

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