

## **Additional briefing note on approach to communications**

### **1. Finance**

Under the arrangements established in August 2010, funding of the communications service model is organised as follows:

- Staff budgets have transferred to the new service, less the agreed savings target.
- The new staffing budget does not however cover the full cost of staffing the service, as it is supplemented by 'income' generated from other departments. This is in the form of handling fees applied to advertising, creative and production services and is an arrangement inherited from the previous set up. In theory, the fees generate enough income to ensure the full cost of staffing is met.
- Non-pay communications and marketing expenditure does not come from the central service's budget. Instead it remains held within departments as it was before. Budgets for each specific project or campaign are agreed through collaboration between the lead department and the communications service. Expenditure with suitable external contractors is then managed by the communications service and the appropriate service recharged for the full cost.

### **2. Relationships with directorates**

The communications service works with directorates and services to identify key communications priorities, aligned to the council's key overall objectives. In 2010-11 this meant inheriting workplans for each directorate that were produced under the previous arrangements, while the 2011-12 planning process (which is ongoing until the end of May) has seen the new service and directorates engaging in a collaborative approach to defining and agreeing communications priorities.

Many of the roles within the service have specific links to one of four portfolio areas, which are essentially based on the four directorates: Adult and Community Services, Children and Young People, Environment and the Office of the Chief Executive. In each case there is a Communications Account Manager, who co-ordinates the planning and implementation of the workplan for their portfolio area. The Communications Account Managers are marketing specialists and each is supported by a Communications Account Executive also assigned to their portfolio.

There is a similar arrangement within the media team, with assigned Media Officers to Adult and Community Services, Children and Young People and Environment. Due to the variable nature of the workflow in this, more reactive part of the service, the remaining two Media Officers cover the Office of the Chief Executive brief but flex their time to also provide support where it is most needed across each of the other three areas.

The remaining posts in the service are not formally assigned to particular portfolios, although in practice there will often be consistency in the way individuals in the team such as graphic designers are assigned to work on specific project areas over a period of time rather than repeatedly changing focus between different service areas.

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