

# **Communication Strategy**

**Dec 2006**

**Council of the Isles of Scilly**

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### **1. Introduction**

The purpose of the communication strategy is

**“To ensure that the Council of the Isles of Scilly communicates clearly, openly and regularly with the public, with partners and with each other to promote a high level of mutual understanding and facilitate a better service to the community on the Isles of Scilly”.**

The communication strategy is a key tool ensuring the successful delivery of our vision statement:

**“The Isles of Scilly – a strong, dynamic and sustainable Island Community:**

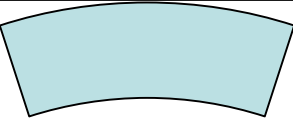
- To provide excellent services for children, young people and families
- To promote healthy and inclusive communities, including working towards meeting the housing needs of our community
- To promote economic vitality
- To protect our outstanding natural environment

- To meet the local transport and local infrastructure needs of our community

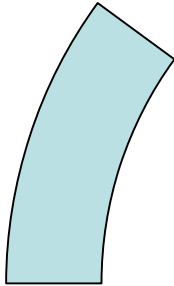
Currently the Authority is working hard to continuously improve the services that it offers to this unique Island community. This strategy will help the authority to improve its communication, which is the most important factor in delivery change and modernisation To ensure that services are delivered in the most efficient way.

**Council of the Isles of Scilly**

**Chief Officer  
Team**



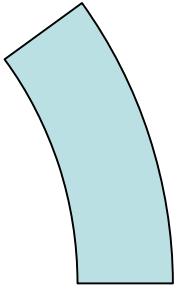
**Members  
and  
Committees**



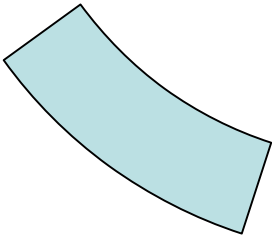
**Council  
Officers and  
Support  
Staff**

**COMMUNICATION:**

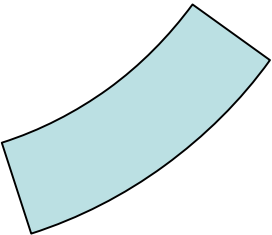
- **Open**
- **Transparent**
- **Accountable**
- **Proactive**
- **Drives improvement**
- **Creates shared priorities and purpose**



**Community  
of the Isles  
of Scilly**



**External  
Partners and  
Inspectors**



Communication Diagram

## **2. Internal Communication**

The key processes of internal communication required in the Council of the Isles of Scilly are deemed to be as follows:

### **Members**

The key to this flow of information is in the minutes from committee meetings. The minutes contain decisions made by members and recommendations from the committee system. Improvements required in this communication channel are:

- Continued achievement of the targets dates for the sending of Committee Agendas and Minutes.
- An internal newsflash following committee meetings: A useful way of increasing the speed in which decisions were communicated was that the Committee Secretary should produce a newsflash email the morning after a committee, in consultation with the Chairman of Committee communicating the essence of key decisions made at the meeting.
- A clearer programme of Chief Officer Performance Development (appraisal) and training for the Senior Members involved in Chief Office appraisal (this is planned in as part of Member Development Programme 2006/7).
- A clear programme of the quarterly attendance by Senior Members at Chief Officer Management Meetings, Chairman and Vice Chairman plus committee Chairs on a rota
- Continued weekly meeting between Chief Executive and Chairman of Council
- Continued regular meetings with Chief Officers and Committee Chairman

### **Chief Officers**

The key areas for successful communication are the channels for passing on and exchanging information such as:

- Systematic posting of the action points from Chief Officer Management Meetings on the notice board and circulation by email to all service managers, as part of a weekly staff newsletter.

- The roll out of the "Outlook" Corporate Diary so all are informed of forthcoming events and dates
- The formation of a corporate work plan for the Authority.
- The development of an integrated inspection plan for the Authority.
- The introduction of service plans in all areas
- The roll out of Performance Development (appraisal) across the Authority
- A clear programme of monthly short departmental briefings

### **Officers & Staff**

The key factors in promoting successful communication have been identified as:

- Continuation of the quarterly meetings between service managers and Chief Officers. Members request that all Chief Officers on the Island attend, except in exceptional circumstances and meetings last no more than 45 minutes.
- All Chief Officers are expected to hold monthly briefing sessions with their departments of no more than 15 minutes to ensure corporate issues are communicated. The frequency that meetings are actually held should be reported to Members.
- Continued investment in staff training and development
- To consider offering an independent counselling and mediation service to all staff to ensure that communication difficulties and disputes are rapidly resolved
- To consider an annual staff survey to ensure that all staff are able to contribute to the corporate agenda.

### **External Communication:**

The key processes of external communication in the Council of the Isles of Scilly are as follows

### **Council of the Isles of Scilly**

Key areas for communication and improvement:

- The Council website [www.scilly.gov.uk](http://www.scilly.gov.uk)
- Web-casting, the viewing of Council meetings over the website

- The web-link to the Off-Islands
- The planned improved front office of the Town Hall
- The Lighthouse Newsletter publication, produced bi monthly and circulated to the community to keep them involved about developments in the Authority.
- More proactive in the publication of press releases by the PR Team for passing information to the public
- The Development of an effective Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) that is sufficiently resourced
- To develop a more consistent pattern of open days and public meetings to promote openness and transparency.
- Member surgeries on a regular basis

### **Community:**

Important elements in securing improvements for the community were seen to be:

- The new Reception Area and one stop information shop with disability access and interview room
- An time-limited response to requests by letter or email, complaints and comments (including Freedom of Information requests) as part of a revised corporate service standards policy.
- To use the Equality Impact Assessment to ensure that all publications are appropriate
- To developing a culture of plain English and striving to reduce the use of jargon to facilitate community understanding.
- Regular Community consultation to develop and review the Council's community strategy including an annual series of briefings for each Island community by Senior Members and Officers.

### **Government, Inspection Agencies and External Partners:**

Important elements of communication are:

- To develop an on line library of Council documents that is easily available for partners

- To develop a proportionate and agreed inspection plan that facilitates the delivery of the corporate work plan.
- To develop a programme of providing information to national publications and Government Departments to raise awareness of the Council's unique position and challenges

#### **4. Corporate Image:**

It was felt that in order to improve communication the Council could do more to promote a positive corporate image, this includes:

- To develop a simple publications protocol which all officers will be bound to, this will include the consistent use of a corporate image on all documents and quality assurance arrangements.
- To monitor the quality of documents that go out to the community by developing the role of the PR team as a quality control panel for all external publications.
- To ensure that the Council mission statement and key priorities are broadly circulated
- To ensure that all officers wear name badges at all times while working for the Authority
- To introduce a corporate uniform for the front desk, library and TIC after consultation with staff.
- That the corporate dress code is more clearly communicated
- To develop corporate standards of culture and behaviour

## Improvement Plan 2006-7 Internal Communication

Action	Officer	Date	Resource	Output	Performance Measure	Action taken
Newsflash following committee meetings (part 3 excluded)	CS and Chairman of Committee	Aug 06	Within existing budget	Regular internal newsflash following committee meetings will mean action points quickly communicated	Monitoring report to P & R	Update from Admin Officer
Member Training for Chief Officer Appraisal	MOACE/John Saunders	Sept 06	IDEA resource secured	Member training on appraisal completed	Monitoring report to P & R	Training timetable agreed January 07 to be rolled out
The posting of the action points from Chief Officer Management Meetings	MOACE	Jun 06	Within existing budget	Increased corporate sharing of issues	Monitoring report to P & R	Achieved Bullet points of issues discussed posted in the monthly news letter.
The roll out of the "Outlook" Corporate Diary	ICT Officer	Oct 06	From IEG Funding	More efficient diary process for the whole authority	Monitoring report to P & R	Implementation to take place by the 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2007
Completion of the corporate work plan	MOACE	Aug 06	Within existing budget	Improved corporate planning	Work plan reported to P & R for approval	No started
Proportionate inspection	MOACE		Within existing budget			!
Performance Development Appraisal for all Officers	Personnel Adviser	Sept 06 rollout starts	Within existing budget	Organisation clearer on individual contribution to strategic goals	Monitoring report to P & R	Majority of Officer appraisals have now taken place
Continued involvement of Members in quarterly Chief officer management Meetings, to include Chairs of Committee on a rota	CE	In place now	Within existing budget	Shared corporate understanding	Monitoring report to P & R	ongoing
Continuation of quarterly meetings between Service Managers and Chief Officers	CE/MOACE	In place now	Within existing budget	Shared corporate understanding	Monitoring report to P & R	ongoing
To offer an independent counselling and mediation service to all staff to ensure that communication difficulties and disputes are rapidly resolved	MOACE	June 06	Additional funding may be required	Improved pastoral role and quicker resolution of disputes, can result in less absenteeism and increased productivity	Monitoring report to P & R	Achieved Service Level Agreement in place since August 2006

Action	Officer	Date	Resource	Output	Performance Measure	Action Taken
Chief Officers to hold monthly 15 minute departmental briefing meetings	Chief Officers	July 2006	Within existing budgets	Corporate issues communicated more clearly, corporate sense of purpose	Monitoring report to P & R	Not achieved corporately
All staff to have access to ICT so that they can receive corporate emails and messages	Chief Officers	March 2007	Additional funding could be sourced from Capacity Building 3	All staff able to have equitable access to information	Monitoring report to P & R	Not achieved DLF Fire men no access
The induction process is revised to improve the staff's corporate understanding from the outset	Tess Lloyd E Richards John Saunders	March 2007	Within existing budgets	Improve the induction into the Authority	Monitoring report to P & R	On target Further consultation to take place with newly recruited staff
A bi monthly newsletter to all staff	MOACE	Oct 2006	Within existing budgets	Improved communication and corporate messages	Monitoring report to P & R	Monthly news letter achieved; Distributed both my email and in wage packets to ensure across the board take up.

#### External Communication:

Action	Officer	Date	Resource	Output	Performance Measure	Action Taken
To ensure the Council website is kept up to date To continue web-casting, the viewing of Council meetings over the website To continue the web-link to the Off-Islands	TDMO	Dec 2006	Within existing budgets	Up to date information accessible to the public	Monitoring report to P & R	Achieved News flashes appearing on front webpage. (community News)
The planned improved front office of the Town Hall as a new reception area and one stop information shop with disability access and interview room	CPO	Nov 2006	Within existing budgets	Improved community friendly facility	Building project completed and facilities available to the community	Party wall issue solved Tenders being sought Feb 07

To continue the Lighthouse Newsletter publication, produced bi monthly and circulated to the community to keep them involved about developments in the Authority. To more proactively produce press releases for passing information to the public	TDMO/ CRO	Dec 2006	Within existing budgets	Improved positive press coverage	Monitoring report to P & R	1 <sup>st</sup> monitoring report to go to P&R February 07
To developing an effective Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) that is sufficiently resourced	TDMO	Sept 2006	Additional staff capacity may be needed	CRM System means enquiries are more effectively managed	Monitoring report to P & R	Agreed by ODPM that we would use the website facilities to provide proportionate information.
To use the Equality Impact Assessment to ensure that all publications are appropriate To develop a culture of plain English and striving to reduce the use of jargon to facilitate community understanding.	CRO/CE	Dec 2006	Additional funding included with capacity building fund	Council reaches level 2 of Equality Standard	Monitoring report to P & R CPA/JAR satisfactory report	6 Officer trained in November 06 to carry out impact assessment. Pro-formas and monitoring forms ready Report to P&R and assessments to begin Feb 07
To develop an on line library of Council documents that is easily available for partners	CRO MOACE	Oct 2006	Within existing budgets	More efficient handling of enquiries by Inspectors	Monitoring report to P & R	Achieved Nov 06 Document library available both on website and on the shared internal drive. Paper document libraries are also at each staff notice board in all council buildings
To develop an agreed consistent corporate image	Chairman and Vice with Chief Officers	August 2006	Within existing budgets	Improved and consistent corporate image	Revised image used authority wide	Not achieved
To hold an annual or bi-annual briefing evening on each Island to inform the community on corporate issues	Senior Members Chief Exec CRO MOACE	Autumn 2006	Within existing budgets	Improved communication of corporate issues and ongoing consultation with the community	Monitoring report to P & R	Community Consultation sessions St Mary's-5 <sup>th</sup> Dec 07 St Martins-17 <sup>th</sup> Jan07 St Agnes Tresco-14 <sup>th</sup> feb07

**Performance Measures, Reporting and Review**

The Communication Strategy will become a standing item on the agenda of the Policy and Resources Committee and Members will reports of progress at each meeting. There will be an annual review of this document, with the first being in August 2007.