



**Prosperous Communities
Committee**

29 January 2019

Subject: Options for future communications

Report by:

Alan Robinson
Strategic Lead Democratic and Business Support
01427 676509
Alan.robinson@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Contact Officer:

Julie Heath
Senior Communications Officer
01427 676502
Julie.heath@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

To give consideration to the introduction of a bimonthly newsletter for town and parish councils.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- a) Support and implement the introduction of a bimonthly newsletter for town and parish councils

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None

Financial: FIN-195-19

- To be delivered within existing resources

Staffing:

- To be delivered within existing resources

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights: An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out – please see attached document.

Risk Assessment:

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities: None

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

x

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

x

No

1 Background

1.1 In October 2017, the Prosperous Communities Committee considered a report to change from a hard copy county news to a digital copy. As part of this recommendation the council resolved to:

- (b) In addition the Prosperous Communities Committee requests a report be produced for a future meeting detailing further additional options to improve channels of communication with its electorate.

2 Current Arrangements

2.1 The communications team currently uses a variety of means to communicate to the electorate with the local print media, radio and magazines and the trade press.

2.2 These also include:

- Social media
- Website
- Press releases
- Promotion via literature such as brochures and posters
- Media interviews

3 Option explored

3.1 The team has explored options of getting content for the different town and parish councils, so they can publicise information.

3.2 A snapshot of some parish and town councils found varying size magazines, some with 60 pages, 10 and some with just 2 pages. In addition the dates and frequency varied in the respective town and parishes, making it difficult to meet individual deadlines. Concerns were raised about was the assumption that council news added into some magazines would increase the cost of printing etc

3. Arrising proposal

3.1 The council in the past issued a Parish Matters magazine with key council information, press releases and some pictures. An electronic version is proposed on a bi-monthly basis to communicate key information to residents. It will be up to the town and parish council's how they present information to local residents. This can be noticeboards, social media, websites, council meetings or in a newsletter.

3.2 It would be a consistent way of West Lindsey District Council, ensuring everyone received the same information at the same time and can use it how they feel it is necessary. This would complement the ongoing work on a new Parish Charter which aims to reframe the relationship with town and parish councils.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 Members support and implement the introduction of a bimonthly newsletter for town and parish councils