

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Date: 19th September 2016

Community Magazines

1. Purpose of Report

Seek support for the continuation of a twice-yearly community magazine for the area councils.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 **The area council approve the production of two further community magazines for the Dearne area as outlined in this report.**
- 2.2 **The area council note the human and financial resource requirements linked to this approach, including officer/member time and distribution costs of approximately £2,667.00 for two further editions**
- 2.3 **The area councils note the process for signing off future publications.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The area councils (excluding Central) have so far produced two community magazines which have been distributed to resident's homes in December 2015 and July 2016. We are currently out of contract for future editions.
- 3.2 The community magazine is designed and printed at no cost to the area councils as this is subsidised by 12 pages of advertising. However, the production of the magazine takes significant time and resource from the area council, members and communications and marketing team. This resource is used to write and proof copy, source distribution and liaise with the designers.
- 3.3 Due to the large areas and mixed postcodes, the distribution of the magazines has been difficult to organise. Some households have received the wrong copies of the community magazines, which has been inevitable when distributing copies from first four parts of postcode data. Communications and marketing have outlined recommendations to improve this process in section 5.2 of the paper.

4. **Feedback**

4.1 Residents were asked to complete a survey to give their feedback on the magazines. The survey had 25 responses. 65 per cent found the information useful. Comments about the magazines were mixed, many asked for more up to date information about local events and activities that community members could get involved in. 90 per cent of those that answered the survey said they would like to see more information about their local area. A full copy of the survey report can be found in Appendix 1.

Other feedback;

- The Dearne Area Team and local groups have had a positive response to the newsletter with a cash donation given to the Salvation Army

4.2 It is suggested that evaluation of each community magazine edition continues to keep up to date with the feedback from residents. Area councils are encouraged to ask for feedback via their social media channels and face to face.

5. **Distribution costs**

The December 2015 magazine was solely delivered by Royal Mail

	Households	Cost of distribution by Royal Mail
Dearne	10,582	£1,333.33

The July 2016 edition was part delivered by Royal Mail and part delivered by a local distribution company.

	Households	Cost of distribution by Royal Mail
Dearne	10,582	£1,333.33

This will be an approximate cost of £2,667.00 for two further editions out of Dearne Area Council finances

6. **Future editions**

To improve the way in which the magazines are collated and distributed in the future, communications and marketing recommend the following:

6.1 The production of the magazines will be staggered. This will allow area councils to have more up to date content and a shorter timescale of turnaround. This process will be trailed and monitored to review if it works better than one deadline for all area councils.

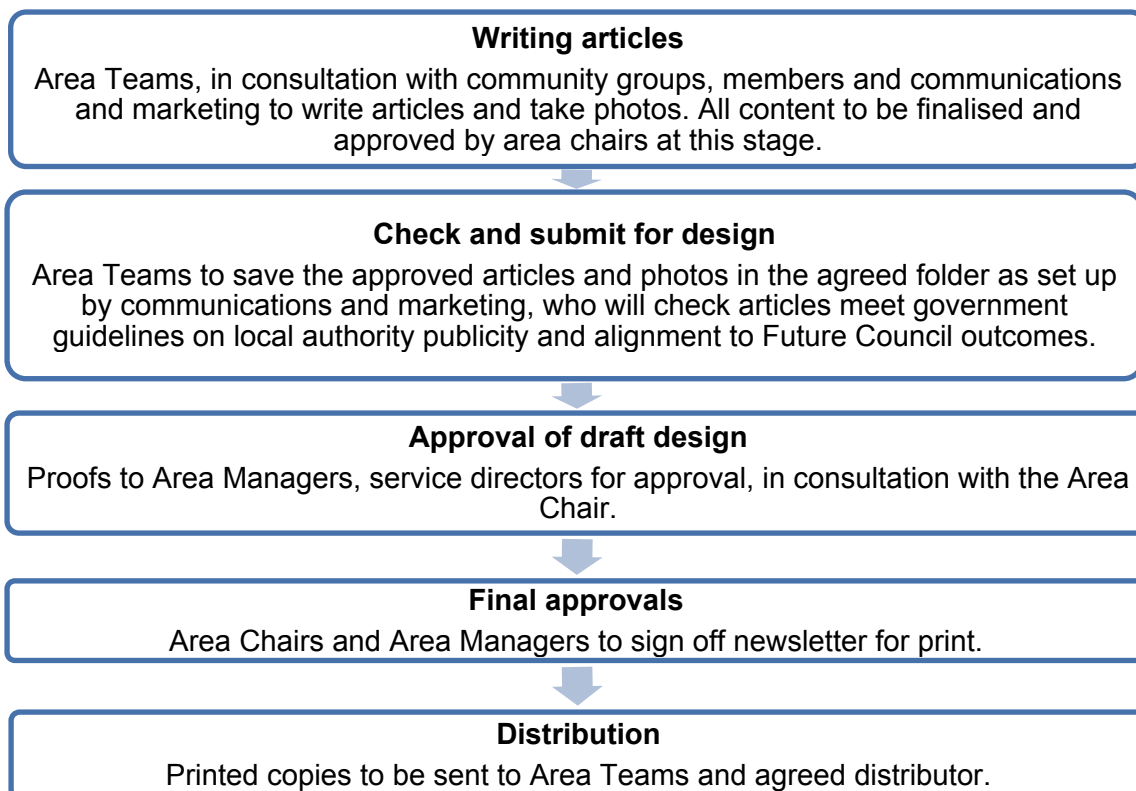
6.2 To improve distribution of the magazines, communications has two proposed methods:

- Tender for a distributor for all of the area council magazines.

- Each area council is responsible for sourcing a distributor for their area magazine.

The responsibility for the distribution will be with the Stronger Communities service.

- 6.3 Communications and marketing will produce a template which will guide area councils on the type of information which may be useful to include in the magazines. This will allow for a mix of content including health information, future council messages, up to date information about local events and activities for residents.
- 6.4 Features focusing on other council services that apply to all areas such as waste, school admissions, and cultural events may be included if it is viewed to be relevant and considered appropriate by area managers and elected members. The communications and marketing team will provide this content.
- 6.5 If the continuation of the magazines is approved. The next issue will be published in the winter of 2016 (through a staggered approach) and again the summer of 2017.
- 6.6 The roles and responsibilities are outlined in the flow chart below;



7 Next steps

- 7.1 If recommendations are agreed, communications and marketing with liaise with designers to sign new contract for future magazines.