



INTRODUCTION

This strategy is based on the guiding principles that communication must be effective and that protocols should be followed to ensure clarity and professionalism. The strategy covers both internal and external communications. The Council aims to be transparent in its dealings and for communications to be timely and effective.

OBJECTIVES

The Council aims to reach everyone who has an interest in the town, be it that they live, work, or visit Andover. It is important that we can effectively communicate with anyone who is interested and may want to become involved in decision making for the town. These people include:

- Andover residents
- Community groups and organisations
- Agencies and partners (including the local police)
- Local schools
- County and Borough Councillors
- The local MP
- Local businesses and employers
- Voluntary groups
- Local media
- Tourists
- Workers
- Other interested parties

GENERAL RULES OF COMMUNICATION

It is important that all Council communications are effective and in so doing must be:

- Short and to the point
- Courteous
- In plain language
- Based on facts and information
- In a consistent format and style
- Clear about the action required or taken.
- Informative

METHODS OF COMMUNICATION



Communication and Involvement Strategy and Policy – 2024

The Council will use a variety of methods of communication based on what reaches its intended audience most effectively and efficiently. Over 80% of the population generally use electronic communication now (Office for National Statistics), so this is the Council's preferred and primary method of communication.

However, we recognise that not all people are able to or wish to use electronic methods of communication, so we will continue to utilise different media and approaches to reach our audiences.

THE TABLE BELOW SHOWS OUR MAIN MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

Council Website	The Council website is our primary method for general communication with our stakeholders. It has recently been totally overhauled. Its existence needs to be more widely publicised. We wish to make it the main means for two-way communication between the Council and its stakeholders. The website must be kept up to date and we want to include information on activities and news on an ongoing basis, as well as provide details of the Council's policies and procedures. We also need more links to other websites offering information considered to be of interest to our stakeholders. There is means to sign up for emailed newsletters but there needs to be more take up of this.
Town Clerk's contact details	Contact details are published on the website to encourage open access.
Council notice boards	The noticeboards are updated regularly with important information about the Council's activities and events.
Council meetings	All Council meetings are publicised and are open to the public to attend. There is a short period at the start of each Council meeting where the Council are able hear issues raised by members of the public. This is a very important part of our communication strategy. Members of the public are then welcome to stay and hear the rest of the meeting.



Communication and Involvement Strategy and Policy – 2024

Council Agendas and Minutes	Agendas of Council meetings are available to all on the website and on the council notice boards. Minutes are on the website and are available on request by email.
Annual Assembly	The Annual Assembly is held in May every year and provides an opportunity to communicate and discuss Council activities over the past year and objectives for the following year.
Press Releases	Press releases are given to local media on significant points of interest or achievement.
Councillor's Representation and Networking	We are committed to regular involvement with local groups and organisations through representation.
Facebook	Andover Town Council has a Facebook page which is regularly updated with news and meeting information.
External Correspondence	We will reply to external correspondence in a timely manner which is both courteous and compliant with the General Rules of Communication (see above).
Internal Correspondence	Internal communication is to be simple, courteous, and kept to a minimum, in accordance with the General Rules of Communication (see above). Matters should not be debated by email but debated at public meetings to uphold democratic values.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE

For details of our full Privacy Policy, please refer to www.andover-tc.gov.uk.

Alternatively, you may write to us at Andover Town Council, 38 Chantry Way, Chantry House, Andover, Hampshire, SP10 1LS.