

Record of Cabinet portfolio holder decision

Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Decision made by	Councillor Anna Badcock
Key decision?	Yes
Date of decision (same as date form signed)	16.12.2016
Name and job title of officer requesting the decision	Patsy Cusworth Principal Communications Officer
Officer contact details	Tel: 01235 422119 Email: patsy.cusworth@southandvale.gov.uk
Decision	To approve a joint communication strategy for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils. A copy of the strategy is attached at appendix one of this report.
Reasons for decision	<p>This is the first joint communication strategy for both councils. It sets out the structure, aims and objectives for communicating with our audiences, including helping to deliver the councils corporate plans, roles and responsibilities, our commitment to keeping customers and staff fully informed and encourages good practice both internally and externally.</p> <p>The councils are delivering a number of major milestones over the next two years, including finalising Local Plans, launching delivery plans for Didcot Garden Town and Berinsfield, promoting two Enterprise Zones and new leisure centres in Didcot and Wantage.</p> <p>These are important issues for our residents and local businesses. Therefore, it is vital that our stakeholders continue to feel informed about the councils' business, understand the benefits of any changes we are making and are aware of the positive impact our services are having.</p> <p>This communication strategy sets out how we are going to deliver our communications during the last quarter of 2016 and during 2017, and will then be reviewed and updated annually.</p>
Alternative options rejected	None.

Legal implications	Legal Services have commented on the communication strategy and there are no legal implications arising.			
Financial implications	There are some financial implications to two elements of the strategy; providing a more active approach to media handling and monitoring coverage, and analysing and recording in-depth data from our campaigns. These elements require additional funding which will be considered as part of the budget setting for 2017/18.			
Other implications	An Equality Impact Assessment has also been compiled and is attached at appendix two.			
Background papers considered	None			
Declarations/conflict of interest? Declaration of other councillor/officer consulted by the Cabinet member?				
List consultees		Name	Outcome	Date
	Ward councillors		n/a	
	Legal	Margaret Reed	Approved	30.11.2016
	Finance		n/a	
	Human resources		n/a	
	Sustainability		n/a	
	Diversity and equality	Cheryl Reeves	Refer to the equality impact assessment.	20.10.2016
	Communications	Patsy Cusworth	We will communicate the strategy to all staff over the coming weeks.	25.11.2016
	Strategic Management Board	Clare Kingston	Approved	25.11.2016
Confidential decision? If so, under which exempt category?	No.			
Call-in waived by Scrutiny Committee chairman?	No. A meeting of the joint scrutiny committee considered the communications strategy on 15 November 2016.			
Has this been discussed by Cabinet members?	Cabinet members considered the strategy at a cabinet briefing meeting on 8 November 2016.			
Cabinet portfolio holder's signature				

To confirm the decision as set out in this notice.	Signature _____ Councillor Anna Badcock _____ Date _____ 16 December 2016 _____
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ONCE SIGNED, THIS FORM MUST BE HANDED TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES IMMEDIATELY.

For Democratic Services office use only		
Form received	Date: 16 December 2016	Time: 15:45
Date published to all councillors	Date: 16 December 2016	
Call-in deadline	Date: 23 December 2016	Time: 17:00

Guidance notes

1. This form must be completed by the lead officer who becomes the contact officer. The lead officer is responsible for ensuring that the necessary internal consultees have signed it off. The lead officer must then seek the Cabinet portfolio holder's agreement and signature.
2. Once satisfied with the decision, the Cabinet portfolio holder must sign and date the form and return it to the lead officer who should send it to Democratic Services immediately to allow the call-in period to commence.
Tel. 01235 422520 or extension 2520.
Email: democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk
3. Democratic Services will then publish the decision to the website (unless it is confidential) and send it to all councillors to commence the call-in period (five clear working days) if it is a 'key' decision (see the definition of a 'key' decision below). A key decision cannot be implemented until the call-in period expires. The call-in procedure can be found in the council's constitution, part 4, under the Scrutiny Committee procedure rules.
4. Before implementing a key decision, the lead officer is responsible for checking with Democratic Services that the decision has not been called in.
5. If a key decision has been called in, Democratic Services will notify the lead officer and decision-maker. This call-in puts the decision on hold.
6. Democratic Services will liaise with the Scrutiny Committee chairman over the date of the call-in debate. The Cabinet portfolio holder will be requested to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting to answer the committee's questions.
7. The Scrutiny Committee may:
 - refer the decision back to the Cabinet portfolio holder for reconsideration or
 - refer the matter to Council with an alternative set of proposals (where the final decision rests with full Council) or
 - accept the Cabinet portfolio holder's decision, in which case it can be implemented immediately.

Key decisions: assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key'

The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' Constitutions now have the same definition of a key decision:

A key decision is a decision of the Cabinet, an individual Cabinet member, or an officer acting under delegated powers, which is likely:

- (a) to incur expenditure, make savings or to receive income of more than £75,000;**

- (b) to award a revenue or capital grant of over £25,000; or**
- (c) to agree an action that, in the view of the relevant strategic director, would be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward in the area of the council.**

Key decisions are subject to the scrutiny call-in procedure; non-key decisions are not and can be implemented immediately.

In assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key', you should consider:

- (a) Will the expenditure, savings or income total more than £75,000 across all financial years?
- (b) Will the grant award to one person or organisation be more than £25,000 across all financial years?
- (c) Does the decision impact on more than one district council ward? And if so, is the impact significant? If residents or property affected by the decision is in one ward but is close to the border of an adjacent ward, it may have a significant impact on that second ward, e.g. through additional traffic, noise, light pollution, odour. Examples of significant impacts on two or more wards are:
 - Decisions to spend Didcot Garden Town funds (significant impact on more than one ward)
 - Changes to the household waste collection policy (affects all households in the district)
 - Reviewing a housing strategy (could have a significant impact on residents in many wards)
 - Adopting a supplementary planning document for a redevelopment site (could significantly affect more than one ward) or a new design guide (affects all wards)
 - Decisions to build new or improve existing leisure facilities (used by residents of more than one ward)

The overriding principle is that before 'key' decisions are made, they must be published in the Cabinet Work Programme for 28 calendar days. Classifying a decision as non-key when it should be a key decision could expose the decision to challenge and delay its implementation.