/23 year) 	Ongoing	BMM/TMO/ TMA	Tourism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Borough Marketing and Communication Strategy Investment Action Plan (associated KPIs in Tourism Service Plan for 2022/23 year) 	Ongoing	BMM	Econ Dev / Regeneration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain corporate contracts and internal resources for event support that offer consistent quality and costs 	Ongoing	MMO/MMT	Contracts users
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote guidelines on the use of corporate brand(s) to ensure all services provided are recognisable as being delivered/funded/supported by Council 	Ongoing	MMO/GD	SUMs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and provide challenge on print requests in line with Council's commitment to sustainability 	Ongoing	MMO	SUMs

Key for BAU table/Staffing

• Management
• Internal
• Digital
• External
• Service Marketing
• Multi-media

• HCM – Head of Comms and Mktg	• CCA-D – Corporate Communications Assistant Digital
• BMM – Borough Mktg Manager	• CCA-E – Corporate Communications Assistant External
• BRCM – Bangor Regeneration Comms Manager	• CCA-I – Corporate Communications Assistant Internal
• CCO – Corporate Communications Officer	• AHMA – Arts and Heritage Marketing Assistant
• MMO – Multi-Media Officer	• MMT – Multi-media Technician
• TMO – Tourism Marketing Officer	• TMA – Tourism Marketing Assistant
• GD – Graphic Designer	

Service Development / Improvement

What service development/improvement will we undertake in 2022/2023	Which of the specified aspects will this improve?	Rationale	Due Date	Lead Officer(s)	Who do we need to help us? (Internal/External partners)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Comms and Engagement Plan for the Bangor Waterfront Redevelopment 	Service Quality/ Availability/ Innovation	As the Council's flagship capital investment project Bangor Waterfront requires robust, innovative and focussed comms and engagement to ensure successful deliver. Dedicated resource and the development of a detailed plan is critical to delivery.	Aug 22	HCM/ BRCM	Internal clients for Bangor W/ External partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing, in consultation with internal stakeholders, a comms/mktg prioritisation process that aligns resources with our PEOPLE priorities. 	Service Quality/ Efficiency	Marcomms resources and channels are limited but key to successful delivery on all projects. With creation of the new Comms and Mktg Service Unit, it is timely to consider a prioritisation process for marcomms activity so that delivery is better aligned to corporate priorities.	Sept 22	HCM/ BMM /BRCM/ CCO	CLT/HOST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a resident satisfaction survey services and a series of focus groups/panels. 	Service Quality/ Availability	This survey provides a comprehensive insight into resident's overall satisfaction with the Council's performance and the results will help with identifying areas for improvement and service planning in 2023/24. Preferred methods of future engagement and consultation will also be explored.	Dec 22	HCM/ CCO	CLT/HOST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing the Council's approach to advertising to both identify savings internally and commercial opportunities externally. 	Efficiency	During the pandemic Council suspended all but essential advertising. Moving forward we want to review advertising spend for efficiencies and to consider opportunities for advertising on Council assets where appropriate.	Mar 23	BMM/ CCO	HOST/SUMs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a new.gov.uk website 	Strategic Effectiveness/ Service Quality/ Availability/ Sustainability	The Council's .gov.uk website is the main shop window for all digital communication, with annual traffic in excess of £1.2M. The site was created in 2015. Council approved a business case to develop a new website that is more mobile, flexible, accessible, integrated and more able to support transactional processes. Supported by robust new technologies	Mar 23	HCM/ CCO	Performance Improvement/ Business Technology/ HOST/SUMs

SPECIFIED ASPECTS OF IMPROVEMENT

What will this improve?	Definition
Strategic Effectiveness	<i>is key to linking the community plan, and the ongoing processes that underpin it, with a council's improvement processes. The Department would expect that a council's strategic community planning outcomes and objectives should be central to that council's improvement activity and clearly contribute to the strategic effectiveness aspect.</i>
Service Quality	<i>all relate to service provision by aiming to meet the needs of citizens and ensuring fair ease of access to the most suitable services that meet their needs. Clearly, all of these objectives can be demonstrated individually or collectively. Fairness can also be demonstrated by exercising non-service functions in ways which reduce disadvantage and improve social well-being, for instance by improving citizens' access to information or by addressing inequalities experienced by Section 75 groups.</i>
Service Availability	
Fairness	
Sustainability	<i>When carrying out its functions or providing services, a council may demonstrate improvement when it operates in a way that contributes towards the sustainability of its area, as required under the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 and the associated Northern Ireland Executive Sustainable Development Strategy. on-going efficiency may also be shown if fewer resources are utilised while maintaining provision of substantially similar or better services. Should a council choose to alter the manner by which a service is provided and in so doing it uses fewer resources or more integrated services, it will not only be demonstrating efficiency, but may demonstrate improved sustainability as well</i>
Efficiency	
Innovation	<i>Any changes to service design and delivery methods that are intended to yield improvement under any other aspect, and are reasonably likely to do so. This allows councils to make changes which may not have tangible effects within the same reporting year, but are likely to in subsequent years, and still count them as improvements.</i>

Service activities being stopped / changed:

What service / activities will we be stopping / changing in 2022/2023	Reason for stopping / changing activity	Savings	Impact on Performance	Impact on the Public	Impact on staffing
N/A					

Performance Measures:

Performance Measures	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 YTD	2022/23 Target
% attendance	C	Quarterly	N/A	93%	94%	99%	94%	100%	96%	95%
Time invested staff development (in days)	E	Bi-annual	N/A	61	63	55	58	20	30	70
Pride in Performance Conversations	E	Annual	N/A	100%	100%	89%	100%	N/A	65%	100%
% staff receiving engagement briefings	C	Quarterly	N/A	N/A	65%	72%	85%	95%	95%	100%
% spend against budget	C	Quarterly	N/A	99%	99%	98%	96%	97.5%	95%	100%
% services Marcomms Planning	E	Annual	N/A	60%	66%	65%	80%	85%	90%	95
% Client Satisfaction	E	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	87%	87%	85%	90%
% multi-media service delivered to times/ sustainability criteria	E	Bi-annual	N/A	N/A	90%	90%	95%	90%	90%	95%
% resident awareness of Council services	E	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A	76%	76%	76%	78%	78%
% Resident satisfaction with engagement	E	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A	69%	75%	75%	68%	75%
% Resident satisfaction with comms	E	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A	76%	80%	80%	76%	80%
% satisfaction with Council website	E	Annual	N/A	79%	83%	94%	94%	94%	88%	90%
% increase engagement with social media	E	Bi-annual	N/A	7%	7%	9%	9%	7%	7%	10%
% Employee satisfaction with engagement	E	Bi-annual	N/A	N/A	N/A	72%	85%	81%	75%	85%

Performance Measures	Is the measure Statutory, Corporate, Existing or New?	Reporting frequency	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 YTD	2022/23 Target
% Employees consider Council 'Great place to work'	E	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	71%	71%	75%	75%
% Reduction in advertising spend	N	Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2%

4. Risks

Corporate Risk Register	Risk Description	Gross Risk			Current controls	Residual Risk			Risk Status	Further Action Required	Action Due by	Risk Owner
		I	L	R		I	L	R	Tolerate / Action			
CR5 Failure to effectively and consistently engage with residents, service users and partners leading to inability to meet expectations and reputational damage	Lack of information/ engagement from internal clients, impacts team's ability to deliver service	5	3	15	Planning meetings/ Training/	2	3	6	Tolerate	Development of prioritisation framework	Sept 2022	CJ
	Communication environment operates 24/7; Council does not. Difficult for staff to get information out of hours – resulting in reputational damage	5	4	20	Agree protocols for identifying and responding to identified critical issues out of hours	3	4	12	Tolerate	Continue to monitor and identify lines to take in advance	Ongoing	CJ
	Failure to manage media/ social media relationships effectively leading to reputational damage	5	2	10	Proactive media relations management at a local and regional level	5	1	5	Tolerate	Continue to monitor	Ongoing	CJ
	Elected member communications conflicting with corporate communications leading to confused messaging	3	4	12	Members extranet	3	3	9	Tolerate	Continue to monitor	Ongoing	CJ
	Insufficient resource to meet client demands at times leading to missed opportunities for proactive marcomms.	5	2	10	Planning meetings/prioritisation	3	1	3	Tolerate	Continue to monitor	Ongoing	CJ

5. Resources

Are all actions resourced within the current (2022/23) budget plan? Yes	
<i>Please see assumptions above. Not all marcomms budgets are centralised. It has to be assumed that individual service areas have budgeted for activities they want to undertake.</i>	
Will additional resources be required?	Potentially see Section B
Section A: Delivery against the core objectives outlined can be achieved with existing financial (revenue budget) and staff resources.	
Section B: It should be noted that large scale investment projects such as Greenways require significant and growing resources (comms/ engagement/ stakeholder management/ consultation). SROs are responsible for securing budget – not always the case in practice. Additional support may be required beyond that available internally to deliver on some elements of this work. This may be via short-term contracts for staff or the use of external agencies.	
Staff: Current staffing: 10 full time and 3 part time.	
Financial: Budget for Communications and Marketing for is in budget books.	
If the required additional resources are NOT available, please state:	
What is the likely impact on performance? Unable to deliver on the communications requirement of major capital schemes resulting in lack of public buy-in and risk to funding/investment.	
What is the likely impact on the public? Unable to deliver on the communications requirement of major capital schemes resulting in lack of public buy-in and risk to funding/investment.	
What is the likely impact on staffing? Existing staff resource may not have capacity to deliver to the demands of these capital schemes.	

6. Monitoring and Review

In adherence with corporate requirements, including quarterly reporting to Committee. Performance will also be discussed at manager meetings and team briefings.

7. Conclusions

The Communication and Marketing Service in Ards and North Down will work in a focused and productive way to provide support to all service areas across Council. The service has a wider remit in the 2022/23 year and a new staff structure, which offers exciting opportunities moving forward.

This plan provides focus for the service during the 2022/23 financial year. It is ambitious but realistic – accepting that the communications element of the service often has to work reactively, and this can prevent delivery on planned objectives.

Many activities can be considered 'business as usual' but they are critical to delivering on the Service's core objective of enhancing and protecting the Council and Borough's reputation. The team will endeavour to bring an innovation and creative approach to delivery against all these objectives.

Along with building the new team, a critical success factor in 2022/23 will be prioritisation of communications messaging and resources. Getting this right will secure benefits for the Service, the wider Council and key stakeholders.

The plan recognises the importance of building on, and enhancing, existing good working relations with all service units to ensure effective information sharing both across the organisation and to external stakeholders.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Customers/Stakeholders and their needs

Customers	Needs
<p>Our key customers are Council Services – who are essentially our clients.</p>	<p>Require communication/marketing/engagement support for service activity/ campaigns. Volume of support required varies. Key areas of activity in 2022-23 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CLT/Chief Executive: Promoting corporate initiatives. Outworking of the 2020-24 Corporate Plan. Explaining the benefits of the Transformation Programme. Support for Belfast Region City Deal, TRAB and Queen’s Parade. ▪ Regeneration: Comms and engagement for the Bangor Waterfront Redevelopment. ▪ Tourism: support for events (strategic direction and programme); food development; ▪ Economic Development: review of digital activity and investor proposition. ▪ Waste and Recycling: Significant behaviour change challenge to address increasing landfill tonnages. Encourage new reuse behaviours. ▪ Democratic Services: year-long programme of support to the Mayor, Jubilee and two Freedom of the Boroughs. ▪ Community/ Business: support local initiatives to assist with recovery from COVID-19. ▪ HR: development of the new Our People Plan, support for IIP re-accreditation and review of recruitment processes and materials. ▪ Leisure: Insourcing project requires comms support (staff and wider public messaging) ▪ Capital Project SROs: investment projects are high profile and require simple, clear and effective public communication and engagement.
<p>All employees</p>	<p>Require timely and relevant information that enables them to do their jobs effectively. Also, engagement opportunities so they can contribute improvement ideas and remain connected to the wider organisation. The prolonged period of remote/ socially distanced working during COVID-19 has resulted in significant disengagement and some discontent. Hopeful that the lifting of restrictions will allow for more face-to-face engagement.</p>
<p>Elected Members/politicians</p>	<p>Require access to timely and relevant information that enables them to engage with constituents/ partners and to explain Council decisions. Review of current communication processes may be useful in 2022/23.</p>
<p>Media/social media influencers</p>	<p>Require answers to queries and insights into Council decisions. A steady flow of stories tailored to their interest.</p>
<p>Key comms partners</p>	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly increased the number of regional partners seeking to use Council communications channels</p>

Customers	Needs
	to share public messaging. This is difficult to sustain now that business as usual messaging is back to normal levels. Require proactive management to ensure benefits to Council.
Capital Project Partners	Require timely and relevant information from Council to allow them to advocate for Council plans among their stakeholder groupings. With the increasing CP portfolio partners are now multiple – from Government departments to charities to sports groups. Agreeing expectations as part of the set-up of project boards important to managing the volume of work.
AND Residents	Require access to service information and opportunities for engagement. The pandemic has seen a significant increase in digital engagement, which will be further supported in 2022/23 with the development of a new .gov.uk website.
AND Businesses	Require access to information on grants/support/advice. Can be important advocates for the Borough. Opportunity to build relationships through the new Town Advisory Groups.
AND Arts/Heritage Sector	Require access to information on grants/support/advice/events; especially around recovery from COVID-19.
Visitors	Require access to information about/ inducements to visit AND.
Investors	Require access to information about/ inducements to invest in AND.

Appendix 2: PESTLE Analysis

<p>Political</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yet to achieve fully integrated or ‘one Borough’ identity politically or corporately • Increased negativity towards local politics • Election in May 2022 • NI Public Sector Comms Forum helping to establish new standards and procedures • More regional/ partnership working providing additional profile opportunities 	<p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency –trying to do more with less resources • Failure across internal services to plan/budget for communications element of their service plans • Perception (incorrect) that digital/social media is a ‘no cost’
<p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing calls for more openness and transparency across all Council activities • Growing public interest in more structured consultation and engagement • Growth in audience numbers on all Council social media and web platforms • Increasing expectation of 24/7 and instant multi-media-based comms • Increasing need for more flexibility in work patterns to be able to respond • Increasingly older local population but necessity to engage with youth – extremes of the comms channels 	<p>Technological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic has accelerated remote working, which is helpful in meeting increasing expectation of 24/7 communications • Needs to be used to support new ways of consulting • Need to engage more effectively with digital influencers • No coordinated approach across Council until new digital strategy developed.
<p>Legal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of conduct • Increasing ethical standards around transparency and openness • Emergency planning – logging procedures (scrutiny) • Copyright • Increasing need for stronger governance around on-line social communications 	<p>Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silo thinking continues cross Council limiting shared learning, duplicating effort/mixed messages to customers • Lack of understanding of the service/ service pressures making difficult to manage work requests