



Category: Public Sector Team of the Year

Company: Fareham Borough Council

Number of staff employed - including executive / support staff - and annual public relations budget, showing areas directly under the control of the team:

Fareham Borough Council has a small Communications Team including five full-time and one part-time member of staff. Between them they look after media relations, social media, content creation, branding, public consultation, events/exhibitions, and emergency planning communications. The team's budget is £69,500.

Business objectives and analysis of team performance against budget over the past 12 months:

The team's business objectives are linked to the Council's commitment to inform and engage residents during its decision-making process.

Its core objectives in the past 12 months have been to:

Increase its social media presence and engage residents using social platforms

The Council's Facebook page had a total reach of 1.8m and 3.7m post impressions. Post likes have increase by more than 1,000. On Twitter, the Council gained 611 new followers, was mentioned 3k times and had 800k post impressions.

Produce engaging visual content for web, social media and print

Videos made in-house for YouTube received 14,307 views across the year and were shared 158 times.

Generate positive coverage in the media

From June 2017 to June 2018 the Council's Communications Team secured approximately 900 positive or neutral stories in the media.

Increase response rates to public consultations

Innovation in public consultation tactics resulted in an increase in the number of responses received in the past 12 months as well as evidence that people had a greater understanding about consultation topics. This success was highlighted most in the Draft Local Plan campaign (see summary below).

Increasing numbers of young people have become involved in the democratic process and decision making through consultations and engagement at an ever earlier age during the last 12 months. Innovative approaches such as the Play Area Game (see below) have greatly increased rates of involvement amongst young residents. Engaging school visits have also inspired young people to take part in consultation activities such as the naming of a new park.

A brief overview of business / team strategy:

The team is clear that in order to meet customer needs it must target them with the best communication methods. This has fed into the planning of campaign tactics to

ensure Council priorities, objectives, values and ambitions are understood by its residents, workforce, local businesses and other stakeholders.

We are committed to providing clear and consistent communications, and engaging each audience in a way that is accessible to them.

A summary of commitment to CPD and professionalism:

All team members responsible for media relations, social media and content creation are CIPR members and participate in CPD. One member of staff holds the CIPR Diploma and another is about to embark on the course. Three team members are undertaking media and business administration apprenticeships while three members receive regular consultation training.

A summary of recent outstanding achievements:

Some highlights in the past year:

Play Area consultation game: this fun activity replaced a consultation form and captures children's playground design ideas in a game that can be played on a desktop, tablet or smartphone. This has greatly increased response rates to play area consultations.

Daedalus 100 event: organising a sold out community event, attended by over 3,000 people to mark 100 years of aviation at the former Royal Navy airfield, Daedalus. The event generated positive media coverage and interaction on social media, helping showcase investment in redeveloping the airfield as an aviation and business hub.

Local Plan 2036 consultation: running a successful campaign alongside the statutory consultation for the Council's Draft Local Plan 2036, which smashed its KPIs and previous consultation engagement stats. See below.

A summary of a campaign you are particularly proud of, including details of the brief, objectives, strategy, tactics, outputs, outcomes and budget:

Between October and December 2017 the Council undertook a public consultation on its Local Plan 2036 which proposed 11,300 new homes in the borough of Fareham.

The Communication Team's aim was to run a campaign alongside the statutory consultation that would help people understand an emotive and complicated issue, and be interested enough to engage positively.

Objective and KPIs:

1. Inform residents by providing them with clear, accessible information:
 - 5,000 people to read paper edition of Special Draft Local Plan edition of Council Magazine Fareham Today and 3,000 people to read online version
 - 15,000 reach on Facebook
 - 2,000 impressions on Twitter
 - 300 people to view interactive consultation Story Map
 - 200 to view promotional consultation animation.
2. Engaging with residents to maximise responses:
 - 1,200 people to attend an exhibition/public meeting
 - 1,000 comment forms
 - 1,700 individual comments.

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning

Historically, planning consultations are complicated resulting in hardly any genuine engagement. The last time the Council consulted on its Local Plan in 2012 it received 137 responses.

As all residents in the Borough will be impacted by the proposals it was important to generate discussion to help foster a joint ownership of the plan. We specifically wanted to target over 65s and young people and families as they will be most impacted.

Strategy and tactics

Use simple, straight-forward language

Devise key messages with specific messages for target groups

Exploit online and offline media channels with a wide range of platform-specific content

Undertake face-to-face engagement in areas of high-footfall

Make taking part simple and painless

Respond quickly to questions.

Our tactics included: social media, publications, exhibitions, onsite notices, promotional literature and digital content.

Outputs

Social media: content to engage residents - video, a Story Map and Quiz promoted using Facebook (paid).

Print: a special edition of the Council's magazine Fareham Today.

Exhibitions: at shopping centres, public meetings. schools and community centres.

Notices: posted on each site proposed for development

Flyers and posters: distributed across the Borough and bus stops.

Generated an online comments form: allowing people to feedback within a couple of clicks - a consultation first for Fareham.

Providing consultation feedback: a Special Edition of Fareham Today sent to all residents in March 2018 outlining what happens next.

Real homes for real people video: showcasing real-life stories of residents' housing need.

Searchable comments: all comments published in an easy to navigate format online.

Outcomes

Communicating with residents (KPI comparison in brackets):

- 12,000 copies of paper edition of Special Draft Local Plan Fareham Today issued (+240%) and 6,153 people read online (+205%)
- Facebook: 38,735 people reached (+257%)
- Twitter: 7,987 impressions (+399%)
- Interactive Story Map: 745 views (+248%)
- Animation: 818 views (+409%)

Engagement with residents:

- 1,700 people attended an exhibition/public meeting (+141%)
- 2,535 comments forms completed (+253%)
- 4,500 individual comments submitted (+265%)

Budget and cost effectiveness

Total budget: £20,000.