

Committee: Policy & Resources	Date: 19 January 2023
Subject: Draft High-Level Business Plan 2023/24 – Communications (Town Clerks)	Public
Report of: Bob Roberts	For Decision
Report author: Sheldon Hind	

Summary

This report presents for approval the high-level Business Plan for the Corporate Communications Team, managed as part of the Town Clerk's Department, for 2023/24.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- i. Approve the departmental Business Plan 2023/24.

Main Report

Background

1. As part of the new framework for corporate and business planning, departments were asked to produce standardised high-level, two-side Business Plans for the first time in 2017 for the 2018/19 year. Members generally welcomed these high-level plans for being brief, concise, focused and consistent statements of the key ambitions and objectives for every department.
2. For 2023/24, the high-level Business Plan has been further evolved to add more narrative and improve readability. The Business Plan now incorporates TOM departmental structure changes.

Draft final high-level Business Plan for 2023/24

3. This report presents, at Appendix 1, the draft final high-level Business Plan for 2023/24 for the Corporate Communications Team, managed as part of the Town Clerk's Department.

The priorities set out align as expected to the Corporate Plan and ongoing corporate strategy but also adapt to changes in the past year. These include the development of Destination City, the need for greater City-wide engagement and a programme of internal communications to address issues arising from the Staff Survey, high level initiatives around financial consolidation and any requests from the new Town Clerk.

As might be expected, the greater part of the Team's resources are expended in the Corporate Affairs and Media Teams which incur costs such as venue hire, event organisation, advertising support and out of hours work – all of which can have significant reputational risk if not managed and resourced appropriately.

The Media Team provides a weekly report on the financial/advertising equivalent of its media coverage and an analysis of the social media activity that has gained the most traction. Within the Publishing Team, Internal Communications tracks performance (both corporate and local) through staff surveys but also informal feedback through the Staff and Internal Communications networks. Corporate Affairs uses both formal (the Committee reporting system) and informal, ad hoc channels to report on both event feedback and political analysis to help shape internal strategy in this area.

The issue of resident, business and worker engagement has still to be agreed with Members both in terms of direction and scope. A need has been identified to reset relations with residents especially around consultation but also with workers in relation to voter registration, election turnout and City involvement more generally.

4. Staff in the Communications Team are solely located in Guildhall. As part of the Town Clerk's Department, the Team's share of this asset is considered to be fully utilised, with a greater number of officers than desks and "hot-desking" used by the different sections.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

All of the workstreams and Priorities List will align to the Corporate Plan.

Security implications

N/A

Financial implications

As the Draft Plan sets out, funding is in place for the Priorities List with the exception of the campaign to increase stakeholder engagement. This will be the subject of a report to the Communications and Corporate Affairs Sub Committee to consider along with any associated costs.

Public sector equality duty

All the services and functions covered in the report are committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and will continue to enable the organisation to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resourcing implications

Depending on any decision relating to stakeholder engagement there may be resources issues in this area. There may also be a push for greater internal communications given the new Town Clerk and Chief Executive, high level initiatives needing cascading and staff survey work and this could have an effect on resources.

Conclusion

This report presents the high-level Business Plan for 2023/24 for the Corporate Communications Team for Members to consider and approve.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Final high-level Business Plan 2023/24

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