



# Raunds Town Communication Strategy

<b>Adopted</b>	<b>March 2016</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>March 2017</b>

## 1.0 Introduction

Raunds Town Council through its business plan has undertaken to “ensure effective communication with the town<sup>1</sup>.” The purpose of this strategy is therefore to set out how the council intends to achieve this.

## 2.0 Why is communication important?

- 2.1 Research from the Local Government Association has shown that improved communication leads to recognition and respect and an enhanced reputation for the council.
- 2.2 Good communication will enable the council to meet their strategic objectives.
- 2.3 Improving communication was identified as an important aspiration in the Vision for Raunds Community Plan adopted in 2014 which set the following objectives:

### **Increase the amount of visual and virtual communication:**

- Notice Boards: Identify best locations
- Newsletter: Investigate setting up a regular newsletter
- Social Media: Increase and improve use of social media

### **Improve knowledge of availability of adult education by:**

- Adding details on Town Council website
- Ensuring paper copies of course brochure more freely available

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<sup>1</sup> SO1 “to provide a strong and independent voice for Raunds” Draft Business Plan February 2016.

- Facilitate communication between townspeople and course providers

### **Improve use and knowledge of Saxon Hall**

#### **3.0 Who should we be communicating with?**

- Residents
- Members of the Council
- Partners within the public sector (East Northamptonshire Council, Northamptonshire County Council.)
- Local Police
- Health Services
- Central Government (MP's)
- Special interest groups including those with language or disability needs
- Business community
- Voluntary/community organisations and groups
- Schools
- Users of council facilities (Saxon Hall)
- Town Council Tenants
- Press/media
- Town Council employees
- Potential user groups

#### **4.0 Existing Communications**

Current methods in place include:

- Website,
- Council agenda papers/letters,
- Social Media; twitter, Facebook, streetlife
- Councillors Champions
- Some press activity (Nene Valley News, Raunds Round-Up, The reporter, Northants Telegraph.
- Interactivity of councillors with residents
- Mayors civic engagements
- Annual Town Assembly
- Consultations (E.g. People and Places)
- Customer service
- Town Council Events

#### **5.0 Ways in which communications can be improved.**

Communications can be improved by:

##### **5.1 Increasing the number of methods of communication used by the council including:**

- production of annual report,
- production of council newsletter (twice yearly),
- Wider range of social media accounts e.g. Instagram.

##### **5.2 Improving the quality and timeliness of communications used by the council.**

- Re-launch of town council website,
- Standard template for press releases,
- Creation of press section within website,
- Issuing regular press releases on council activity,
- Maintaining an up to date list of press contacts.
- Pre-planned activity on social media (in addition to timely responses to residents' queries.
- Ensure all communications conform to council brand (E.g. style, fonts etc.)

##### **5.3 The following principles will be adopted in all communications:**

- Integrity and honesty
- Clarity
- Openness and accessibility
- Inclusiveness
- Listening and responding
- Accountability
- Consistency
- Accuracy

## 6.0 Communications Plan

### The communication plan is shown in (Appendix A)

The communications plan details how each of the publications and media will be used to support this strategy and the business plan.

## 7.0 Evaluation

It is extremely important that the Council measures the success of this strategy so that it may inform any future plan.

### What can we measure?

- Raised awareness of the Town Council and the services it provides
- Attitudes towards RTC
- Participation and engagement with Council projects, initiatives and consultation processes.

### How will we do this?

- Consultation with residents – perception and satisfaction surveys
- Measure press coverage for saturation and against press releases for content usage
- Hits on website
- Number of Friends and Followers on Social Networking sites (if applicable)
- Staff survey

## (Appendix A) Raunds Town Council Communication Plan

Primary Audience	Communication Objectives	Channel	Timing
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	To inform stakeholders of town council responses to all consultations that affect the town and its residents. (Examples may include Planning Applications, Planning Policy, Policing and other matters)	Responses to planning applications are recorded in published minutes  Responses to significant or applications will be published in minutes ,on the website and on social media. Press	Monthly  Immediate (as required)

		releases will be created for the most significant consultations	
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	To inform stakeholders of the town councils successes and work in lobbying other tiers of government and partner organisations on issues that affect Raunds.	Success in lobbying will be published in council minutes and social media where significant	Immediate as required.
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council partners	To publicise excellent standards of governance on achieving the gold standard in the Local Council Award Scheme by October 2016	Press release  Social Media/website  Branding including quality council logo on letterheads and website.	On achieving quality status
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	To ensure that staff are well trained and effective through the use of annual staff appraisals and development programme	Training achievements e.g. external courses will be published in council minutes.  In exceptional circumstances e.g. if staff won an award then this may be published on council website and social media and through press release	Qtly through personnel minutes.
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town	To work with partners to reprint the Heritage Sites leaflet by the end of 2016	Hard copies to be distributed through library and local businesses, town council offices and Saxon Hall.	On publication of the leaflet

council. partners		Publication of the leaflet will be promoted through social media, website and press release	
Local residents  Businesses	To raise the profile of the office of Mayor by ensuring that 100% of events attended are recorded on the town council website and social media.	All events attended will be recorded on the town council website and on social media.  Press releases will be written for the Mayors own civic events.	Immediate  As required
Local residents  Businesses	Publicise events Town Council events held in the town.	Social media Website Printed materials Press releases	On-going campaign to be created.  Press releases will be sent in a timely manner to ensure they meet publisher's deadlines.
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	To promote links to Stanwick lakes by ensuring appropriate signage is in place at each end of Meadow Lane by Summer 2016.	Social media Website Printed materials Press releases	Sustained campaign to promote links.
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town	To work with Raunds History Society to create two "pop-up" museum events per annum from 2016 onwards	Social media Website Press releases	To promote the event

council. partners			
Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	The Town Council will promote the business forum through continued use of Saxon Hall and regular attendance (100%) at the forum by council officers and members to update the forum on council matters and to receive feedback on matters relating to the town council	Promote business forum meetings via social media	7 days, 3 days 1 day before each business forum meeting.
Local Residents. Business.	Promote success from participation in JAG group.	Town council minutes  Press release used if a particular campaign is required.	Bi –monthly  Ad-hoc
Local Residents. Business. partners	Reduce speeding in the town through participation in the Speedwatch campaign during 2015/16	Press release, social media, website	1) to encourage participation 2) after event to promote success
Potential residents Potential business	To introduce a welcome pack and CLIP for distribution to new residents by July 2016.	Press release, social media, website	1) main campaign on launch 2) repeated regularly to signposted to welcome pack.

Local residents	To ensure that regular groups, classes and clubs that meet at council owned premises are promoted through the town council website and social media.	Social media / website (Saxon Hall has its own Facebook page)	Regular tweets -pick a group per week, tweet on 3 occasions for that group.
Local residents	To promote what the council is doing to reduce dog fouling and littering in the town by the introduction of a poster campaign designed by young people and promotion of the green dog club	Press release, social media, website	Regular activity 3 times per annum create social media /poster activity on dog fouling
Local residents	Create awareness of the Neighbourhood plan and to seek support for the referendum.	Press release, social media, website	In run up to referendum on Neighbourhood plan. Sustained campaign.
Local residents Business	Works with our partners to reduce ASB and the perception of ASB particularly in young people	Social media campaign	Regular activity 3 times per annum create social media campaign – minimum of 3 tweets per week for two week period
Local residents	To work with CANDO and other adult social care providers to promote high quality care and adult services within Raunds	Social media campaign	Regular activity 3 times per annum create social media campaign- minimum of 3 tweets per week for two week period
Local residents  Local residents	The Town Council will promote healthy life choices.  The Town Council will lobby for good public	Social media / websites  Press release will be used if a particular campaign	

	transport links for Raunds.		
Local residents	The council will promote the refurbish all leisure areas within the lifetime of this business plan.	Social media / websites Press release	When play area is refurbished this will be promoted ad-hoc
All	The council will maximise revenues from the Town Hall and Saxon Hall through maintaining the buildings to a high standard and appropriate and innovative uses of the buildings.	Promotion of weddings agreed in separate report to Policy and Resources Committee April 2016.  Social Media and print advertising will be used to promote hire of Saxon Hall.	On-going  Monthly adverts in Raunds round-up
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	To improve communications	Monthly report prepared for Raunds Round –up Also sent to Reporter	Monthly
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. Partners.	Annual report	Printed/Website	Annually.