



Oadby & Wigston Borough Council

Communications Action Plan

2022-2025

Developed, March 2022
First Year Review - November 2023

Communications Strategy 2022-25 Action Plan

Below is a table of the planned tactics to achieve the objectives and overall aim, including targets, how it can be measured and its impact. It is not an exhaustive list as more campaigns will be identified as the three-year period advances.

1. Grow the Council’s own audiences on digital channels

	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
1.1	Continue to grow social media audiences	Ongoing	Target to have 3,000 followers on Twitter and 4,000 followers on Facebook by 2025	Communications Manager	Direct communication with customers, peers, stakeholders which can pass on key information, messages, enhance reputation, build trust and engage in two-way conversations.	On target	Our Facebook page has already surpassed this target at 4,200. Twitter (or X as it is now known) is seeing slow growth and the company’s direction is unclear. New charges will impact our ability to grow the platform if they continue. We currently have 2,678 followers.
1.2	Develop more engaging social media content to explain Council priorities and vision, the role of the borough council (and the services it delivers) and get across key information to customers and stakeholders	Ongoing	Social media and digital analytics to gauge viewing figures as well as taking on board customer feedback	Communications Manager	Greater impact and engagement with customers regarding Council campaigns, information, key messages.	On target	Our new Corporate Plan is due to emerge in 2024, giving the opportunity to pursue this target fully. The council’s new Vision was agreed in 2023 and an engaging graphic created to ensure the Vision is accessible and understandable to the public. This has been shared on social channels but also sits on the website.

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	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
1.3	Rollout new Granicus Gov Delivery communication tool and demonstrate month on month growth in subscribers across all topics	2022-2025	Month on month growth in subscribers across all topics	Communications Manager	A new way of directly communicating with customers and stakeholders that only requires the user to have an email address. Communications is proactive – lands directly in inboxes and far more targeted, using data and preferences set by the user.	On target	This platform has steadily grown since its introduction in April 2022. More than 9,500 individual subscribers now receive regular updates from the council by email. The open rate on our emails exceeds 50% - a high rate when benchmarked against others.
1.4	Support the rollout and management of a business/investor website	Spring/summer 2022	Website going live is the initial milestone followed by evidence of an increase of page views month by month in the first year.	Communications Manager & Business regen manager	The microsite will create a clear one stop shop for all businesses and potential investors, tightening the connection between the council and these stakeholders.	Complete	The InvestOW business website launched in 2022 and now has a large amount of content for businesses and investors. We promote the website heavily, especially in business newsletters.
1.5	Establish a new digital communication channel for council tenants using Gov Delivery	Summer 2022	See month on month increase in number of subscribers Tenant feedback	Communications Manager Housing Manager	To establish a regular method of communication with tenants in addition to paper communications.	Complete	This topic was created and now has 733 subscribers. We have approx. 1,200 tenant households in the borough. Growth continues steadily and we have plans to continue promoting this tool to tenants

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	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
1.6	Support services in the development of their own topics as part of an expansion of our Gov Delivery use	Autumn 2022	Increase the number of council topics offered on Gov Delivery and see increases in those subscribing to them	Communications Manager	To explore and expand upon our communication of council topics that we perhaps don't communicate a lot about at the moment.	Complete	A number of new topics have emerged that support specific service areas in getting messages out to targeted audience. These include health & wellbeing, private sector housing, tenants and the community safety partnership.

2. Enhance the council’s reputation using the media and social media

	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
2.1	Continue to provide a proactive approach to Council news and supply the local media with ready to use copy, pictures and video. More focussed selling-in of stories is to be encouraged and the development of relationships with key journalists (print, radio, TV)	Ongoing	Aim for at least 90% of news releases to be covered by at least one media outlet	Communications Manager	Key messages reaching a wide audience, reputation enhanced and protected.	On target	We have developed good relationships with the Leicester Mercury reporters and see a high level of coverage as a result. In the last six months we have seen a coverage in excess of 90% of the press release we have sent out
2.2	Continue to monitor the media for reputation issues and take action if necessary as well as scan the horizon for potential issues	Ongoing	Percentage of positive and negative coverage	Communications Manager	Reputation of Council protected Customers can trust what the council says	On target	In 2023 the council has been the subject of 73 pieces of media coverage. 69 were positive or neutral and just 4 were negative. All 4 of these were reader letters, which are published without opportunity for council comment.
2.3	Revamp and rebrand social media pages to become more community	Autumn 2022	Social media engagement and feedback	Communications Manager	Reach a wider audience, raise the borough’s profile, improve community spirit and enhance	On target	Mollie has done significant work to improve the tone and style of our social media channels. We

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	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
	orientated				reputation.		still receive negative comments from time to time but there has been a vast improvement when compared to 2021/22 and the toxicity of our platforms – especially around car parking charges.

3. Improve our communication reach and effectiveness for hard-to-reach groups and individuals within the borough

	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsible	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
3.1	Have a minimum of two paper communications delivered to all households in the borough per year	Ongoing	Delivery of two paper communications	Communications Manager	Guarantees all households have the opportunity to read council news and information.	Complete	The Our Borough magazine is now delivered to residents twice a year, with the most recent being in early October 2023.
3.2	Support the re-establishment of face to face (supported with a hybrid digital offer where possible) community forums and increase engagement	Ongoing	Number of attendees Feedback	Community & Wellbeing Team Communications Manager	Reaches wide audience and offers good option to reach people without internet access.	Complete	Resident Forums had paused during Covid-19 but are now up and running again. The comms team supports by creating posters for the events and promoting them on all channels, including targeting specific areas through Gov Delivery.
3.3	Extensive Gov Delivery comms plan	Ongoing	Number of subscribers Subscription insight data	Communications Manager	Maximising the reach of Gov Delivery to potential users with an email address across the borough	Ongoing	A comms plan supported the roll out and this is responsible for the 9,500 subscribers we have so far. Various tactics have been used including the website plug in, inclusions in Our Borough, social media and including leaflets in council correspondence.

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	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsible	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
3.4	Conduct a review of tenant communication, including face to face, paper and using Gov Delivery	Summer 2022	Discussions arranged with relevant parties. Tenant newsletter planned and can be measured Tenant feedback	Communications Manager Housing Manager	Reach more tenants, more often, more effectively	Ongoing	Our tenant topic on Gov Delivery now has over 700 subscribers. The comms and housing team relationship has strengthened as demonstrated by the success of communication around Chartwell House boiler issue in Oct 2023. More work to be done to strengthen these ties and ensure tenants are receiving the communication they need
3.5	Hard to reach stakeholders to form a clear part of all relevant communication plans	Ongoing	Physical changes to comms planning documents	Communications Manager	Communication plans as standard acknowledge the need to identify stakeholders not on digital channels and consider these needs.	Complete	Our communication plans now contain a section regarding different audiences and those that might be hard to reach. We look to maximise opportunities to reach these individuals wherever possible.
3.6	Review and improve process of using town centre screens, ensuring all are fully	Spring 2022	Having a minimum of 12 different sets of graphics shared through the year	Communications Manager Town Centre Manager	Key messages reach those that spend time in our town centres but perhaps don't engage with digital channels	Complete	New town centre screens were installed in summer 2023 and are a great way to reach local people,

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	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsible	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
	functional		– i.e. refreshed at least once a month.		.		including those that can be hard to reach. Graphics are refreshed regularly and kept current.

4. Execute three key campaigns each year which support the Corporate Plan and are properly evaluated to measure Success

	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsible	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
4.1	Recycling Campaign to support waste/recycling strategy	Autumn 2022	Contaminated waste Volume of recycling Volumes in low recycling areas	Communications Manager Waste services	Increase recycling rates Reduce contaminated waste Better education among residents.	Ongoing	A number of pieces work are undertaken to promote this. The panels on the sides of our lorries are currently being refreshed and we have been a key part of a joint waste campaign with the seven other borough councils. More work still to be planned with the waste team.
4.2	Brocks Hill Office Move and Agile working (subject to planning permission approval)	Throughout 2022	Staff engagement Member engagement Positive media encourage Staff feedback	Communications Manager	Motivated, positive and engaged staff and members that feel enabled by agile working and the opportunities it brings, in addition to being comfortable with the very different working environment of Brocks Hill.	Complete	The Brocks Hill move completed in summer 2023 and staff surveys completed after the move show excellent communication feedback. Press coverage has focused on the positives, especially the fact that Jenno's were secured to run the adjacent café
4.3	Campaign to support the launch of Gov Delivery and to secure significant	Throughout 2022	Number of customers that subscribe	Communications Manager	Better service to customers, increased use of online services, reduced number of phone calls	Ongoing	A comms plan supported the roll out and this is responsible for the 9,500 subscribers we have so far. Various tactics

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	numbers of subscribers across all topics, including those from hard-to-reach groups						have been used including the website plug in, inclusions in Our Borough, social media and including leaflets in council correspondence.
4.4	Campaign to showcase the services the council delivers, demonstrate how taxpayer money is spent, and how we offer value for money	End of 2022	Customer feedback Customer satisfaction	Communications Manager	Customers have a better understanding of the role of the borough council in our communities and how we spend our funding and council tax	Ongoing	Both Gov Delivery and Our Borough have offered opportunities to be clearer on this with residents. The March 2023 Our Borough edition contained clear information on the services we deliver and what we are achieving. We look for regular opportunities through the press and media to showcase the delivery of key projects.

5. Ensure the web content is well-managed, easy-to-read and highly-rated by any independent assessment

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	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsible	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
5.1	Developing the Council's website content in order to meet WCAG Accessibility guidelines	Through out 2022	Maintain Council's 98% A and AA WCAG ratings and increase our AAA rating from 82% to 90% by end of 2022	Communications Manager	Improved online experience for customers and to meet Government requirements.	Ongoing	We are on target to maintain these ratings and currently sit about 30 th in the list of all borough councils in the country in terms of the quality of our website accessibility. For a small council, this is an excellent place to be
5.2	Produce accessibility guides that can be used across the organisation	By autumn	Our WCAG triple AAA rating	Communications Manager	Staff across the organisation understanding accessibility requirements will create a better user experience for customers	Target date amended	This work is planned to be delivered in Quarter 4 of 2023/24 and then into the following financial year.
5.3	Conduct staff training to ensure website content is up to date and accessible	By summer 2022	Our WCAG triple AAA rating Customer feedback	Communications Manager Managers across the council	Staff and teams understand the need to keep information up to date at all times, giving website users a more positive experience.	Target date amended	This work is planned to be delivered in Quarter 4 of 2023/24 and then into the following financial year.

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5.4	Set up a website content review plan that ensures staff are engaged in regularly checking the accuracy and quality of our content	Through 2022	Customer feedback	Communications Manager	Content on the website is kept up to date and is customer orientated.	Target date amended	This work is planned to be delivered in Quarter 4 of 2023/24 and then into the following financial year.
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6. Improve and develop internal communications channels to meet the needs of the organisation and support member and staff engagement

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	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
6.1	Quarterly briefings for staff, led by SLT and supported by comms, to update them on performance and issues affecting the whole organisation	Ongoing	Attendance and feedback	Communication sManager SLT	A more engaged workforce	Complete	The quarterly staff briefings are now a fixture of the calendar. Briefings are delivered in a hybrid way and the most recent in October 2023 was the most highly attended ever – with approx. 100 staff either tuned in online or in attendance face to face. Depot staff also receive a separate briefing
6.2	Review our staff intranet and develop improvement plan so that staff can access information and news, share content, access documents more efficiently	End of 2022/ early 2023	Usage and feedback	Communication sManager	Easier to share information, news and documents with our staff population	Complete	This work was completed in autumn 2023 with the entire intranet revamped to make it more accessible and useful to staff. This dovetailed with work done by HR to improve the content on their pages.
6.4	Research and develop a member hub	Summer 2022	Usage and feedback	Communication sManager	Improve Member engagement and make accessing council news, information and documents simpler and more intuitive.	Complete	The member hub was launched in late 2022 and is updated regularly by comms and other service areas.

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	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
6.5	Communications workshop with managers	Spring 2022	Manager feedback Number of attendees Successful actions	Communication sManager	To embed a stronger communication culture in the organisation and bring managers on board with the themes of the comms & marketing strategy and this action plan.	Complete	Workshops were held in early 2023 and have helped establish stronger links between comms and service areas.
6.6	Annual review of Communication Strategy with members	Next review early 2023	Engagement with members	Communication sManager	To ensure members can share their views and give direction on our communication strategy on an annual basis	Complete	Progress update being taking to committee in November 2023. Comms Manager also meets with council leader monthly and engages regularly with other members, including around the production of Our Borough
6.7	Support the rollout of internal health and wellbeing hub for staff	Spring/summer 2022	Engagement of staff Results of next health and wellbeing survey	Health & Wellbeing Team Communication s Manager	Help motivate and increase the health and wellbeing staff Positive impact on sickness levels due to a healthy workforce	Complete	Staff now access to a wellbeing hub that contains a wealth of useful information and signposting

7. Lead on the delivery of the council’s events programme

	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsible	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2023
7.1	Develop a calendar of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Events & Festival Days 2022-23, that sets out which the council will support and how	By May 2022	Website, social media, newsletter engagement	Communication sManager	Reaches wide audience and offers best option to reach people without internet access. Sets out which the council can support with the resource available to it.	Complete	This calendar is now produced annually
7.2	Remembrance parades	November each year	Resident feedback Numbers in attendance	Communication sManager	Ensure a fitting tribute to the fallen and our Armed Forces while enhancing council reputation	Ongoing	Remembrance parades successfully returned to the borough in November 2022 and at the time of writing are due to take place again in 2023.
7.3	Queen’s Jubilee	June 2022	Target of one major event each day 2-5 June Feedback	Communication sManager	Community cohesion Council reputation	Complete	Queen’s Jubilee events were delivered in 2022
7.4	ARTIC awards – internal	December each year	Number of staff in attendance Feedback	Communication sManager	Boosts staff morale and celebrates our achievements.	Ongoing	Annual staff awards are delivered each Dec and are due again this year. 2022 saw a record number of staff nominations and a hugely successful face to face event.

8. Drive an effective and beneficial consultation strategy that ensures we receive useful feedback and insights from stakeholders throughout our communities

	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2022
8.1	Develop a specific consultation strategy document to guide our approach	By May 2022	Completion of guide	Communication sManager	Ensures a streamlined approach to consultation across the council. Encourages consultation to be well planned, thought out and easy to be evaluated.	Target date amended	Work due to take place in early 2024
8.2	Effectively use the Citizens Panel and encourage its growth so that it provides an excellent cross-section of our community which can feedback to us	Ongoing	Numbers involved Resident feedback	Communication sManager	Allows us to gather views and opinions from local people on a variety of topics.	Complete	We instead use the reformed Residents forums. We also have a consultations and surveys topic on Gov Delivery with 2,480 subscribers. These channels, among other yielded an excellent response to the Customer Experience consultation in early 2023, for example.
8.3	Conduct a resident communication survey	Summer 2022	Number of responses Customer feedback	Communication sManager	To gain feedback on the council's communication activity and the channels we use, identifying gaps and understanding the preferences and needs of people in the borough	Ongoing	The major Customer Experience consultation in 2023 contained many communications related questions of which the responses have been acted upon. Running a specific communication

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	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact	Progress	Update comments November 2022
							survey in 2024/25 in under consideration
8.4	Conduct communication surveys with staff and members	Summer 2022	Number of responses Feedback	Communication sManager Customer Experience Manager	To assess and gain feedback on view of the council's internal and member communication	Ongoing	Regular staff surveys have been conducted in past year, largely to capture key feedback and feeling through the Brocks Hill move but also about our wider communication practices. The Comms Manager has also had a face to face session with members since the election to discuss comms and gather feedback.
8.5	Support the re-establishment of community forums and increase engagement (see 3.2)	(see 3.1)	(see 3.1)	(see 3.1)	(see 3.1)	(see 3.1)	(see 3.1)

Next review Date:

November 2024 by Communications Manager