



Service Planning 2022-23

Communications, Digital Services and Engagement Team

Version 2.0

April 2022 – March 2023



Each part of the council plays its part in a joined-up approach to service delivery- from this plan that sets out our staff priorities, to staff's individual performance reviews to confirm that everyone is doing their part.

Officer Lead: Andrew Hopkins (Acting Manager)

Portfolio holders: Cllr Sarah Jackson, Cllr John Loudoun and Cllr Jack Rowland

Service Plan Template 2022-23: Contents Page

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Notes for Strategic Leads and Service Leads:

*Certain parts of this form will be pre-populated. Shaded areas are for guidance.

When you have completed your Service Plan:

- ✓ Save to O:\Service Plans. Final versions will be placed on the intranet/internet
- ✓ Communicate it to your staff
- ✓ Keep it under review – make it a live document which adds value!
- ✓ Use it to formulate individual objectives

Section 1 – Brief description of service and purpose(s)	
What we do and who we deliver to	<p>The Communications, Digital Services and Engagement team is a newly formed department at the council which strives to disseminate relevant information to its residents, tenants and visitors and aims to continually seek new ways to achieve this via the use of traditional media and through the improved use of existing and emerging digital platforms. These improvements will be achieved by the performance management of council services, making the maximum use of data to drive the digital delivery of our services and carrying out meaningful consultation with its community whilst ensuring the council complies with its equality obligations.</p> <p>The team is responsible for brand and reputational management which includes dealing with press enquiries, press releases, the publication of internal and external newsletters, providing content for and the management of the corporate social media channels and image library.</p> <p>We are also responsible for the council’s external and internal websites in conjunction with our IT partner Strata Service Solutions Ltd and manage the council’s visual identity online as well as the East Devon app. We are responsible for making sure the council adheres to online accessibility laws.</p> <p>We provide a corporate overview of performance management – understanding how each of the services are working and if they are achieving the targets set out in the council plan, which we help to collate.</p> <p>We also manage the process of service planning across the council which is also a pivotal part of what we do. This includes working with services and holding reviews twice a year of the digital risk register that looks at issues which need corporate attention.</p> <p>We support the council in engaging with children and young people, the public, voluntary and community groups, staff, councillors, town and parish councils and others, including supporting services with meeting the legal ‘duty to consult’ – designing and sending out questionnaires, organising focus groups, workshops and going into schools along with the organisation of events such as the East Devon Working Together Conference.</p> <p>The team manages and runs several council funding streams that are available to the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. We also help support not-for-profit groups, by work such as advising on external funding, organising networking opportunities and advising on the structure of groups and organisations.</p>
How we deliver and ensure equal access	<p>The team provides the lead on the implementation of equality impact assessments and will through 2022/23 ensure refresher training is provided to all service leads and managers. It strives to ensure its services are accessible and will provide a corporate steer and lead to other departments to ensure this takes place.</p>

How we compare	We collect data on a variety of sources to benchmark our service. Through our performance management operation we also provide a variety of reports to different committees of the council for consideration. We also work with partner authorities to understand and learn best practice including South West Audit partnership. We will use the opportunities of new technology to create new dashboards of information which will enable us to examine our service delivery and identify further improvements that could take place.
Statutory elements of the service	n/a

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2021-22		
	<i>Briefly describe key achievements and what outcomes were created. This will inform Annual Report at year end.</i>	<i>Strategic link to Council Plan priorities</i>
1	Establishment of the Communications, Digital Services and Engagement Team	The Communications, Digital Services and Engagement Team carry out tasks which continually strive to meet the council’s visions and values. Namely to seek continuous improvement and to adapt new ways of working, whilst recognising the pressures on resources.
2	<p>Communications team – 2020 outputs (2019 comparisons)</p> <p>Social media: Twitter - followers 8,877 (+ 716), Facebook - followers 4,936 (+1,576), Instagram 1,454 followers (+416), YouTube – 270 (+237) subscribers, LinkedIn – followers 836 (+616).</p> <p>e-Newsletters: East Devon e- newsletters – 13,282 subscribers (+3,882); Total no of East Devon e-newsletters sent out during 2020; 217 (+161) including 55 Coronavirus residents’ and business updates.</p> <p>Media: Press inquiries: 252 (-100) Press releases: 142 (+11) Statements: 141 (+12)</p> <p>Web: East Devon app – 25,260 (+4,670) Website visits – 1,292,482 visitors (+293,440)</p>	
3	Worked with Councillors and the Senior Management Team to develop and publish the new Council Plan.	
4	Supported the provision of internal communications with staff, including the publication of the weekly Stay Connected newsletter	
5	Staff survey and resulting action plans	
6	Creation of a new welcome module for staff	
7	Made the EDDC website compliant with accessibilities laws, major upgrades to the website with Strata – improving site speed and people’s experience with the mobile site.	

8	Worked with the Customer Services Team to move our services digitally, this includes the creation of new Firmstep/Gov Services forms and associated improvements to the website	
9	Chaired groups to work across departments to trouble-shoot issues of concern such as staff shortages which impacts upon service delivery	
10	Updated and reviewed the Corporate Equality and HR policies	
11	Worked with town and parish councils to spend S106 monies, including undertaking consultations for local projects. This has included undertaking projects on behalf of StreetScene allocating over £200,000 of capital project spend on play areas.	Better home and communities for all
12	Worked with Elected Members to distribute over £25,000 to worth community based not for profit projects through Crowd Fund East Devon.	Better home and communities for all
13	Worked with the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector and Councillors to put forward a proposal to council for providing support to this sector within East Devon.	Better home and communities for all
14	Organised and facilitate the council's Working Together Event for the voluntary and community sector in the district.	Better home and communities for all
15	Undertook the Public Toilets Review Consultation.	Better home and communities for all
16	Maintained the list of Coronavirus community support information on the Covid-19 hub on the website up to date. Ran support meeting for the voluntary and community sector on covid-19 related topics.	Better home and communities for all
17	Undertook communications for the Emerging new local plan	Better home and communities for all A greener East Devon A resilient economy

Section 3 – Looking forward : what we will do in 2022-23 (service objectives)				
Key Service Objectives (<i>please include consultation or procurement activity required</i>)	Financial/ corporate resource	Lead Officers	Start date	End date
<i>Please highlight any projects so that they may be recorded and monitored in SPAR. See project guidance document for the definition of a project.</i>				
1) Better homes and communities for all				

Keep the Coronavirus community support information on the website hub up to date and relevant. Support the voluntary sector who are provide Covid-19 related support to its residents and community	Corporate resource	Jamie Buckley	Ongoing	Ongoing
Where S106 monies remain and are available to be spent by a community support the public engagement on how this is spent and help is given to enable easy access to funds	Corporate resource	Jamie Buckley	Ongoing	Ongoing
Distribution of grants to town and parish councils and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and providing associated support to enable them to provide community services and facilities	Corporate resource	Jamie Buckley	Ongoing	Ongoing
2) A greener East Devon (to include any climate change objectives)				
3) A resilient economy				
4) Other relevant considerations				
Develop performance reporting and produce reports to go alongside the new Council Plan	Corporate resource	Joanne Avery	Ongoing	Ongoing
Improve the delivery of digital communication channels to increase local resident interaction and engagement with the council	Corporate resource	Andrew Hopkins / Beth Sharp / Victoria Williams	Ongoing	Ongoing
Work across departments to deliver the move of services to digital platforms	Corporate resource	Andrew Hopkins / David Martin / Postholder to be recruited / Marcus Roberts	Ongoing	Ongoing

Establish an equality training and support programme with associated systems in place to support the council meet its legal obligations	Corporate resource	Andrew Hopkins	Ongoing	Ongoing
Continue to develop existing lagan transactions into Firmstep/Gov Services; reducing cost and creating efficiencies in each process	Corporate resource	Postholder to be recruited / Andrew Hopkins	Ongoing	Ongoing
Support the HR and Payroll team with the new meta compliance policy reminder system	Corporate resource	Joanne Avery	Ongoing	Ongoing
Refresh 'Knowing East Devon' following the release of Census data from the 2021 census	Corporate resource	Joanne Avery	April 2022	September 2022
Develop Power BI dashboards and agree a corporate approach for the collation and delivery of this data	Corporate resource	David Martin	Ongoing	Ongoing
Following the Staff Survey in December 2021 carry out a review of staff communications channels including the intranet and newsletter. Investigate the creation of new ways to inform staff of the work of other departments at the council	Corporate resource	Marcus Roberts / Beth Sharp / Victoria Williams	April 2022	June 2022
Continuing to refresh the East Devon website and app to improve the users journey and access to online services as part of our channel shift project	Corporate resource	Marcus Roberts	Ongoing	Ongoing
Continue to carry out Staff Surveys regularly and support SMT+ and Councillors in creating Action Plans from the results	Corporate Resource	Jamie Buckley	Ongoing	Ongoing
Explore innovative digital ways of consulting our residents to establish snapshot views to help us improve our services	Corporate Resource	Jamie Buckley	Ongoing	Ongoing
Carry out a residents' viewpoint survey and develop an action plan to improve our services	Mainly Corporate Resource, but also financial	Jamie Buckley	May 2022	March 2023

	implications of roughly £6,000.			
If funding for voluntary and community sector support is approved by Council will work with the voluntary sector to put this into place.	£60,000	Jamie Buckley	As soon as possible	October 2022
Renew the Community Engagement Policy.	Corporate Resource	Jamie Buckley	December 2021	September 2022
Organise and run the Working Together for the Future of East Devon event for voluntary and community groups and social enterprises.	If in person, financial resource of around £2,000. If virtual, just Corporate Resource	Jamie Buckley	July 2022	November 2022

Section 3 a – Looking forward: options for doing things differently – this section is vital due to the funding gap we face over the next few years.

Please outline any opportunities to do things differently.

1. As a new team we are continually striving to find new and more efficient ways of delivering our service

Section 3 b – Looking forward: Changes to measures and performance indicators - what we will measure, how often and for whom

Measure/indicator	How often – monthly, quarterly, bi-annually, annually	For whom? Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny	Link to Corporate Priorities (listed on page 3 1,2,3 or 4)	Responsible Officer for production of management information	Retain this measure (yes/no) or new
Grant delivery for EDDC	Annually	Cabinet and Scrutiny as required	Linked to our vision and values	Jamie Buckley	Yes
Newsletter subscribers	Annually	Cabinet and Scrutiny as required	Linked to our vision and values	Andrew Hopkins / Beth Sharp	Yes

Power BI dashboard activity for EDDC	Annually	Cabinet and Scrutiny as required	Linked to our vision and values	Joanne Avery / David Martin	Yes
Social media activity for EDDC	Annually	Cabinet and Scrutiny as required	Linked to our vision and values	Andrew Hopkins / Beth Sharp	Yes
Transfer of services online	Annually	Cabinet and Scrutiny as required	Linked to our vision and values	Postholder to be recruited / Andrew Hopkins	Yes
Website and app activity for EDDC	Annually	Cabinet and Scrutiny as required	Linked to our vision and values	Andrew Hopkins / Marcus Roberts	Yes

Section 4 – Resources and workforce planning

Full time equivalents/Headcount as at 01/10/2021	FTE = 5 Headcount = 4.76
Turnover (April 2020 to March 2021)	Voluntary Turnover = N/A Voluntary & Non Voluntary Turnover = N/A
Absence (April 2020 to March 2021)	Days lost per person: N/A

Section 5 – Training and development

Team based skills/development required – please identify training required that is not currently available	Who for	Expected outcome	When
1. Equality training plan.	Whole team	Improved skills and resilience for the team	September 2022
2. New systems training	Whole team	Improved skills and resilience for the team	June 2022

3. Skill sharing training plan	Whole team	Improved skills and resilience for the team	March 2023
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Section 6 – Reducing our carbon footprint	
In what ways is your service contributing to our carbon footprint	What can you do to reduce this impact
We await the worksmart review which is due to report in Spring 2022	Reducing travel to work and unnecessary printing of documents
Through digital file storage and use	Carry out a digital housekeeping exercise to reduce any necessary file storage and use of email

Section 6 – Risks			
New/emerging risks description – See attached Risk Register for current service risks	Impact [minor, significant, serious, major]	Likely-hood [remote, unlikely, likely, very likely]	How managed/controlled What action will you take to reduce/minimise risk
1. Team resilience, due to individual specialisms within the team	Minor	Unlikely	Skill-sharing project to enable greater understanding of roles within the team
2. Reputational damage to the organisation	Significant	Likely	Through the management of organisation messages and response service
3. Accessibility and accuracy of website	Minor	Likely	Ensure training is provided to web authors and regular audits are carried out by the Digital Services Officer
4. Risk of Judicial Review if a consultation is not carried out appropriately, mainly with regard to equality impacts and assessment.	Serious	Unlikely	The team having oversight of council consultations.

5. Risk of grant funding public money being given to ineligible organisations or projects.	Significant	Unlikely	The team having oversight of grant applications, assessments and decisions.
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Section 7 - Equalities and safeguarding		
New / emerging equalities risks	Impact Level [High, Medium, Low]	How managed/controlled
1. Ensuring training is regularly undertaken	High	Working with the HR and Payroll team to ensure this takes place