



# Communications Strategy 2020-2022



*south*  
**AYRSHIRE**  
COUNCIL  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Deas



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OUR COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY IS ALIGNED TO THE

# 6 COMMITMENTS

OF OUR COUNCIL PLAN AND SETS OUT HOW WE WILL DEVELOP

## EFFECTIVE AND ENGAGING

COMMUNICATION WITH RESIDENTS, COMMUNITIES, EMPLOYEES AND PARTNERS TO PROMOTE THE SERVICES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE COUNCIL.

# OUR COUNCIL PLAN

We serve South Ayrshire every day, providing services which make a difference to our communities.

In 2018, we set out a clear and ambitious vision of what we want to achieve in our **Council Plan 2018-22**

Our ambitions are set against 6 key themes:



# INTRODUCTION

We want to make sure that our residents, communities, employees, partners and stakeholders know:

- Who we are – our purpose, vision and values**
- What we do – our services; our statutory obligations; our ambitions and commitments**
- Where and how to access or engage with our services or the Council**
- How we spend our budget to fund services and improve local communities**
- How we make a difference to residents and communities**
- Why we do what we do - why we are changing the way we work and the way we deliver some of our services**
- When we are proposing to make changes or decisions that affect people and how they can get involved**

# OUR COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

We communicate in many ways with thousands of people every week. Whatever the method, we will make sure that all of our communication is:

- In plain English, clear and easy to understand
- Accessible and inclusive
- Person centred and appropriate to our audience
- Two way, approachable and engaging
- Clear and accurate
- Up to date
- Consistent in style
- Honest
- Reliable and Regular



# KEY PRINCIPLES

- Effective communication is key to the successful day to day running of the Council, to engaging with residents, communities, partners and employees and to establishing and maintaining a positive and professional reputation.
- We are all responsible for the way we communicate.
- Each and every one of us - Elected Members, the Corporate Leadership Team, managers, employees and partners has a role to play to make sure we enhance the profile and reputation of South Ayrshire and the Council.
- Service Leads and Chief Officers play a key role in providing proactive, consistent and relevant information about the services they provide.
- Employees are responsible for keeping themselves up to date with what is happening across the Council. Services such as ICT play a key role in providing the technical expertise to modernise the ways in which we can communicate with employees and residents.



**The Communications team will support the delivery of this strategy, working with services to develop relevant, informative and engaging communication and branding which enhance the reputation of the council.**

# HOW WE'RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE

We are continuously trying to change and improve the ways in which we communicate and engage with people – residents, communities, partners and employees.

In the last 12 months we have transformed the way we tell our story, explain who we are and what we do and celebrate our successes



South Ayrshire Council Live Magazine issued to local residents



We have massively increased reach and engagement on our social media channels – Twitter; Facebook and Instagram.

We are using social media in many different ways



We're communicating more using video and visual art



We are streamlining our branding



We engage regularly with the media



We are changing the way we communicate and engage with employees including a new intranet, 'The Core'

## Strategic Goal 1

# TELLING OUR STORY

We will develop **engaging** communications which **tell the Council's stories** and generate **interest, awareness and pride** in what the Council and its partners are achieving and which **increase the profile and reputation** of South Ayrshire and the Council.

We will-

- Provide residents with relevant, accurate and timely information about the council, the services we provide and how they can get involved in shaping decisions;
- Promote the positive work of the Council, teams and individual employees and the difference they make to residents every day;
- Listen to managers, employees, residents and stakeholders on their preferred communication options and adapt our communication methods where possible to suit their diverse needs;
- Introduce new ways to reach residents who don't have digital access;
- Introduce a framework to ensure planned corporate and targeted campaigns are effective, efficient and evaluated;
- Seek to maintain good relations with the media and increase proactive TV and radio coverage;
- Provide regular information on situations which are urgent or constantly changing;
- Ensure our communications are accessible and can be made available in a range of formats.



## Strategic Goal 2

# SOCIAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA

We will maximise the use of **social media** as a key **proactive, interactive and reactive** communications tool.

We will-

- Keep growing our social media audience and streamline the number of corporate social media accounts we operate to maximise reach and followers;
- Use social media platforms to engage a wider and more diverse audience;
- Make sure our social media content is engaging and informative;
- Use social media as a key tool to communicate breaking news and give immediate updates on critical or changing situations;
- Use social media and digital applications to make it easier for residents and employees to ask questions and give us their feedback, ideas and suggestions;
- Make sure social media training and guidance is in place for Elected Members, managers and employees.



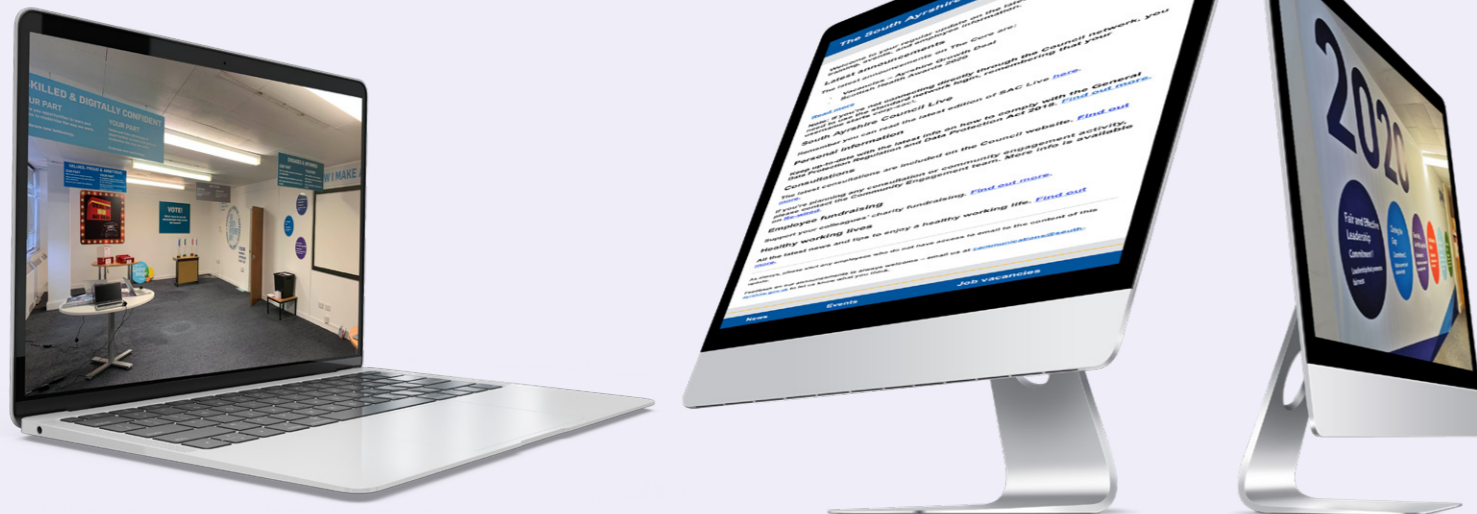
### Strategic Goal 3

## OUR EMPLOYEES

We will make sure our employees are involved and engaged and can access the information they need.

We will-

- Introduce a range of digital methods to communicate with employees and to help ensure they are first to hear about Council news;
- Provide a range of ways to encourage and support staff to share ideas, suggestions; stories and successes and to generate a sense of pride in the work they and the Council do;
- Communicate with employees to make sure they engage with the vision, values and direction of the Council and understand their role in achieving the council's ambitions.





## Strategic Goal 4

# OUR CORPORATE BRAND & IDENTITY

We will develop a strong, consistent and recognisable Council brand and identity.

We will-

- Develop a clear and recognisable brand to promote the Council's vision and values and to align with the Council Plan and ambitions;
- Streamline the current proliferation of brands.



# DELIVERING THIS STRATEGY – OUR CORPORATE ACTION PLAN

We will develop **engaging** communications which **tell the Council’s stories** and generate **interest, awareness and pride** in what the Council and its partners are achieving and which **increase the profile and reputation** of South Ayrshire and the Council.

## Strategic Goal 1

Action	Responsibility	Success Measure	Timescales		
			2020	2021	2022
Promote the positive work of the Council, teams and individual employees and the difference they make to residents every day.	Corporate Leadership Team; Service Leads; Employees; Communications team.	Data on the number of positive campaigns run and on the evaluation of their effectiveness shows that residents are better informed on the range of services and positive work provided by the Council.  SAC Live online magazine is produced on a monthly basis.  A targeted public communications campaign supporting the launch of the Council’s vision, values and purpose is designed and in place.  Communication and engagement and promotion of Council services, what they do and the difference they make is embedded within Service Plans and service planning process.			
Listen to managers, employees, residents and stakeholders on their preferred communication options and adapt our communication methods where possible to suit their diverse needs.	Corporate Leadership Team; Service Leads; Employees; Communications team.	People can access information about the Council in a range of ways.  Communication is accessible and inclusive.  Surveys and engagement with residents and employees tell us the type of information they are interested in and their preferred channels and feedback is used to develop future communications.			
Provide residents with relevant, accurate and timely information about the council, the services we provide and how they can get involved in shaping decisions.	Corporate Leadership Team; Service Leads; Employees; Communications team.	We are first to tell council news - Service Leads/ CLT provide regular, proactive and timely information for the Communications team to create engaging messages, information and campaigns.  Corporate and service web pages are up to date and engaging.  There is increased use of digital methods to reach and engage with residents and customers.  Feedback from surveys and social media analytics show that residents are more informed on how the Council works.  A campaign, including a series of short videos explaining how the Council works, the decision making process and how residents can get involved is in place.			
Introduce a framework to ensure planned corporate and targeted campaigns are effective, efficient and evaluated.	Communications Team.	Campaigns follow the recognised OASIS (Objectives; Audience; Strategy; Implement; Scoring & Evaluation) model and have clear objectives, target audiences and success measures. All campaigns are evaluated using this model.			

# DELIVERING THIS STRATEGY – OUR CORPORATE ACTION PLAN

We will maximise the use of **social media** as a key **proactive, interactive and reactive** communications tool.

## Strategic Goal 2

Action	Responsibility	Success Measure	Timescales		
			2020	2021	2022
Grow our social media audience.	Communications Team.	Increased reach, followers and engagement.	→	→	→
Streamline the number of corporate social media accounts to ensure a more joined-up approach and to maximise reach and followers.	Communications Team/ Service Leads.	Clear guidelines in place for use of niche accounts. Niche accounts which are not maintained have been suspended. SAC Live social media sites are the predominant sites used to communicate information to the public.	→	→	
Use social media platforms to engage a wider and more diverse audience.	Communications Team.	Social media analytics show increased reach and diversity of audience. Social media channels are used strategically to target particular audiences e.g. Instagram stories for young people.	→	→	→
Develop engaging and informative social media content.	Communications Team.	There is increased use of engaging content such as infographics; animations and short videos. Social media analytics show positive engagement and reach.	→	→	→
Use social media as a key tool to communicate breaking news and give immediate updates on important changing situations.	Communications Team/ Corporate Leadership Team/ Service Leads.	Council decisions are proactively published on social media and online as soon as they are approved. CLT and Service Leads provide information proactively.	→	→	→
Use social media and digital applications to make it easier for residents and employees to ask questions and give us their feedback, ideas and suggestions.	Communications Team/ Service Leads/ Corporate Leadership Team.	New interactive tools such as Facebook polls are in place. Data on engagement and response rates shows increased participation.	→	→	→
Co-ordinate social media training and guidance for Elected Members; managers and employees.	Communications Team.	Social media guidance is in place. Elected Members, managers and employees are clear on the potential of Social Media and its appropriate use.	→	→	→

# DELIVERING THIS STRATEGY – OUR CORPORATE ACTION PLAN

We will make sure our employees are involved and engaged.

## Strategic Goal 3

Action	Responsibility	Success Measure	Timescales		
			2020	2021	2022
Communicate with employees to make sure they engage with the vision, values and direction of the Council and understand their role in achieving the Council's ambitions.	Corporate Leadership Team/ Service Leads/ Communications Team.	A targeted employee communications campaign is in place to support the launch and implementation of the Council's vision, values and purpose.  Campaigns are in place to celebrate and promote the work of employees and teams internally and externally.			→
Introduce a range of methods to communicate and engage with all employees to help ensure employees are first to hear about Council news.	ICT/ Communications Team / Digital Services.	Every employee can access relevant and appropriate information digitally.  Employees can keep themselves informed and up to date on Council news.  Employee surveys and focus groups are used to gain an understanding of the information and communication they would like to receive.			→
Provide a range of ways to encourage and support staff to share ideas, suggestions; stories and successes and to generate a sense of pride in the work they and the Council do.	Corporate Leadership Team/ Service Leads/ Communications Team/Digital Services.	Every employee can access ways to give feedback, make suggestions or share ideas.			→

# DELIVERING THIS STRATEGY – OUR CORPORATE ACTION PLAN

We will develop a strong, consistent and recognisable Council brand and identity.

## Strategic Goal 4

Action	Responsibility	Success Measure	Timescales		
			2020	2021	2022
Develop a clear and recognisable brand to promote the Council's vision and values and to align with the Council plan and ambitions.	Communications Team.	Visible branding is in place including on vehicles; in public buildings; office spaces and signage. We have clear brand guidelines which are consistently applied across all applicable communication.		→	
Review and streamline the current proliferation of brands associated with the Council.	Communications Team.	There is a reduction in the number of distinct brands used by Council services. There is a common and corporate theme running through each Council brand.			→

This information can be made available, on request, in braille, large print or audio formats and can be translated into a range of languages. Contact details are provided below.

درخواست کرنے پر یہ معلومات ناپیدنا افراد کے لئے اُبھرے حروف، بڑے حروف یا آڈیو میں مہیا کی جاسکتی ہے اور اسکا مختلف زبانوں میں ترجمہ بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ رابطہ کی تفصیلات نیچے فراہم کی گئی ہیں۔

本信息可应要求提供盲文，大字印刷或音频格式，以及可翻译成多种语言。以下是详细联系方式。

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ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਬੋਲ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਣਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਰਪ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਲਈ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ, ਅਤੇ ਇਹਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਹੋਰ ਬੋਲੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ।

Niniejsze informacje mogą zostać udostępnione na życzenie, w alfabecie Braille'a, w druku powiększonym lub w formacie audio oraz mogą zostać przetłumaczone na wiele języków obcych. Dane kontaktowe znajdują się poniżej.

Faodar am fiosrachadh seo fhaighinn, le iarrtas, ann am braille, clò mòr no clàr fuaim agus tha e comasach eadar-theangachadh gu grunn chànanan. Tha fiosrachadh gu h-ìosal mu bhith a' cur fios a-steach.

## South Ayrshire Council Making a Difference Every Day

[www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

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