

***** DRAFT *****

**COMMUNICATION & MEDIA
CENTRE**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S
DEPARTMENT**

**Annual Business Unit Operational
Plan
2008/9**

SECTION 1: SERVICE PROFILE

PURPOSE OF THE SERVICE

The purpose of the Communications & Media Centre is to lead on communications across the authority and take responsibility for implementing the Communications Strategy. This is to ensure that the Kent residents are informed and knowledgeable about the services provided, understand how to access those relevant to them and how to access Kent County Council generally.

The unit also ensures that communications across all channels - media, internal, print, web, marketing and events – and KCC branding are cohesive and present a one organisation approach. This avoids confusion and information overload for the general public and allows for links to be made between activities across the organisation.

Additionally, support, guidance and advice is provided to the rest of the organisation on the production of communications (including events) to meet KCC standards, as well as managing large events such as the County Show to engage face to face with internal and external audiences.

OPERATING CONTEXT

The Communications & Media Centre operates in the context of fast changing technological channels and increasing customer expectations. The ability to provide information to Kent residents in the format they, individually, wish to use is increasingly challenging as communication channels further fragment. This is likely to be the most significant change in the coming year and the ability to make full use of emerging technologies and adapt to new methods of communication will be essential in order to maintain and improve our services. The Communications & Media Centre also aims to promote environmentally friendly communication, although it should be noted that this does have a budget impact in terms of recycled paper etc.

The Communications & Media Centre is subject to and mindful of the Freedom of Information Act. It also adheres to the code of recommended practice on local authority publicity, published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in May 2006. We also have a statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 2000 and communications Act 2003, to consult and communicate with our residents.

USERS

Users of the Communications & Media Centre services can be classed as all Kent residents, all KCC staff, elected members and national and international government, media and interested parties, including our many stakeholders and partners. Therefore, it can be difficult to define customer needs broadly as they are so diverse. Many different feedback mechanisms are in place for the different types of communication produced by the unit. This feedback informs and drives the

development and refinement of various channels. Examples of this over the past year include:

www.kent.gov.uk – Web page hits and statistics are used to determine the most useful pages and ensure that they are easily found. Feedback is encouraged by publishing contact email addresses on all pages.

Events team – Feedback from events is invariably positive and includes last years Award for KCC's presence at the County Show. However, the feedback received is used to focus on particular strengths when planning future events.

Publications – Around Kent has an email response address and a published phone number for residents to get in touch. Feedback has resulted in changes to the editorial content. A customer survey is intended for the next publication.

Coverage is monitored and information and feedback shapes future press communication in order to change opinions and perceptions where appropriate and is also used by officers and elected members to inform policy

REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE 2007/08

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS/OUTCOMES IN 2007/08

One of the key achievements in 2007/08 was a partial restructure of what was then the Corporate Communications unit, resulting in a more streamlined, fit for purpose unit, better able to increase awareness of KCC and its services among residents. As a result of further adjusting the structure and to reflect the changing world of communications, the team has been renamed **KCC Communication & Media Centre**.

2007/8 saw some **notable campaigns** – supporting Kent residents and helping to ensure KCC as a community leader.

- The Post Office closure campaign was successful and brought together various units within corporate communications and across KCC. The press team secured a lot of coverage and the web team ran interactive surveys and promotion.
- Turner Contemporary
- Freedom Pass
- Kent Youth County Council elections
- The use of energy saving traffic lights.

The team also increased the usability of the **website** and attained higher levels of active consultation by promoting webcasts more effectively, adding a new consultation database, putting more local board details on such as minutes and agendas of meetings. Statistics for usage of the website have grown from 1,513,304 May 2007 to 2,183,192 January 2008.

Supported the successful launch of **Kent TV** and help to increase the viewing figures in its early months by establishing an effective marketing campaign.

Managing another award winning County Show presence and co-ordinating quality service awards across directorates for all staff. Also, supporting the delivery of two very successful, one off events, essential for the international promotion of Kent, the **Tour de France** and the **Smithsonian Folklife Festival**. This is in addition to input into other organisational events such as the **Kent Volunteers** award.

Launched the **Kent First** card and magazine.

Managed the **M&C Saatchi** review, which highlighted more effective and efficient ways of communicating with Kent residents.

Developed an organisation wide **Communication Strategy**.

Established a **Strategic Communications Board** to ensure communication is effective and joined up across KCC.

Re-launch of **Around Kent**, including new design and formatting.

Launched a weekly dedicated **Highways promotion** in Kent on Sunday.

Began a Publications Review that will be completed in 2008 to rationalise publications and leaflets across KCC to ensure our messages are effective in terms of outcomes and costs.

SERVICE COMPARISON

TO OTHER COUNCILS

More work is being done in 2008/9 to benchmark data to compare our services with other local authorities and ensure a full comparison can be made.

SECTION 2: PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SERVICE

<i>Core Objective</i>	<i>Responsible Officer</i>
Ensure that the public are aware of KCC services through promoting and communicating the work, services, activities, decisions and policies of Kent County Council.	Head of Communication & Media Centre
Ensuring the reputation of KCC is maintained and enhanced.	Head of Communication & Media Centre
Providing professional communications advice and guidance to members and officers in all directorates.	Head of Communication & Media Centre
Build and maintain good customer relations with internal and external customers	Head of Communication & Media Centre
Ensure value for money across the organisation by	Head of

encouraging combined buying power when producing all types of communication	Communication & Media Centre
Ensure Kent residents know how to access the County Council and feedback on services and experiences easily	Head of Communication & Media Centre
Using the feedback from Kent residents to help inform officer and member policy decisions	Head of Communication & Media Centre

Revenue Budget

2007-08 Controllable Expenditure £'000	FTE	Activity/budget line	2008-09				Gross Expenditure £'000	External Income £'000	Internal Income £'000	Controllable Expenditure	Cabinet Member
			FTE	Employee Costs £'000	Running Costs £'000	Contracts & Disburse ments £'000					
1065.5	19.0	Corporate Communication	19.0	771.3	536.1	1307.4	-2.0	-92.2	1213.2		
4527.1	19.0	Controllable Totals	19.0	771.3	536.1	0.0	1307.4	-2.0	-92.2	1213.2	
		<u>Memorandum Items:</u> Central Overheads Directorate Overheads Capital charges									
5300.0		Total Cost of Unit							1213.2		

"The Managing Director is authorised to negotiate, settle the terms of, and enter the following agreements/projects:

Project/ development/key action	a/c manager	Link to Corpo rate/D irecto rate Targe t	Deliverables or outcomes planned for 2008/09	Target dates
Develop and implement media, branding, web and internal communications plans through working groups	Marcus Chrysostomou Shelley Whittaker Tracey Gleeson		Plans delivered on time and in budget Plans approved by directorates & Cabinet Member	June 2008
To raise communication as a priority issue for the organisation	Head of Communication & Media Centre		Communication viewed as a priority for the organisation Cross-directorate Strategic Communications Board established	Ongoing
Refocusing the media team to be more proactive with news stories	Marcus Chrysostomou		Increase in proactive news stories and campaigns compared to previous years	April 2008 ongoing
Produce communication toolkits for use throughout the organisation	Shelley Whittaker Marcus Chrysostomou Tracey Gleeson Deborah Malthouse		Toolkits published and disseminated	May 08
Conduct a publications Audit	Shelley Whittaker		Publications audited and updated as appropriate	June 08
Produce KCC publications	Shelley Whittaker		Around Kent (quarterly)	Quarterly (ongoing)
Benchmark branding, publications and internal communications with other local authorities	Shelley Whittaker		Awareness of performance in relation to other authorities and benchmarking data &	September 08

			ensuring KCC is effective in terms of outcomes and cost	
Develop Communications training packages to roll out across the organisation and externally	Shelley Whittaker Marcus Chrysostomou Tracey Gleeson Deborah Malthouse		Upskilling of staff both within Communication & Media Centre, across directorates & externally	Summer 08 onwards
Increase use of websites and intranet by introducing a range of online interactive tools such as blogs, wiki's, e-newsletters and forums	Tracey Gleeson		Blogs, wiki's, e-newsletters and forums are introduced and web and intranet statistics increase.	January 2009
Develop use of existing tools including webcasting, online surveys and e-learning	Tracey Gleeson		Use of online tools promoted within the organisation to improve interaction with the public.	Ongoing
Improve content on both website and intranet by updating web writing and usability standards, carrying out regular usability and accessibility studies and delivering usability and writing training to publishers.	Tracey Gleeson		Usability studies are carried out and both sites are developed according to the outcomes	March 2009
Develop use of statistical information from website and intranet	Tracey Gleeson		Statistics are more useful and used by the organisation to inform future developments.	December 2009
Maintain and manage excellent relationships with outside conference venues , negotiating and continuously monitoring preferential rates for all staff	Deborah Malthouse		Preferential rates are secured with all Kent venues and staff are aware of rates to achieve best value	September 2008
Share events management best practice with all KCC staff using the KNet site to offer advice on H&S risk assessment, DDA compliance, protocols and data protection act	Deborah Malthouse		Staff have heightened awareness of the procedures and training has taken place	August 2008.
Ensure that KCC has an excellent showcase opportunity at the Kent Show to enable all business units to demonstrate how the Towards 2010 targets are being delivered to the people of Kent	Deborah Malthouse		County Show is successful & feedback is utilised	July 2008.

Providing training and development to the team to meet the increasing and diversifying challenges of communication	Marcus Chrysostomou Deborah Malthouse Shelley Whittaker Tracey Gleeson		Upskilled team with an outstanding reputation internally and externally	March 09
Developing and maintaining relationships with media in Kent and beyond	Marcus Chrysostomou		At least 1 face to face meeting conducted per month Ensuring the success of the Media Forum	April 08 ongoing
Use new emerging tools and skills when delivering communications in order to ensure effective outcomes	Marcus Chrysostomou Tracey Gleeson Shelley Whittaker Deborah Malthouse		New tools embedded into business	January 09
Maintain percentage of positive / neutral coverage	Marcus Chrysostomou		60% positive and neutral stories maintained	March 09
Ensuring Kent is represented in national and trade media with relevant stories	Marcus Chrysostomou		At least 4 stories placed in national media each month	May 08 ongoing
Monitoring and evaluating media coverage to highlight successes and measure results. Using Advertising value equivalents to value the press coverage received.	Marcus Chrysostomou		Cuttings and values distributed regularly	June 08 ongoing
Strengthen internal communications	Shelley Whittaker		Implementing the Internal Communications Strategy Strengthening directorate links Embedding the internal magazine "First" into the culture of KCC	Ongoing

Strengthen the marketing quality within the Communications & Media Centre in order to generate income to the team	Shelley Whittaker Marcus Chrysostomou Tracey Gleeson Deborah Malthouse		Officer advise on communications to other public sector organisations, generating income where appropriate	Ongoing
Maximise environmentally friendly forms of communication wherever possible in order to reduce the team's carbon footprint.	Head of Communication & Media Centre		Reduced paper use Increased use of recycled paper as a % of total use Maximise electronic forms of communication	Ongoing
Working to ensure maximum benefits and a long term legacy for Kent from the London 2012 olympic games	Head of Communication & Media centre		Achieve promotion of Kent nationally and Internationally in Olympic coverage	

In line with financial regulations, any capital projects on this list will be subject to a prior "gateway review" by the Project Advisory Group and in consultation with the Leader

USER/ RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT PLANNED FOR 2008/9

Name	Start date/ End date (dd/mm/yy)	Feedback date (dd/mm/yy)	Target Group	Target area (Kent, Town, district, ward etc)	Brief summary	What we want to find out and how we will use the information,(approx 25 – 50 words)	Statutory Yes/No	Consultation type (*see list below table)	Contact name, e-mail & phone No.
Around Kent	01/03/08 – 30/06/08	30/06/08	All residents receiving Around Kent	Kent	Survey to ensure content meets user needs and refine future editions	Whether the current format of Around Kent is fit for purpose and if residents would like to see changes implemented	No	Business	Shelley Whittaker
Usability and accessibility study of the Website	01/09/08 - 31/12/08	31/12/08	Residents using the website	Kent	Online survey and accompanied web surfs to ensure that the website is usable and meets the needs of the residents	Whether the website is fit for purpose and to plan future developments	No	Business	Tracey Gleeson
Usability and accessibility study of KNet	01/06/08 - 30/09/08	30/09/08	Employees using KNet	KCC offices	Online survey and accompanied web surfs to ensure that the intranet is usable and	Whether the intranet is fit for purpose and to plan future developments	No	Business	Tracey Gleeson

					meets the needs of the users				
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*** Consultation types – Business, Council, Environment, Social, Community, Education, Leisure, Transport**

CAPACITY, SKILLS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The department is fairly well resourced following the recent restructure. However, there is a current skills focus on press which will need to be balanced with other communication skills. Internal Communication is an area in which capacity needs to be built to enable the organisation to have meaningful dialogue with its staff.

There is also significant pressure in the web team, which will increase with development of the website and introduction of more online tools.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY

The Communication & Media Centre will ensure that all communications delivered are inclusive and accessible to all.

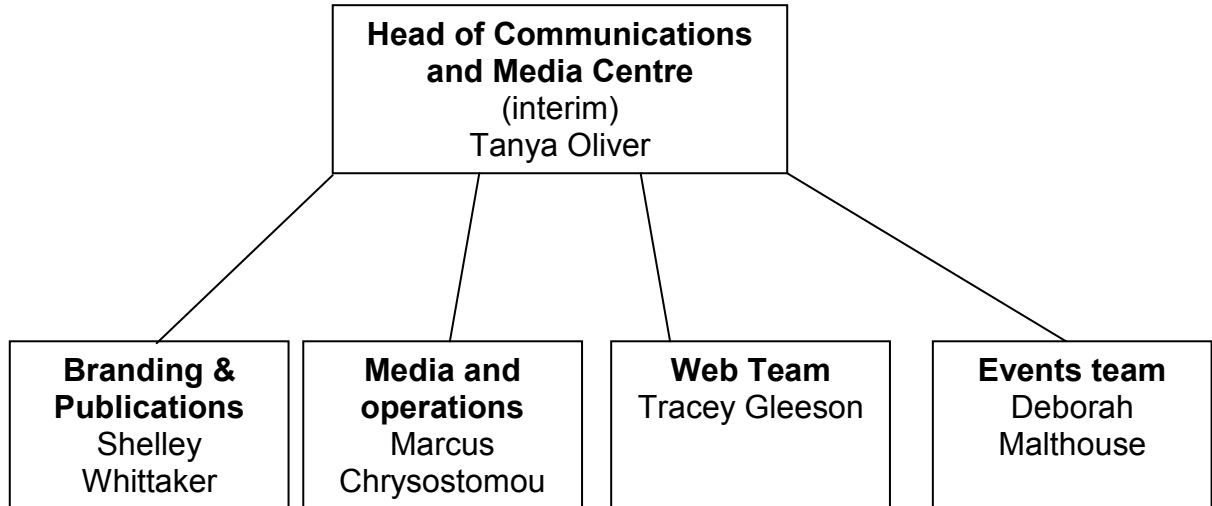
This includes (but is not exclusive to):

- adhering to accessibility standards on our web and intranet sites
- producing written and web communications to be representative in terms of images and references
- ensuring that all written documentation produced is in 12 point as standard
- Promoting accessibility for all events and ensuring that those organised by the Communications & Media Centre are fully accessible.
- All communication is available in other available formats and advertised as such.
- Providing advice & guidance on accessibility to other parts of KCC

The Communication & Media Centre will also ensure that all new and existing policies and procedures are subject to equality impact assessments.

RESOURCES

Structure chart



Staffing

	2007/08	2008/09
Pt13 and above or equivalent (FTEs)	2	2
Pt12 and below (FTEs)	15	15
TOTAL	17	17
Of the above total, the estimated FTE which are externally funded		

SECTION 17 CRIME & DISORDER ACT

All work of the Communication & Media Centre will adhere to the crime and Disorder act and work to minimise the effects of crime and disorder on the residents of Kent.

The unit will communicate on issues of crime and disorder and work with partners to promote reassurance and the work being done to tackle antisocial behaviour. (i.e. safer and stronger communities group, community wardens, community safety team etc)

Specifically, the County Show can be used as a platform to raise awareness of the impact of crime and disorder where appropriate. The risk of anti social behaviour at any event organised will be considered as part of the risk assessment process.

The unit links into the emergency planning procedures for both the authority and the county and would have responsibility for leading communications in such an event.

CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

Business Unit cross-cutting environmental objective	Lead officer	Deliverables / outcomes for 2008/09	Target date
Reduce the amount of paper used in communications	Head of Communication & Media Centre	Paper consumption of the unit (both for printing and publications) will be reduced	Mar 2009
Support and develop authority wide communications campaigns around good environmental performance, internally and externally	Head of Communication & Media Centre	Greater awareness of environmental issues throughout the organisation	March 2009

Project / development / key action	Evidence of compliance with KCC Environment Policy	Major climate change impacts on service delivery	Adaptive action in 2008/09 (include lead and target date)
Conduct a publications audit	Work to minimise our impact on the natural environment and its resources	Any severe weather including flooding, snow or drought will impact on the service of the Communications and Media centre as it will be looked to as a the gatekeeper of messages from the authority to citizens	An out of hours service is already in place. Further work is being undertaken to be part of the key team for Emergency planning. Marcus Chrysostomou is leading, ongoing.

SECTION 3: MONITORING AND REVIEW - HOW DO WE KNOW WE ARE THERE?

The Communication & Media Centre management team will be responsible for the delivery of the targets. Quarterly updates on the progress of specific actions will be reported to the Communications Strategy board and included in usual business monitoring procedures.

Press cuttings are sent to senior managers and relevant members daily.

The Head of Communication & Media Centre will be responsible overall and will take action should there be insufficient progress.