

Communications Strategy

Introduction

The Rt Hon Greg Clarke wrote a book called “Total Politics” which eventually resulted in the Localism Act 2011. The act set out to “help people and their locally elected representatives to achieve their own ambitions”. Under this act local areas can produce a development plan, which takes full account of the characteristics of the local area, and, if “adopted” (made), requires that planning applications have to take note of the policies within the adopted plan.

The Battle Neighbourhood Plan, has been going for some considerable time. Its key aims are to:

- ⑩ formulate localised planning policies for the Parish of Battle which development proposals are required to comply.
- ⑩ create the conditions within the community which allow improvements on facilities and infrastructure to begin, for the benefit of the Parish

To achieve these aims engagement with the local community during the process is vitally important. Two-way communication with all the stakeholders helps smooth the path through to the referendum ensuring that it fully reflects the needs of the community from every corner of the Parish. A consistent strategy must therefore initially be developed which gives direction to all but is constantly under review to incorporate changes as and when they occur.

It must provide the framework which determines how all media, online, marketing, publications, internal and public relations communications relating to the Battle Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group are formulated and presented. Our channels of communication with our stakeholders which includes residents, employees, businesses, community partnerships and all levels of the government, must be appropriate and cost-effective.

We must ensure that our messages are clear, concise and easy to understand and that they reflect the key messages that we wish to get across throughout the process at all the Battle Neighbourhood Plan milestones. It is also essential that we facilitate to our stakeholders all the various methods of providing feedback on any aspect of the plan and its ramifications.

Objectives

The objectives of the Communication strategy are:

- ⑩ to provide better communications which meet the needs of the target audience, ensuring a better understanding of their requirements and the outcomes we deliver
- ⑩ to deliver a plan which is understood by all
- ⑩ to allow the community and other interested parties the opportunity to help formulate the plan
- ⑩ to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of how the process works and who is taking the plan forward on their behalf
- ⑩ to provide appropriate consultation and communications to all stakeholders on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan at each and every stage which includes gathering their approval
- ⑩ to engage with Rother District Council on how the consultation, set out in the statement will be carried out and how this will be evidenced from a community perspective.

Principles

Our key principles are information:

- ⑩ that is relevant and appropriate
- ⑩ that is targeted at the right people
- ⑩ that is via the right channel of communication
- ⑩ that follows the key milestones and stages as set out in the plan

These principles have the following primary elements;

- ⑩ all communications must meet the requirements of the message to be conveyed
- ⑩ the information must be available to view
- ⑩ the methodology of delivery should meet the highest possible standards
- ⑩ delivery of information should be appropriate and in plain English
- ⑩ people with disabilities and where English is not their first language should be considered in the delivery options
- ⑩ transparency must be a key element

Delivery Options

These are determined from the options available by evaluating what would achieve the required aims in the most positive and credible manner to the different groups.

Delivery Mechanisms	
Website	
Local Paper Blog	
Social media	
Press releases	
Parish Magazines	
Minutes of meetings	
Exhibitions	
Sports Centres	
Council Newsletter	
Direct Mail	
Consultation Forums	
Emailing	
Leaflets and flyers	
Networking	
Posters	
Local Information Boards	
Stakeholders Premises	
Events	

Milestones & Timescales

This is the current listing based on all available information to date.

Milestones	Target Date
Area designation	May – Sep 2015
Communication strategy, identify key stakeholders, engage with the community	June 15 – Feb 2016
Writing policies and completing projects	Oct 15 – May 2018
Reg 14 Pre-submission Consultation	May/June 18
Reg 15 Plan Submission	September 2018
Reg 16 Consultation	October 2018

Our Communications Strategy

Stakeholder	Delivery Options
Residents in Parish Area	Exhibitions/website/local paper blog
Young people in Parish Area	Social media/targetted and consultation events
More mature people in Parish Area	Consultation eents/website/local press/posters/boards
People with disabilities and special needs	Website/Concultation events/local press/posters/social media
Schools and colleges serving the Parish Area	Consultation events
All businesses and employers in Parish Area	Website/Consultation eventsNewsletters/local press/letters/email
Parish Council	Reports/Meeting mins/Presentations
Councillors	Reports/Meeting mins/Presentations
Specialist Groups	Meetings/letters/email
Community Groups	Meetings/letters/email
Voluntary Groups	Meetings/letters/email
Clubs	Meetings/letters/email
Service Providers	Meetings/letters/email
Landowners	Meetings/letters/email
Developers with interest in the Parish	Meetings/letters/email
Neighbouring Parish/Town Councils	Meetings/letters/email
District Council	Meetings/letters/email
Sports Centres	Meetings/letters/email
Museums	Meetings/letters/email

The website will be used as the prime method of communicating with everyone.