

MINUTES OF INFORMING AND ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITIES TASK GROUP

24 JULY 2018

PRESENT:

Members of the Group: Councillors Keeling (Chair), Bearne, Douglas, Claire Edwards, Gillias, Lewis and Srivastava

Officers: Matthew Deaves (Communication, Consultation and Information Manager) and Veronika Beckova (Democratic Services Officer)

In attendance: Oliver Gallant (Head of Digital, Quidem Media) and Jo Billings (Regional Events Director, Quidem Media)

4. MINUTES

The approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2018 has been deferred to the next meeting of the task group.

5. DISCUSSION

The task group received a presentation from the Communication, Consultation and Information Manager on **what communications channels are available to the Council and their use:**

1) News releases and media relations are available to:

- all councillors
- all parish councils that have opted in
- Warwickshire and West Midlands Association of Local Councils (WALC)
- relevant internal contacts
- local, regional, national or trade media (as relevant)
- the Council's website and social media (as appropriate)

2) **The Council's official website** is designed to help residents 'get things done' and engage. The secondary purpose of the website is to inform, especially in relation to getting things done. A strategy is in place to simplify the user journey and remove barriers to engagement. The website is designed to be viewed on mobile devices.

3) Social media

- **Facebook**
 - 7 corporate pages
 - 2 partnership pages
 - Rugby Communities
 - Preventing Homelessness, Improving Lives (p.h.i.l.)

- The Mayor's page
- 14,500 follows
- reach for single posts – up to 50,000
- **Twitter** – 10 official accounts including 2 officer accounts

Images and video amplify reach and click-throughs.

- 4) **Email** is actively used by the Communications Team, the Benn Hall, the Rugby Art Gallery and Museum and the Rugby Visitor Centre. Use of bulk email software reduces risk of Data Protection breach and provides analytics data. Various lists are in use (up to c.15,000 people). Email opening rates are up to 70 per cent comparing to the industry average of 16 per cent. Email also allows for A/B testing. A/B testing is a way to compare two versions of a single variable and determining which of the two variants is more effective.
- 5) **Letters** are the most expensive means of communication. There is very little data around the effectiveness of direct mail. This form of engagement is best utilised when targeting a particular area or a topic of interest, for example: a local plan consultation.
- 6) **Leaflets and other print media** are not a preferred choice of communication as they are expensive and difficult to keep up to date. Web information can be made available in a print media on request.

The task group received a verbal presentation from **Quidem Media** explaining the company's background and what learning from their previous campaigns can be offered to the Council. The Head of Digital and the Regional Events Director attended the meeting.

At their first meeting, the task group members were informed that the Council was working with Quidem Media regarding the development of a recycling campaign.

During the presentation, the following main points were made:

- Quidem Digital is a sister company of Quidem. Quidem is a UK-based media company which operates radio stations including Rugby FM and seven other radio stations. Quidem Digital develops its own original content in-house. Their job is to make sure that the right people are getting the message when they need it.
- Good storytelling is of the utmost importance. A story has to be presented in an engaging way with a clear call to action and served on the right platforms to the right people. The story also has to be supported by accurate data.
- Branded campaigns of awareness and campaigns designed to get a reaction from the public have to be treated separately.
- **Email** is an important tool when sharing information. It is a trusted source not associated with spam.
- For **online** purposes, the Council may decide on a static banner campaign. However the average view rate for an online banner is between 0.08 and 0.12 per cent.

- People are 10 times more likely to stop and engage with **video content**. It is important to gear campaigns around the local audience as they are more likely to engage.
- In present day, a lot of advertising happens online. A **pre-roll ad** is a promotional video message that plays before the content selected. Users are allowed to skip the ad after six seconds of free advertising. The pre-roll ad may have no link to the selected content as it is based on very accurate algorithms (any video source is generally powered by Google, Yahoo or Bing). Quidem Digital works with clients to harness the markets available to their advantage.

Due to the new General Data Protection Regulation, Quidem Digital were unable to share stats and figures from their previous campaigns with the task group.

The task group was informed that the Digital Team has started working on the story for the Council's recycling campaign. An informative short animation film will be produced featuring three bins. To bring them to life and connect with the audience, each bin will have a name, a voice and a character. The animation will be fully licensed to Rugby Borough Council.

Following the update and the verbal presentation, the task group was asked to agree the measures and desired outcomes of the campaign. The following was proposed by the Communication, Consultation and Information Manager:

- Quantitative data supporting (or not) link between campaign and behaviour change
- Use of video
- Use of animation to reach various communities
- Output in various formats for use across multiple channels
- Available to education officers for use in schools and community groups
- Future-proofed where possible

Members of the task group agreed the measures and desired outcomes listed above and asked for the following behaviours to be addressed by the campaign:

- Plastic bags
- No blame (I do everything right.)
- Non-believers (Why should I care?)

The task group was informed that the project is fully supported by the Head of Environment and Public Realm. It is also fully funded.

6. PROGRAMME OF WORK AND DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting of the task group will be held on Tuesday 2 October at 5.30pm.

CHAIR