



Report to Cabinet

Subject Forward Communications Plan for winter 2009

Date 3 September 2009

Author Communications Manager on behalf of Head of Strategy and Performance

1. Purpose of the Report

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

2. Background

The council regularly produces a Forward Communications Plan, to flag up issues that it wishes to publicise in the immediate months ahead. The Plan is produced three times a year, to feed into the next edition of Contacts magazine and other forms of communication activity.

This has been recognised as good practice externally.

The Plan 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 Plan 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 Communications Plan for Summer 2009 is attached for members' information at **Appendix A**. It is based on information provided by departments of 20 August 2009.

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

As usual, 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.

The Communications Team 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, working closely with departments and lead members.

4. Contacts Magazine

The summer edition of Contacts (issue 22) magazine was distributed between 10 and 26 July. Planning is already well underway for the winter edition, which is due out in late November.

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

Contacts Year Plan for 2009/10

Edition	Delivery to Council	Distribution
Contacts 22 (09/10 financial year)	9 July	10 –26 July
Contacts 23 (09/10 financial year)	19 November	19 Nov – 8 Dec
Contacts 24 (09/10 financial year)	Feb/March 2010 (TBC – depends on when general election is called)	(TBC)

6. Refuse Freighter Panels

The refuse freighters include a large side panel on each side of the vehicle that can be used for publicity purposes. The panels are manufactured in such a way as to be easily interchangeable. This represents an excellent opportunity to promote Council services, on a one-off or ongoing basis.

We have asked departments to identify opportunities to promote their services in this way, which we then aim to coordinate through this forward plan, in partnership with Direct Services. Costs of producing the panels will need to be borne by departments.

8. Resource Implications

Resources have been made available to deliver the programme. External funding is sought wherever possible to support partnership activity.

As outlined above, funding for refuse freighter panel advertisements needs to be made available from relevant departmental budgets.

9. Recommendation

Members are **recommended** to:

- Note the report