

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

Subject: Update on the Communications Strategy
Committee: Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Date: 3 November 2010
Cabinet member: Councillor Glenn Jordan
CMT member: Assistant Chief Executive
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Part: 1 (one)

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Panel has requested updates on the external and internal communications strategies. Some of the issues and challenges affecting how the Council communicates with residents and staff were explored in a presentation to the panel in March 2010 and a written update was provided in September 2010.
- 1.2 A communications strategy reflecting these issues has now been drafted for consultation. The draft strategy is in two parts – external and internal.
- 1.3 The draft strategy aims to reflect the recent changes and the challenges facing local government, including reducing budgets, the new priorities emerging from the Plymouth Report and the latest research on communications in local government.
- 1.4 It aims to focus the direction of communications activities across the Council and to set out a framework and principles to govern the way we operate.

2. Priorities

- 2.1 The strategy aims to focus activity under five priority themes:
 - Keeping residents better informed
 - Delivering better value for money communications
 - Providing fast and efficient online services
 - Promoting resident involvement
 - Supporting staff in delivering excellent communications

3. Delivering the strategy

- 3.1 The strategies are fairly high level and should focus direction. Detailed delivery of the strategies will be through the Corporate Communications business plan and departmental publicity plans.

- 3.2 Performance will be monitored through a range of detailed indicators and benchmarking information. Overall performance against this strategy will be assessed using high level indicators that help us track performance over time.
- 3.3 These include the percentage of residents who feel informed about the Council, the number of residents who feel they can influence decision-making and the number of staff who feel informed about the Council's vision and priorities. The internal communication priorities will be evaluated against the results of the 2010 staff survey, which will be available later this year.
- 3.4 Progress reports will be produced annually.