

# Strategic Communications Plan

Lowestoft Town Council

## 1. Where are we?

### What is going well:

- Stronger use of brand identity
- Creating of eye-catching graphics for advertising
- Wider use of new IT systems to help with engagement and interaction (*Forms, Sways etc.*)

### What could be going better:

- Understanding of what the Town Council does
- Enhancement of two-way communication
- Delivering our messages in varied ways to reach more people

### Areas of focus for improvement in the future?

- Wider awareness and engagement with the Town Council
- Regular updates on what the Town Council is doing
- Different means of communication to enable more people to access Town Council information

## 2. Our strategy

### What is our purpose

Lowestoft Town Council aims to be a voice for the people of Lowestoft. Our aim is to provide high-quality facilities, such as our parks and open spaces, for everyone to enjoy, whilst listening to local people about local issues, and making Lowestoft a better place to live.

### What are our key goals

- To make Lowestoft a better place to live
- To provide high-quality facilities across our assets
- To restore community pride

### Our values

- We are a Council for everyone in Lowestoft
- We are climate conscious and environmentally friendly
- We are supportive of initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of our town's residents and visitors

### Briefly outline what 'success' would look like in three years time

Success would look like more people having an understanding of what the Town Council offers, with a wider engagement in meetings and Town Council activities/events. The Town Council should become something that the local people are proud of.

## Strategic objectives

- To improve awareness of what the Town Council does
- To increase the sense of “ownership” from the public in what the Town Council provides
- To ensure everything the Town Council does is for the betterment of the Town and its people, and that this is communicated to all

## 3. Our plan

### Use SWOT to identify priorities

- Regular communication of what the Town Council is doing (key works, grants etc.). This should be both internal and external. *There is an opportunity here with the new precept coming to fully engage the community with how the Town Council is spending its share.*
- Ensure more people are aware of Town Council meetings and how they can engage with them.
- Use communication methods in a diverse way, from print media to short film, online and in-person. *Opportunities to host engagement events, especially when consulting the public on projects. Utilise pre-existing circulation newsletters - potential for building an online newsletter following.*

### Set SMART Goals

- Produce regular communication to promote the Town Council’s work, including monthly updates, weekly stories and awareness campaigns
- Increase engagement between the Town Council and local residents
- Increase awareness of the Town Council’s work and how it compares to other local councils

### How will success be measured – KPIs

- More engagement with Town Council activities
  - increased numbers attending events and meetings,
  - higher viewership on YouTube and website
  - more interactions on social media.
- Increase in quality, quantity and variety of communications shared.
  - Achieve targets on quantity of communications per month/activity
- Greater understanding of what the Town Council does compared to other local councils
  - Increase in residents contacting the correct council to report issues
  - Decrease in comments on social media referring to “the council” as residents become more aware

## 4. Implementation

### Informing, explain and training

- All Councillors and Council Staff should be made aware of the current Town Council messaging around its work and projects. In the very least, all

Councillors and Staff should understand how the public can obtain the information they require.

- Any upcoming campaigns or promotions should be explained at the monthly Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting and shared internally via the Councillor and Staff Update.

### **Get the right tools in place**

- Website and Social Media Accounts (Facebook, Instagram etc.)
- Social Media Content Planner
- Council-owned phones for pictures and videos. Some additional equipment (such as microphones compatible with phones) may be required to improve the quality of videos, especially if voiceovers/interviews are included.
- Design Software (**currently using CANVA – this could be upgraded to premium package**)
- Press Release Templates
- Email Newsletter/Sway Templates
- Templates and suppliers for posters/banners etc.
- Gazebos, materials etc. for engagement events

### **Develop systems and procedures**

- Finding Stories
  - Grounds Team taking more “promotional” photos (rather than inspection photos) and videos
  - Sports in action
  - Heritage engagement
- Promoting the Town Council Meetings
  - Highlighting important meetings taking place
    - Decision needed on which meetings should be more actively publicised (***is it all, just committees, or Full Council?***) or if there are big agenda items that could have public comments submitted
  - Potential for creating meeting summaries – ***who will do this? What would this achieve?***
  - Next day promotion of important decisions
- Creating of campaigns
  - Scheduling of campaigns – theme, content, methods, outcomes, goals, review
  - Giving sufficient lead-in time for development of campaign (i.e. large campaigns, such as a Summer Holiday campaign)