

MINUTES OF COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP 29 AUGUST 2017 – 4.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr Ken Hind	Michelle Smith
Cllr Sue Hind	Lawson Oddie
Cllr Graham Geldard	Mark Beveridge
Cllr Ged Mirfin	Colin Hirst
	Tom Pridmore

APOLOGIES

Received from Cllr Allan Knox and Theresa Sanderson

PURPOSE OF THE WORKING GROUP

- To examine and make recommendations to Policy & Finance Committee on the current policies relating to promotion and public relations of the Council including written press, radio, television, the website, and social & digital media.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

Lawson had prepared a report on the types of social media used by the Council and the accounts run by various service areas. The report outlined the automatic postings and regular postings of the accounts and retweets carried out from other profiles. It was highlighted that the Council must be cautious about who they 'follow' as this could be seen as endorsement. 'Hits' can sometimes be a better indication of interest than 'followers'.

It was acknowledged that there could be increased use of YouTube and Instagram.

A further report had been prepared regarding the corporate website. The landing page of the website includes 8 icons which change according to demand and searches plus 'Latest News' and promotions. There was potential for increased use of on-line forms and mobile phone access has increased dramatically.

There was a view from Members that although the main website is a good deliverer of information it is not interesting to look at and could do with something visual to make it 'demand to be read'. Something that tells people what RV is about. There should also be links on the front page to Twitter, Facebook and the other RV accounts – eg Tourism. The visitribblevalley website is very successful. Lawson explained that the current layout was driven by making the user experience as smooth as possible, and was reflected in the SOCITM rating (Society of IT Managers).

Members felt that the 3 main streams of the website should be

- To attract businesses
- Hospitality / tourism
- Delivery of information to residents

IMPROVEMENTS

The improvements outlined in Lawson's report regarding social media should be implemented as soon as possible. The website should also show RV as a brand and include images of Pendle Hill and the Trough of Bowland as well as prominent links to Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and the other RV accounts including Tourism and Wedding Heaven.

CONFERENCE ON FOOD AT HOLMES MILL

The Leader has been asked to open this event on 6 September 2017. A promotional stall has been offered to RVBC for tourism and economic development. This is an event that should be promoted and celebrated on the RV website.

TRAILS – TOURIST / HERITAGE / FOOD

Tom Pridmore is working on a trail for tourism / heritage that will hopefully be included in the report on tourism to the Economic Development committee in September.

A relaunch of the Food trail needs further consideration before anything is done.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The promotion of RV to encourage new businesses is imperative. At the moment we very much rely on others doing the promotion.

ACTION:

- Lawson – improvements as outlined in his social media report.
- Tom – to work on a Tourism/Heritage Trail
- Colin – look at how to promote RV to businesses

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was arranged for 4.00pm on Tuesday 26 September 2017 in the meeting room, Level D of the Council Offices.

The meeting closed at 5.10pm

MINUTES OF COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP 26 SEPTEMBER 2017 – 5.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr Ken Hind	Michelle Smith
Cllr Sue Hind	Lawson Oddie
Cllr Ged Mirfin	Theresa Sanderson
	Colin Hirst
	Tom Pridmore
	Stuart Haworth

APOLOGIES

Received from Cllr Graham Geldard and Mark Beveridge

PURPOSE OF THE WORKING GROUP

- To examine and make recommendations to Policy & Finance Committee on the current policies relating to promotion and public relations of the Council including written press, radio, television, the website, and social & digital media.

UPDATE ON ACTIONS TAKEN ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

Following a meeting between the Leader, Chief Executive, Lawson and Stuart Haworth it was agreed that as the corporate website is essentially information based a separate promotional website should be created with links to our other websites.

Lawson and the IT team had also made progress on the following actions

- Educating staff on social media – staff meetings and Heads of Service meeting plus individual meeting with Heads of Service
- Promotion of facts and figures – quirky anecdotal facts + facts about services
- Promote services linked in to National Days – social media calendar with details of national awareness days/weeks
- Raise profile of council meetings and public participation
- A day with RVBC – covered by #OurDay – 21 November
- Monthly features – promoting the activities of services areas as a regular rotating feature
- Follow a job role for a day
- National #OurDay – identifying an A – Z of possible services to include. Interest from #OurDay will inform promotion of services in future social media activity
- Use social media to educate and inform residents – regular meetings IT/Theresa/Contact centre to identify themes of services that the public are making contact about. Help direct the public to the right agency/correct service. Work with partners in respect of retweeting.
- 'following' – further review of organisations that we follow
- Promote photo competition
- Provide links to corporate social media on all literature etc
- Spread good news about staff events/achievements – consent required for this
- Encourage staff to suggest tweets/posts
- Run campaigns
- Get more imagery from events and services to use on social media

Lawson reported that Followers on both twitter and facebook had increased since the last meeting.

Check Standing Orders about councillors tweeting in meetings.

Councillors should be encouraged to look at what has been tweeted by the Council and re-tweet so that the message is widened as far as possible. Councillors may need some training on using social media – **Michelle Smith / Stuart Haworth to investigate courses** . It was however, pointed out that promotion and political issues should be kept completely separate.

UPDATE ON TOM'S REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tom's draft Tourism Destination Management Plan had been approved by committee to go out to consultation.

Committee had also resolved to ask Tom to do a Heritage Trail. Tom had prepared a basic paper that outlined the tasks to be completed in order to do this including an audit of 'heritage gems'; identifying which have potential for tourism growth; hosting meetings of key potential partners; and launch. This would be progressed early in the new year.

Ken reported that both Stonyhurst College and Browsholme Hall would both be interested.

The idea of something more than just a 'paper' trail was also discussed – walking; car; coach and app. For example there may be potential to develop an 'app'.

RIBBLE VALLEY PR CAMPAIGN

Theresa reported that the PR campaign would be largely based on the organisational aims contained in the Corporate Strategy that had recently been approved by Policy & Finance committee.

The campaign would need a slogan to represent RVBC's new vision. She asked for ideas and it was suggested this should be opened up to councillors and staff to make suggestions.

There was a lot of customer satisfaction in RV so it is about building on the good work that is already happening and maintaining that satisfaction in the face of funding cuts. The Borough's profile in relation to economic development needs to be raised in order to create a sustainable borough.

Main action points include

- Target audiences
- Tactics and channels to be used
- Timescales
- Evaluation

It was felt that work on this should start straight away with the aim of a big launch in January 2018. There are newsworthy activities to use that are already on-going.

The Leader suggested a timescale for different bits

- Promotional website – February 2018
- Heritage trail – Spring 2018
- Events calendar

Theresa is currently working on a short promotional film that should be available to show (perhaps unfinished) by the next meeting.

PROMOTIONAL WEBSITE

Stuart circulated copies of examples of other authority websites along with one that he had put together as an idea for RV. He also gave a demo of this on-line for the group to see. Stuart had based it on Live/Work/Play theme following the meeting with the Leader, Chief

Executive and Lawson with rotating banners. It needs to be the 'shop window' that is user friendly and looks good with links to 'real' information on the corporate website. We need to decide what this website is trying to achieve and needs a strapline/vision/branding. Cllr Mirfin remarked that 'Brand RV' is missing. It needs to say that RV is in Lancashire as there is nothing that obviously tells people where RV is in the country.

It was agreed that Theresa/Alice would work on a branding exercise/logo and what we are looking to achieve but the material and what we wanted the site to achieve would drive the process. Michelle warned that this may have cost implications that would need committee approval.

ACTION:

- Lawson – continue with improvements as outlined update report.
- Stuart/Michelle – investigate training for councillors on social media
- Tom – to work on a Tourism/Heritage Trail
- Colin – look at how to promote RV to businesses
- Theresa – involve councillors and staff in 'new slogan' for PR campaign and work on a scoping exercise

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was arranged for 4.00pm on Thursday 26 October 2017 in the meeting room, Level D of the Council Offices.

The meeting closed at 6.25pm

MINUTES OF COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP 6 NOVEMBER 2017 – 3.30pm

PRESENT:

Cllr Ken Hind	Michelle Smith
Cllr Sue Hind	Lawson Oddie
Cllr Ged Mirfin	Theresa Sanderson
	Colin Hirst

APOLOGIES - None received.

PURPOSE OF THE WORKING GROUP

- To examine and make recommendations to Policy & Finance Committee on the current policies relating to promotion and public relations of the Council including written press, radio, television, the website, and social & digital media.

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2017

These were approved as a correct record.

Cllr Sue Hind remarked upon the need to add Lancashire to the promotional website as she had spoken to two people recently who did not know the location of Ribble Valley.

UPDATE ON CORPORATE WEBSITE

The Head of Finance submitted the most recent statistics for the corporate website. These showed top 10 pages visited; top 10 search terms; devices used; use of on-line forms; and website visits.

He highlighted the changes that had been made to the website to incorporate social media icons.

PROMOTIONAL WEBSITE

Progress on this was continuing. The Head of Financial Services showed a picture of the Homepage with 3 main headings – Live, Work and Play. Content under these headings would now be added with links taking people to more information. In order to progress the site further consideration would need to be given to branding, colour, name, logo and web address.

The Communications Officer felt that it was important to consider what the website was being set up to achieve and who it was aimed at, as this would dictate how it should be focused otherwise it would just be a repeat of the corporate website.

Members considered this and it was agreed that the following applied

- LIVE – aspirant families looking to seek quality of life in Ribble Valley
- WORK – potential employers and investors / business leaders looking to relocate businesses to Ribble Valley
- PLAY – existing residents / tourists looking to enjoy rich cultural heritage, food, drink and the countryside

The 3 headings are there to grab the attention and would be used as a signpost to links elsewhere with more information.

The group asked that progress be continued in this format.

CORPORATE SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

The Head of Financial Services gave some statistics on the followers for both Twitter and Facebook. Cllr Mirfin remarked upon the high female usage as being unusual.

There was still massive potential for use of You Tube and progress was being made in setting up an Instagram account and LinkedIn.

Information was circulated regarding the preparations for #OurDay tweets due to take place on 21 November 2017. These would follow an alphabet of services or things associated with 24 hours in the life of RVBC.

TRAINING

The Head of Human Resources had done some investigations into appropriate training for both councillors and staff on the use of social media. These would be practical sessions as well as informative, designed to explain what social media is, the good and bad about it, and how to use it to the Council's advantage. A twilight session would be arranged that would be funded out of the corporate training budget.

SLOGAN COMPETITION

The Head of Human Resources circulated a list of suggested slogans that had been entered for the competition. The working group discussed the submissions and decided that the following was the winner -
'Amazing spaces, people and places'

The Communications Officer said that she would arrange for a version of the RVBC logo to be amended to include this line for use on the promotional website.

AOB

The Tourism Officer would continue to work on the Heritage Trail. It was also suggested that the Wedding Heaven brochure needs to be more inclusive regarding diversity.

The Head of Regeneration and Housing would continue to work on promoting economic development.

ACTION:

- Head of Finance – continue with improvements to both corporate and promotional websites and use of social media.
- Head of HR - to arrange training for councillors/staff on social media
- Tourism Officer – to work on a Tourism/Heritage Trail
- Head of Regen & Housing – look at how to promote RV to businesses
- Communications Officer – update RVBC logo to include the winning slogan for use on the promotional website

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was arranged for **4.00pm on Thursday 7 December 2017** in the meeting room, Level D of the Council Offices.

The meeting closed at 4.40pm

NOTES OF A DISCUSSION HELD ON MONDAY, 18 DECEMBER 2017 AT 4.10PM

PRESENT:

Councillor K Hind

Michelle Smith
Lawson Oddie
Mark Beveridge
Theresa Sanderson

It was agreed to defer the next meeting of the Communications Working group until early February 2018.

There was informal discussion on steps that could be taken in the intervening period, with regard to the promotional website, and issues to be considered.

- Responsibility would need to be taken for preparation of the different aspects of the site.
 - a) Play – issues of tourism and leisure would be considered by the Head of Cultural and Leisure Services.
 - b) Live – the Head of Financial Services could pull information together.
 - c) Work – this would require input from the Head of Regeneration and Housing. There was discussion on the various available or proposed employment sites, the types of business to be encouraged (new start or relocating) incentives such as grants or rate relief and the types of retailers and food/refreshment outlets that could be incorporated in the new market.
- Domain name – consideration would need to be given to the name of the site.
- Styling – one writing style was desirable as on the Council website, with the communications officer taking a lead on accessible and readable house style.
- The next agenda for the group should include an item on how the site would be scoped and 'road tested', and how access and the number of hits could be boosted. The Communications Officer to investigate this prior to the meeting.

The meeting finished at 4.40pm.

MINUTES OF COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP 19 FEBRUARY 2018 – 2.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr Ken Hind	Michelle Smith
Cllr Sue Hind	Lawson Oddie
Cllr Ged Mirfin	Mark Beveridge
Cllr Graham Geldard	Colin Hirst

APOLOGIES

Received from Cllr Allan Knox and Theresa Sanderson

PURPOSE OF THE WORKING GROUP

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UPDATE ON PROMOTIONAL WEBSITE

Lawson reported that good progress was being made with all pages now populated. Theresa would now review them for terminology consistency and style. She would also help to source images and videos.

- Lawson – Live
- Mark – Play
- Colin – Work

Lawson circulated a hard copy of the front page with the content behind. This would also include links. We may need to consider such items as imagery or iconography.

It was agreed that external advertising should not be included as the Council cannot be seen to be endorsing a particular product etc.

Video links suggested to be used / linked to, to show off different parts of the Ribble Valley included

- LEP
- Marketing Lancashire
- Food Festival
- Jazz Festival
- Tour of Britain bike race
- Create Longridge
- Country File – Gisburn Forest

We are looking for a target launch date of 1 May 2018.

FEEDBACK ON #OURDAY

Lawson circulated feedback statistics on the tweets that had been made on this day on 21 November 2017. It had been a very successful day and one that the Council will support again in 2018.

SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINING FOR COUNCILLORS

Michelle had arranged Social Media training for all Chairs of committees for Tuesday 27 February 2018 at 4pm. Herself, Lawson and Theresa will also attend.

Cllr K Hind asked about creating councillor Facebook accounts keeping personal and councillor Facebook accounts separate. He asked if it could be picked up in the training. Michelle would raise this issue with the trainer.

SLOGAN COMPETITION / NEW LOGO FOR PROMOTIONAL WEBSITE

The slogan winner was Lawson Oddie with 'Amazing spaces, people and places'. This would be added under the Council logo on the promotional website.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was arranged for **2.00pm on Tuesday 20 March 2018** in the meeting room, Level D of the Council Offices.

Lawson would have the promotional website ready to show the members at this meeting.

The meeting closed at 2.40pm

MINUTES OF COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP 20 MARCH 2018 – 4.30pm

PRESENT:

Cllr Ken Hind	Michelle Smith
Cllr Ged Mirfin	Lawson Oddie
	Mark Beveridge
	Stuart Haworth
	Theresa Sanderson

APOLOGIES

Received from Cllr Sue Hind

PURPOSE OF THE WORKING GROUP

- To examine and make recommendations to Policy & Finance Committee on the current policies relating to promotion and public relations of the Council including written press, radio, television, the website, and social & digital media.

NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19 FEBRUARY 2018 – approved

UPDATE ON PROMOTIONAL WEBSITE

Stuart gave a demonstration of the promotional website. Most of the content was now on with work continuing on key facts. Theresa would review the style, wording and investigate providing images. Stuart followed several links to show the councillors how it worked and examples of the content already on.

Links to external websites in the text would be updated by the sites themselves.

Councillors considered a number of options for the domain name of the site.

It was felt that waiting until after approval from P & F in June to launch the site may be too long, but it was recognised that P & F would have to give approval before 'go-live'.

RIBBLE VALLEY NEWS

Theresa gave an overview of the Council newspaper that she produces twice a year. This is an 8 page tabloid that is delivered to 25,000 homes and also made audio by RV Talking Newspaper (300 blind and partially sighted)

It is produced in consultation with Heads of Service and according to newspaper convention. The reason we have a Council newspaper is because we are a large borough with poor access to services and no communication hubs. It is a means of getting information to householders – particularly with our demographic – older residents value it.

She outlined the pros and cons of both printed and social media methods and highlighted that it should be both not either/or.

Outcomes are also measurable – eg renovation grants, warm homes, mortgage rescue scheme.

Distribution of the Spring edition was imminent.

MARKET RE-DEVELOPMENT

Cllr Hind wanted to bring attention to the need to get the publicity right on the Market Re-Development once we got to the stage of agreeing a scheme and making the public aware of it. The scheme was being considered by the Market Working group on 27 March 2018 and subject to their approval would be presented to all councillors at a meeting on Monday 16 April 2018.

It was acknowledged that the scheme would need the approval of Policy & Finance committee which would also include the Heads of Terms, contractual arrangements and financial viability before there was any commitment to going ahead with the development.

Thought needs to be given to the timing of promotion of the scheme including key messages perhaps with a specific press conference set up with information packs and images. Images should be watermarked with 'copywrited' and councillors embargoed.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be arranged when required.

The meeting closed at 5.32pm