

**MAKING THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS:
REVIEW OF COMMUNICATIONS AND CONSULTATION STRATEGY
(Report by Head of Policy)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Effective communications are an important feature of any successful organisation, and an essential measure of success in modern local government.
- 1.2 This report provides an opportunity for the Cabinet to consider a revised communications and consultation strategy for the District Council.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 A communications and consultation strategy 'Making the Right Connections' was adopted in April 2003. Among the factors influencing the development of the strategy was the publication of a series of reports by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Local Government Association, the Improvement and Development Agency, and the Audit Commission that identified a strong business case for investing in communications.
- 2.2 Subsequently external reviews such as the Investors in People re-assessment and the Comprehensive Performance Assessment have highlighted areas for development, principally concerning internal communications. Since then work has taken place to review both our strategic approach to communications and consultation and to activities and practices across the Council.
- 2.3 The revised strategy is intended to provide a framework for the Council's corporate communications on a structured and consistent basis, with the aim of earning the understanding and support of our key audiences, to support high quality service delivery and to help ensure that we have a good reputation. The attached action plan sets out some of the key activities that will help to achieve the outcomes in the strategy and contribute to the Council's wider priorities. The action plan will be reviewed annually and will contribute to detailed service planning.
- 2.4 The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery & Resources) have recommended that the revised Strategy should be endorsed, subject to a number of minor textual amendments which have been incorporated into the attached Strategy.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Cabinet are invited to adopt the Communications and Consultation Strategy and associated action plan.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

'Making the Right Connections' communications and consultation strategy
CPA inspection report, Audit Commission

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