

## BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

<b>TO:</b> COUNCIL	<b>REPORT NUMBER:</b> <b>CMU10</b>
<b>FROM:</b> Councillor Kathryn Grandon - Cabinet Member for Communications	<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b> 24 July 2018

### TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNICATIONS

#### 1. OVERVIEW OF PORTFOLIO

- 1.1 The Leader of the Council has created the new position of Cabinet Member for Communications in recognition of the importance of effective and timely communication both internally and externally. The Cabinet Member's responsibility includes a specific focus on the Council's key messages through a range of communication 'channels' and how they are used to engage with and listen to all our communities, residents, electors, businesses, visitors, tenants, partners, customers, staff and members.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Council notes the report.

#### 3. KEY ACTIVITIES/ISSUES OVER THE PAST 3 MONTHS

##### *Annual Summary 2017/18*

- 3.1 A new-style end of year summary was produced by the Communications Team working in partnership with the Business Improvement Team. This highlighted the Councils' key achievements during 2017/18 in the form of infographics aligned to the Councils' Joint Strategic Plan. The summary also assisted Councillors attending the annual meetings of their Town and Parish Councils.

##### *Monthly communications evaluation reports*

- 3.2 Previously, no evaluation of the effectiveness of the Councils' communications was carried out. Processes have now been put in place to enable the impact of communications activities to be monitored and assessed. These monthly evaluation reports, starting from April 2018, are circulated to all Councillors.

##### *District facts*

- 3.3 The Communications Team and the Business Improvement Team have worked together to compile a fact sheet, which aims to highlight some of the key facts regarding each district, through a collection of key statistics, illustrated by infographics.

## Key stories

These are the main stories from the last quarter which have been proactively promoted on our communications channels. On a daily basis the Communications Team provides a responsive service for journalists with press enquiries and advises staff from across the organisation on internal and external communications.

### *iESE award presentation*

- 3.4 There was significant external and internal communication in relation to the presentation of the iESE Public Sector Transformation Awards to Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils for 'Council of the Year' and 'Working Together'. The Chief Executive of the awarding organisation (iESE) came to Suffolk to personally present the awards to the Councils. The judges were so impressed with the Councils' submission for the 'Working Together' award that they entered Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils into the overall 'Council of the Year' award, where it received the silver award.

### *Stars of Babergh and Mid Suffolk Awards*

- 3.5 The Communications Team co-ordinated the launch of the Stars of Babergh and Mid Suffolk Awards on 1 June. Nominations are now open for the awards which have 17 categories split between community awards and business accolades. The closing date is 28 September and nominations can be made via the website of the *East Anglian Daily Times*, which is part of Archant, our media partner for the awards, which featured the launch. The awards ceremony will be held in Hadleigh during October.

### *Future plans for Corks Lane, Hadleigh*

- 3.6 Extensive communications support has been provided for the two public engagement events on future plans for Babergh District Council's former headquarters sites in Corks Lane, Hadleigh. Council representatives and consultants answered questions and discussed the plans at the exhibitions. This was covered in the Suffolk Free Press.

### *Suffolk Day*

- 3.7 The Sudbury Vision for Prosperity Action Plan was launched on Suffolk Day, as part of the town's Suffolk Day celebrations on 21 June. BBC Radio Suffolk interviewed Deputy Leader Councillor Jan Osborne live from Sudbury and there was media coverage in the local press. The Communications Team also designed the document and banners for a public information event which was held in the town hall two days later. Walks in Hadleigh and Shotley, held as part of the Suffolk Day celebrations, were also promoted.

### *Housing*

- 3.8 Housing was in the headlines as the Council took on the first shared ownership housing in 25 years at Admiral's Quarter in Holbrook. This was just a week after new tenants moved into council housing in Glemsford. Priority was given to people with local connections to the area. In addition, the development of 12 new affordable homes in Lavenham, commissioned by the Council, were shortlisted for the East Anglia Building Excellence Awards. These stories generated media coverage in the local press, including the *East Anglian Daily Times* and the Suffolk Free Press.

### *Public question times with the Leader and Deputy Leader*

- 3.9 The 'Meet the Leader and Deputy Leader' events in Sudbury and Hadleigh, were publicised in the Sudbury Free Press, the East Anglian Daily Times and via posters. These provided an opportunity for people from the towns to come and directly ask questions about the Council's work and services.

### *New chairman*

- 3.10 Following the appointment of Councillor Barry Gasper as Chairman of the Council work is underway to promote the Chairman's chosen charity, Bumblebee Children's Charity. This is a specialist centre in Sproughton which provides support for babies and young children who have difficulties with movement and coordination. These problems can be caused by a wide range of conditions including cerebral palsy, Down's Syndrome and autism.

### **Internal communications campaigns**

#### *Mental Health Awareness Week*

- 3.11 A range of activities and information was provided during Mental Health Awareness Week in May which were publicised to staff and also resulted in a story in the East Anglian Daily Times.

#### *GDPR*

- 3.12 Extensive work has been carried out through internal communications to raise awareness among staff and prepare for the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations on 25 May 2018.

### **Future key activities**

- 3.13 Communications work is being planned to publicise key decisions which are due to be made during the next few months including the future development of the council's former headquarters in Hadleigh and the Vision for Prosperity in Sudbury. Plans are being made to mark Local Democracy Week by raising awareness of the role of a councillor and the services that the council provides.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Council is working closely with staff and councillors to increase awareness of the Council's positive work, initiatives and services. A recruitment process has also recently been carried out to add capacity to the Communications Team. Restructuring the team will enable more fully integrated media, marketing and digital campaigns to be delivered.