

## Briefing Paper - Implementation of the Community Engagement and Empowerment Strategy

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### Background

The Council Redesign and Accessibility Review Panel, at its meeting on 18 November 2021, received an update on the implementation of the Council's Community Engagement and Empowerment Strategy. At that meeting, panel members requested:

- Detailed costings of the community engagement officers and activities for the past 12 to 18 months e.g. advertising, staff numbers, how money has been spent and how has this improved engagement;
- Performance information on the communication and engagement activity targets identified in the Business Plan for the Policy, Performance and Community Engagement Team.

This briefing paper sets out the information requested.

### Activity associated undertaken by Community Engagement Officers

The staffing structure of the Policy, Performance and Community Engagement Team is shown in Appendix 1.

The Council has two Community Engagement Officers who took up their posts on 1 December 2020 and 1 February 2021. They were both formally experienced Communications Officers with the Council and, given that as an organisation we were still responding to Covid-19, some of their time at the start of their contracts as Community Engagement Officers was spent undertaking more traditional communications works.

(In addition, support was also provided around internal engagement ahead of the recruitment of an internal engagement officer which included regular returning-to-the-office communications and support in updating and creating the meeting and breakout rooms.)

The team also includes a Partnership Development Manager who is seconded from Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust.

The activity undertaken over the past year is set out in Appendix 2.

A breakdown of the costings is set out below:

Description	Cost (21/22)	Impact
2 fte Community Engagement Officers	£83,160	Extended the breadth, reach and quality of engagement in Torbay Supported teams across the Council to engage differently

		Implemented new community enablement initiatives Provided support to the Communications Team to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic
0.83 fte Support Officer	£26,083	Ensures questionnaires are appropriately worded Provides analysis of results to inform decision making
Hire of Scala Hall for Tree Warden induction	£65	Provided opportunity for training within Brixham
Photography associated with festoon lights switch-on	£150	Promoting investment in resort infrastructure to the wider community Working towards improving the Council's reputation
Social media marketing platform licences	£150	Enables social media content to be planned and programmed Enables analysis of social media posts
Advertising in Beach Hut Magazine	£8736	Council communication reaching 20,000 households per month (hard copy)

## Performance Information

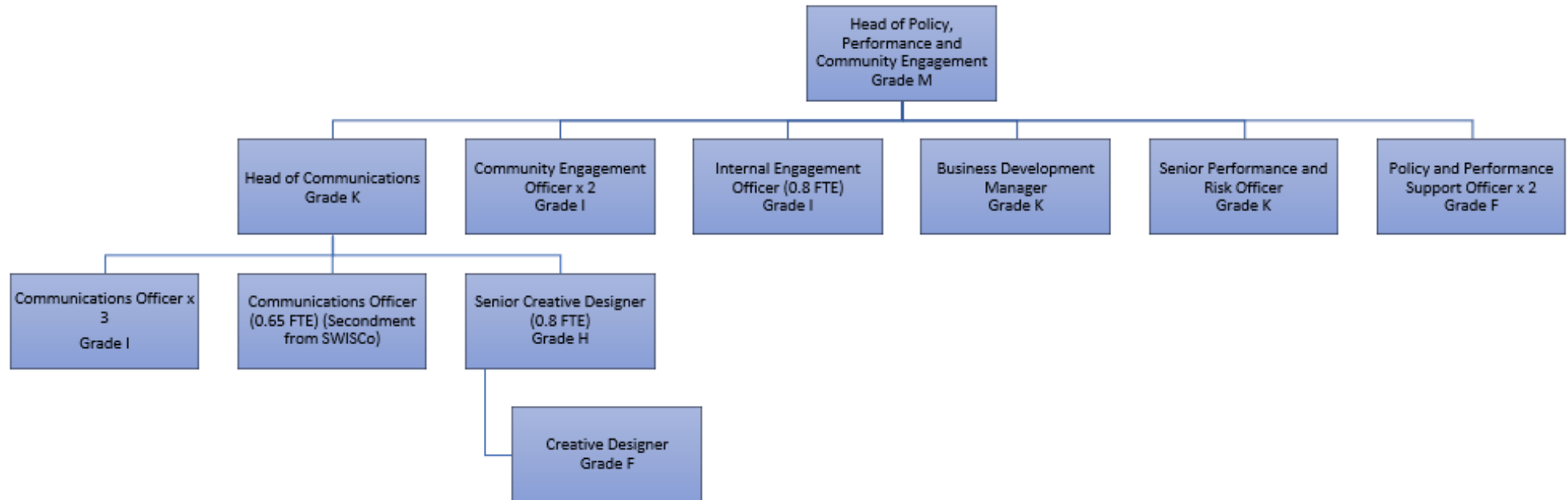
The performance indicators within the Policy, Performance and Community Engagement Business Plan for 2021/2022 (as they relate to engagement activity are shown in the table below) together with the actual performance.

Standard/Indicator ID	Standard/Indicator	Link to Community & Corporate Plan or other Outcome	Current Standard/Indicator Performance (Value)	Target Performance for Standard/Indicator (Value)	Actual Performance (by 31 March 2022)
PPCE03	Reach and Open Rate of One Torbay (weekly e-newsletter)	Informing the public about the Council's ambitions and priorities and the progress against the same.	February 2021 Total subscribers = 7556 Open rate = 54.9%	Total subscribers = 8500 Open Rate = 58%	Total subscribers = 8,485 Open rate = 53%  (Remedial actions: A content plan for One Torbay is currently being prepared which will provide a "storyboard" of content based around our priorities. Better use will be made of the evaluation data available so that we can focus on stories which matter to residents.)

PPCE04	Views, Reach and Reactions to Facebook Live events	Informing the public about the Council's ambitions and priorities and the progress against the same.  Enabling our communities.	Peak Number of Live Viewers = 82  Total Number of Views = 2000 (after 7 days)  Reactions = 310  Reach = 2,827 (after 24 hours)	Peak Number of Live Viewers = 90  Total Number of Views = 2200 (after 7 days)  Reactions = 340  Reach = 3,100 (after 24 hours)	Peak Number of Live Viewers = 107 (Torbay Road/Torwood Street)  Total Number of Views = 2000 (after 7 days) (Safe, Clean and Green Bay)  Reactions = 355 (Budget 2022/2023)  Reach = 2,875 (after 24 hours) (Budget 2022/2023)
PPCE05	Attendance rates and feedback from Annual Community Conference	Enabling our communities.	Attendance = 118  Feedback:  Pace and interaction of event was good or excellent = 47%  Quality of speakers was good or excellent = 67%  Breakout sessions were good or excellent = 0%*	Attendance = 130  Feedback:  Pace and interaction of event was good or excellent = 60%  Quality of speakers was good or excellent = 80%  Breakout sessions were good or excellent = 60%	Attendance = 90 (although numbers were limited due to Covid restrictions)  Feedback:  Pace and interaction of event was good or excellent = 91%  Quality of speakers was good or excellent = 96%  Breakout sessions were good or

					excellent (Question not asked)
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## Appendix 1: Staffing Structure of Policy, Performance and Community Engagement Team



## Appendix 2: Community engagement activity (1 March 2021 to date)

- Community Ward Fund
    - 2021/2022 scheme launched and administered
    - Majority of schemes have now been undertaken
    - One of the unexpected benefits was the relationships built between the Council, SWISCo, Members and the Community Partnerships.
    - Lessons learnt exercise undertaken and 2022/2023 scheme developed
    - 2022/2023 scheme launched
  - Community Fund
    - Agreement reached about operation of the scheme
    - Discussions included streamlining a number of the different community funds operated by the Council
    - Micro grants element to be administered as an extension of the Public Health Small Grants fund via Torbay Community Development Trust
    - Community Action Grants element to be launched by end of June 2022
    - One-off applications approved during the course of the year
  - Crowdfund Torbay
    - Took on the running of the Crowdfund Torbay account
    - Pledges managed and approved via panel
    - Targeted communications about the scheme
  - Engagement and consultation activity
    - Paignton and Preston Sea Wall/Paignton Public Realm
      - Initial consultation paused as a result of community feedback
      - Task group established
      - Co-ordinated the procurement process for consultants
      - New engagement co-designed with consultants
      - For Phase 1 - set up and ran 18 focus groups and workshops with council officers, members of the community, key stakeholders and with the general public – online and in person.
      - Phase 1 results – 220 completed forms from 350 participants. 120 attendees at the focus groups and workshops
      - Planning for Phase 2 – replicate phase 1
    - Open Spaces Strategy
      - In summer 2021 we ran an Open Spaces survey, which had 443 responses, and reached more than 20,000 people on Facebook.
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- We took a 'blank page' approach, seeking views on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to Torbay's open spaces
- Initial discussions took place with major stakeholders including Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust and Wild Planet Trust, with plans for further engagement in the future.
- The feedback from this survey is just the first step and will be used to help shape a new long term Open Spaces strategy for Torbay.
- Carbon Neutral Action Plan
  - The Council agreed its new Carbon Neutral Action Plan and Policy in March 2022 and is now working with a range of partners from public, private and community sector through the new Torbay Climate Partnership to develop a Torbay-wide Carbon Neutral Action Plan.
  - Following the Community Conference in November 2021 which focused on climate change, a series of themed 'Climate Conversations' are taking place in Torbay over the next couple of months to identify priorities for tackling climate change and there will then be a full public consultation in the autumn.
  - This will also help inform the future Open Spaces Strategy.
- Open Spaces Strategy (443 responses)
  - Discussions with major stakeholders including Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust and Wild Planet Trust
- Active Travel
  - We are currently working with our partners at Sustrans on a number of proposed projects to enable people to become more active and travel by foot, bike, scooter or public transport. To reach the right people, a new approach to engagement was needed. Highlights include:
    - A 'Street Party' consultation event for local residents and businesses in Winner, Street, Paignton, to identify priorities to make the street a more attractive, safer, place to visit and live.
    - A consultation on improvements to Marine Drive to develop a widened pavement between Preston and Paignton greens as well as a new crossing and improvements to existing ones and a new 20mph zone. The consultation was done at the same time as engagement on creating a safer route for people on foot, cycle and wheels for Torbay Road at Hollicombe.
    - Two ongoing Active Travel projects for Brixham including engagement led by Furzeham Primary School to create a safer and more attractive environment for children, parents and carers to walk, cycle and wheel to and from school. The other project is Safer Routes for Brixham and following an initial online engagement event in the summer of 2021, work is ongoing to create and test interventions for a safe and accessible route for everyone connecting Brixham with the edge of Paignton



- Future of Parkfield
  - Co-design of future options, starting with a Visioning Event with 41 attendees
  - One-to-one discussions with stakeholders
  - Launch of framework agreement against which to seek proposals from community partners
  - Ongoing engagement with key community representatives.
  - Design and launch process to identify partner(s) to take over management and development of the site
- Equality Objectives
- Nightingale Park Solar Park (132 responses)
  - Targeted online consultation generated 27 responses
  - 81 residents attended the open event which was held with details of the proposals
  - A further 24 emails were received with feedback
- Local Plan Housing Growth (1,353 responses)
  - Targeted activity aimed at reaching young people, those in temporary accommodation and those on the Devon Choice Waiting List.
  - A good cross section of age groups responded
  - Two lengths of surveys were created to capture as many different audiences as possible.
  - Used social media polls to capture initial thoughts
- Budget 2023/2024 (150 responses)
- Preston Down Road (188 responses)
- Torbay Road, Paignton (260 responses)
  - Designed in consultation with partners (including the Community Partnership).
  - Included face-to-face consultation
- 12-14 The Strand (Debenhams)/Torquay Harbour Public Realm (494 responses)
  - Open day
- Personal Social Services Survey for Adult Carers in England 2021
- Adult Social Care Survey 2022
- Ask Us Facebook Lives

	Peak Live Views	Views	Reactions
21 July 2020 (Covid-19)	73	2,100	80

27 April 2021 (Safe, clean and green Bay)	82	2,000	311
28 June 2021 (Covid/Summer Readiness/Homelessness)	43	1,300	159
2 December 2021 (Torwood Street/Torbay Road) – Joint with Network Rail	107	1,594	123
2 February 2022 (Budget 2022/2023)	82	1,700	355

- As a result of one of the Ask Us Facebook Lives, a “community walk round” was undertaken in Ellacombe as issues were raised a number of times
- Creation of content for One Torbay – weekly e-newsletter and monthly article in Beach Hut magazine.
- Relationship building with a number of green spaces groups, including Friends of Clennon Lakes, Green Spaces Forum, Friends of parks groups
- Great British Spring Clean
  - 28 May-13 June 2021: 135 volunteers take part in 13 events with 35 black sacks, 1 dumpy bag and a plastic dinghy full of litter and recycling. The events were community organised with support from the Council and SWISCo.
  - 2022: We took a different approach this year and focused on two main SWISCo organised events held jointly with WeSup, Flshcombe Cove Café, Torbay Cleaner Coasts Initiative, 365 Sea Swim Challenge, and Me and the Plastic Sea. Across the two days, there were 63 participants with ages ranging from 4 to 75, and 15 bags of rubbish were collected.
- Tree warden scheme implemented
  - More than 80 people have signed up to be Tree Wardens
  - Tree warden training/induction sessions held with support from the Tree Council and Treecomonics
  - Development of planting schemes with community partners
    - Planting at Galmpton
    - Covid Memorial Tree Trail
    - Platinum Jubilee Tree Planting
- Portage Facebook Group established
  - Enables service users to create their own community to support each other
  - Consideration will be given to how we roll out to other areas within the Council
- Ward Facilitator scheme
  - Details available on our website

- Background information has been shared with Community Partnerships
- Community Builders tasked with contacting Ward Facilitators
- “Communities” section of the website [www.torbay.gov.uk/building-stronger-communities](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/building-stronger-communities) updated and continues to be under review
- Third Community Conference arranged and held about Torbay’s Response to Climate Change
  - 90 members of the public, partner organisations and council officers attended
  - Contingency plans were put in place should the event need to become virtual
  - In person event held (having been postponed from September to November)
  - Conference tied into a series of activities/promotions related to COP26.
  - Overall positive feedback
- Outline for Covid Celebration Event in September prepared
  - The event was postponed given the increase in cases in the Bay and the public health guidance on Council-run events
  - Preparations now underway for a smaller event are part of the Jubilee weekend
- Significant amount of work has been undertaken by the team in relation to the summer season and the ongoing impacts of Covid etc – toilets, litter bins, recycling and waste delays.
  - This has included discussions between the comms, web and info compliance teams to ensure that consistent messaging is being used when responding to customers via social media.
- Posters designed and installed in Debenhams windows to show how the Town Deal funding will be utilised for town centre regeneration. These designs will be rolled out across Torbay as different schemes come online.
- Support in relation to communication and engagement for the procurement of OYO and Richmond House Hotel for temporary and key staff accommodation.
- Work to encourage an increase in recycling rates
  - Filming for three recycling videos
  - Provide critical friend challenge on the work programme of the Recycling Co-ordinators.
  - Design of new campaign Right Stuff, Right Box
- Support for the new Agatha Christie artwork for the harbour area
  - Website produced including videos of the artists
  - Public vote to choose the winning artist (over 3100 votes cast)
- Launch of Spaces to Thrive website
- Social media support for major roadworks schemes
  - Commenced with Torwood Street and Torbay Road
  - Evaluation undertaken throughout in order to adapt how the community is engaged over the remaining timescale

- Responding to concerns raised by businesses on Torwood Street, support/challenge to businesses
- As a result of the work undertaken on Torwood Street, SWISCo Highways Team have provided a list of future “major” roadwork schemes and are seeking early views on how best to engage
- Consideration is being given to preparation a model consultation and engagement plan which will make use of the evaluation of the Torwood Street/Torbay Road engagement.
- Review of Community Engagement and Enablement Strategy undertaken and 2022/2023 Action Plan prepared (to be incorporated in the Project Plan for Our Communities Project)
- Engagement support for Torbay Place Leadership Board
  - Created web pages
  - Launched Torbay Story
  - Set up, promoted and ran the initial Torbay Story Champions events
  - Planning for future Champions events
  - Built a database of over 300 people to keep up to date about the story and the Champions event
  - Built relationships internally and externally to raise the profile of the story
- Preparation of Engagement and Communications Plan to support the implementation of the SEND Written Statement of Action
- Work within the multi-agency response for Ukrainian refugees and asylum seekers
- Put in place arrangements for Civic switch-on and associated communications for new festoon lighting
- Development of a business case for Employer Supported Volunteering Scheme (still in draft)
- Development of a multi-sector Sustainable Food Partnership and co-production of a vision and charter for Torbay
- Co-ordinated the celebration event for Brendon Prince’s return from The Long Paddle