

# Cabinet Report

## COMMUNICATIONS VISION

**Cabinet Member:** Cllr Lawrence Wood

**Ward(s) Affected:** All

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### ***PROPOSED DECISION***

Members are requested:

To approve the 'Vision for Communications and Marketing in the Digital Age' set out in Appendix A.

### ***Reason for Decision***

The current Corporate Plan includes a Pounds priority which sets the ambition for the Council to 'continue to innovate and transform our services to provide them in the most efficient and accessible way'.

It is part of our role as a Council to inform and engage with our communities effectively to help them to understand where they can get help when they need it and to inform the public about the way that we will deal with any requests for service or carry out our role. Delivering communications effectively is therefore one of the important aims of efficient and accessible services.

### **Corporate Implications**

1. This report does not outline any formal action or expenditure. It is a vision document which sets out the direction of travel. The detailed elements of the vision (if approved) will be set out in a Communications and Marketing Strategy which will be developed.
2. There are no financial or legal implications arising directly from this report.
3. There are no equalities implications outlined with the vision although improved communications including the use of more accessible forms of media should improve the accessibility of information and therefore have a positive impact on affected groups.

### **Executive Summary**

4. The Council has set out a Digital First Strategy (considered elsewhere on this agenda) which highlights a specific piece of work on improving the Council's Citizen Engagement. This includes the way in which we carry out our Communications and Marketing.

5. The vision document sets out a direction of travel and outlines to members a proposal for a new model for delivering communications. Our communications should improve the lives of people and communities in Wycombe District; support the effective operation of our services and deliver responsible and informative communications. This vision sets out how we propose to do this.
6. If the vision is supported it is proposed that officers will do further work to identify the detailed proposal for the steps necessary to bring about the proposed changes. The vision outlines a number of recommendations including
  - 1) Development of a repository for intelligence and insight to provide data on audience, channels, campaigns and learning
  - 2) Strategic management of Communications at senior level across elected members and officers of the authority at appropriate points in project and strategy development.
  - 3) A detailed strategy for Communications and Marketing to be developed aligned to the Corporate Plan.
  - 4) There are also recommendations in relations to skills development, relationship building, resources and business delivery.

### **Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications**

7. The proposed vision is in accordance with the objectives set out within the Pounds priority within the existing Corporate Plan 'continue to innovate and transform our services to provide them in the most efficient and accessible way' and in the emerging Corporate Plan 'Communicate the right things well'.

### **Background and Issues**

8. The Communications Vision is one aspect of the proposed delivery of Digital First. The Council recognises the importance of citizen engagement and communicating effectively with our communities to deliver services effectively.
9. The success of our communications depends upon our ability to connect with our audiences giving them information and helping change behaviours in a way that fits in with their lives.
10. The way that the Council communicates has to change because what has worked in the past isn't going to work anymore. We need to look more closely at where and how we are spending our time and effort and decide what works now and will work moving forward. We need to focus on the communications and marketing channels that will work for us more effectively and engage proactively with communities operating in a digital world.
11. This means we must master new techniques including digital technologies but we must also remain at the forefront of the latest thinking constantly revising and updating skillsets to keep ahead of the extraordinary pace of change.

12. The proposed vision sets out a vision for what we need to do to meet this challenge and to operate effectively in the changing environment of communications.

### **Consultation**

13. To inform the development of the Digital First strategy and the specific strand working with Eduserve we have met with stakeholders from across the organisation in order to develop a vision. Meetings have been held with Members and service representatives exploring where we are now, how we have delivered against our corporate and service plans, what has worked well, barriers we have encountered and future ambitions.
14. Further consultation will be undertaken with Members, services and stakeholders to support the development of the Communications and Marketing Strategy.

### **Next Steps**

15. Subject to Cabinet approval, to carry out reviews of key aspects of delivery, develop the Communications and Marketing Strategy and set out a road map.

### **Background Papers**

Digital First vision document (Agenda Item 9: Cabinet Report September 2017)

Digital First Strategy (on this agenda).