

Bridgend County Borough Council Communications, Marketing and Engagement strategy, 2019-2021



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1. Overview

The purpose of this strategy is set out the approach the council will take when communicating, consulting and engaging with its stakeholders.

The council's stakeholders can be broadly defined as our citizens (those who live here and use our services), businesses (existing and potential), our public, private and third sector partners, and any person visiting Bridgend County Borough.

2. Communications

Communications with our stakeholders should be relevant, targeted and accessible and should link back to the council's vision and priorities.

We should seek to inform, consult and/or engage citizens, not to impress. This is easier to manage when the message is being controlled centrally e.g. through the Communications, Marketing and Engagement team, but it is important that the whole authority communicates in a way that puts stakeholders, especially our citizens, first.

The council should always communicate in a way that is:

- **Consistent and appropriately branded**
The council's [brand guidelines](#) provide employees with information on using the council's logo, typeface, colour palette and imagery as well as providing examples of branded documents, adverts, signage, stationery and other materials. The guidelines also provide information on the use of partner's logos and sub-brands. Information about briefing and accessing the approved list of designers is also included.
- **Accurate and informative**
- **Clear and unambiguous**
- **Honest**
- **Bilingual, in English and Welsh**
The council received its Welsh Language Standards compliance notice in September 2015. Under these standards we are required to ensure that all public-facing materials (letters, documents, promotional materials, website etc.) are fully bilingual and that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language. Further information on our commitments under the Welsh Language Measure can be found on the [Welsh Language Standards](#) section of the intranet.
- **Timely**
- **Meaningful**
- **Accessible**
Further information on alternative formats can be found on page 39 of the council's [brand guidelines](#).

- **Uses 'plain English' as best practise**

Further information on the use of plain English can be found on page 35 of the council's [brand guidelines](#).

The council recognises that effective communication and meaningful engagement is an important factor in how citizens feel about the services we provide.

3. Dealing with the media

The policy at Bridgend County Borough Council is that staff who receive a call from the media should refer it to the Communications team for handling. Further information is provided in the council's [media guidelines](#).

4. Consultation and engagement

The council has made a commitment to endorse the [National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales](#) as best practise as well as Gunning's principles surrounding legal guidance.

The council recognises the importance of our stakeholders, and in particular our citizens, feeling that they are able to influence our priorities and the way in which our resources are directed within their own communities. Citizens should be actively encouraged to participate in our engagement and consultation activities.

The way in which we engage with our audiences is critical to understanding our stakeholders' views. This can also lead to more effective, citizen-centred services, a better reputation and improved relationships.

Consultation and engagement can cover statutory, policy or discretionary based interaction. It can be used in many ways including to: generate ideas, prioritise services, set performance standards, and improve delivery. The council has an authority-wide [consultation and engagement toolkit](#) in place to ensure our engagement is consistent, robust and effective.

The toolkit helps managers to identify which is more suitable; consultation or engagement, covers project planning, identifying resources, understanding and reaching audiences, the different consultation and engagement techniques, the live period, data analysis and reporting as well as evaluation. The toolkit has been developed with Participation Cymru and Gunning's principles in mind and has been user-tested with senior managers.