



Report to Cabinet

Subject Forward Publicity Plan – Summer 2007

Date 12 July 2007

Author Head of Strategy and Performance

1. Purpose of the Report

§ To inform members of proposed publicity initiatives planned for coming months.

2. Background

The Council regularly produces a Forward Publicity Programme, to flag up issues that it wishes to publicise in the immediate months ahead. The Programme is produced three times a year, to feed into the next edition of “Contacts” magazine.

This has been recognised as good practice externally.

The Programme is drawn together by the Communications Manager, based on ideas contributed by departments across the Council.

As well as including plans for publicity about the Council’s own outward-facing activity, the Programme also includes details of proposed internal communications and publicity activity carried out in partnership with other agencies to help secure the Council’s cross-cutting priorities.

3. Proposal

The Forward Publicity Programme for Summer 2007 is attached for members’ information at **Appendix A**. It is based on information provided by departments @ 14 June 2007.

A range of techniques will be used to deliver the programme. These include the Council's website and intranet and the next edition of "Contacts" magazine.

As usual, all press releases will be included on the website for information – where website is included as a specific medium, this relates to those issues felt to be most appropriate for more intense website coverage.

Communications staff will work closely with lead members and departmental representatives to ensure the programme is delivered. They will also continue to handle and respond to reactive media enquiries, again working closely with departments and lead members.

Members should however note that the current Communications Manager has recently tendered her resignation, having successfully applied for a more senior post at a neighbouring local authority. We have begun the process of appointing a replacement but it is likely that the post will be vacant for the bulk of the summer period. This will limit our ability to provide a full communications service and it may not therefore be possible for the full programme to be delivered. In particular, we may require Heads of Service to play a more active role in handling media enquiries at this time. Normal service should be resumed in time for production of the Autumn/Winter Contacts magazine, assuming an early appointment can be made.

As always, all publicity included in the Plan will comply with the Code of Practice for Local Government publicity.

4. Contacts Magazine

The next edition of "Contacts" magazine has now been completed and is being distributed from 6 July 2007.

As outlined above, stories for "Contacts" have been sourced substantially from material included in the Forward Publicity Plan.

5. Resource Implications

Resources have been made available to deliver the programme, though the vacancy for the post of Communications Manager will have an impact as highlighted above. External funding is sought wherever possible to support partnership activity.

6. Recommendation

Members are **recommended** to note the report.