

Libraries Review

2018

Communication and consultation plan



1. Background

Barnsley Council is redesigning the borough's library and customer services. We value our libraries. Libraries have a strong place in Barnsley's future. We need to inspire Barnsley residents to work with us to develop and deliver the vision for future libraries.

To support this, we carried out an initial engagement process in 2016 to find out what people want from their local libraries. Engagement activity took place with all stakeholder groups, including residents and employees.

More than 2,000 public responses were received. This helped us to build a picture of how people are using libraries. This data, combined with a comprehensive local needs assessment and libraries information, has helped us to see how we can prioritise services.

The next stage was a further engagement period, during autumn 2017, to share initial findings and proposals and gain feedback from selected groups.

This Communications and consultation strategy sets out how we will conduct robust **consultation between 21 June and 21 September 2018.**

Our approach will be honest and open. We will help people understand the reasons behind proposed changes and give them access to a range of information.

This document sets out the proposed communications and consultation activity.

2. Aim

This campaign has one clear measurable communications aim.

Objective: Stakeholders have sufficient information about the proposed changes and the opportunity to have their say.

Measure: Pre and post campaign visitors to the let's talk libraries section of the council website

Measure: Amount of media coverage generated through PR activity

Measure: Reach and engagement of social media posts

Measure: Number of consultation responses

3. Key messages

What's the plan for libraries?

- In response to reducing budgets and changing customer needs, we're working with local communities to create a modernised library service with the new Library@theLightbox at its heart.
- This is an extension of the conversations we had last year – this is the formal consultation.
- We're not closing any libraries – we're looking at the needs of each area to create a service that works for everyone.
- The Council will have less money to spend by 2020. We will need to save £872k on customer services, including a £165k specifically for library services.
- This means we need to change the way we run libraries.

What have we found from our engagement activity?

- Each area of Barnsley has its own needs. We need to create a library service to meet these needs.
- We are required to have a model that meets the statutory requirements of the Public Libraries & Museums Act
- We know that people are using less traditional library services – they're going online and using libraries as meeting places and for activities.
- We know that only 7% of people living in Barnsley borrow from libraries.
- Partners and community groups have already told us they'd like to be involved in developing the library offer.
- We need to use more IT and digital technology, explore opening hours.
- Many people have told us they prefer reducing opening hours to alternative changes.

Next steps:

- The survey is live from 21 June to 21 September 2018. It's online at www.barnsley.gov.uk/letstalklibraries
- We'll review the feedback and make the decision by January 2019.
- Any changes will come into effect in April 2019.
- Find out how to get involved at Barnsley.gov.uk/letstalklibraries

Appendix J

4. Implementation plan and activity log

The outline below acts as a working document for the project group. Officers can add activity where required and keep a log of all work completed. This will act as evidence of communications and consultation work carried out. Its effectiveness can be reviewed during and after the project, to provide learning for future projects.

Key: **Greyed out text** = completed activity

Month	Exact date	Project milestone	Activity	Progress	Lead
June 2018	tbc	Library Staff Communication complete	Pre-publication briefings for libraries employees		Kathryn Green
June 2018	tbc		Book media briefing into diaries Email MPs regarding strategy, plans and timeline		Omar Khan
June 2016	6 th June 2018	All Member Briefing	All Member Briefing on strategy, plans and timeline		Kathryn Green
May 2018			Develop script and FAQs doc for project leads and media briefing Sign off news release ahead of publication Develop social media plan Update /letstalklibraries web page		Comms

Appendix J

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June 2018	tbc		Pre-publication briefing for local media		Comms
June 2018	1 st June – 13 th June 2018	Cabinet papers published	<p>Publish needs assessment, survey feedback, updated FAQs (FAQs would be done post Call In (21.6.18) on /letstalklibraries section of the website at same time as cabinet papers are published.</p> <p>Issue news release and social media posts.</p>		<p>Comms</p> <p>Omar Khan/Kathryn Green</p>
June 2018	13 th June 2018	Cabinet meeting	Live social media posts from cabinet as item is discussed.		Comms
June 2018	21 st June 2018	Consultation starts	<p>Communications activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular news releases • Two social media posts per week • Regular appearance in Open Mail, the council's external e-bulletin • Regular articles in Straight Talk for employees • Communication to schools at the beginning of the consultation and follow up reminder after the summer holiday. <p>Consultation activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MP email briefings • Equality forum sessions 		<p>Comms</p> <p>Omar Khan/Kathryn Green</p>
September 2018	21 st September 2018	Consultation period ends	Announce closure. Thanks and next steps.		Comms