

## **Marketing & Communications Update Policy & Resources Committee December 2018**

### **Corporate Events**

Planning and delivering pre-event promotional activity across channels, during-event social media coverage and post-event press and social coverage is a substantial area of marketing and communications support service in the latter part of the calendar year.

The Halloween and Christmas event programmes have now been completed:

- Friday 26 October Halloween Dungannon
- Saturday 27 October Halloween Cookstown
- Wednesday 31 October Halloween Maghera
- Friday 23 November Christmas Cookstown
- Saturday 24 November Christmas Magherafelt
- Saturday 24 December Christmas Dungannon
- Saturday 1 December Christmas Maghera
- Saturday 2 December Christmas Coalisland.

Individual evaluations of each event are being undertaken and, continuing the new approach to how the service delivers feedback, an events review meeting will be scheduled in January to allow greater engagement and timely discussion which can inform decisions and activities for next year.

In addition, the service has provided significant support for two community-planning related events in October:

- Monday 15 October Mid Ulster Skills Forum Report & Action Plan (widespread regional broadcast coverage secured on BBC radio and television).
- Monday 22 October Community Planning Convention

The social media coverage, including the out-of-hours coverage, represented the first efforts to build improved partner-communication buy-in and showed signs of early success, with posts liked, shared and re-tweeted by partner organisations, partner staff and key influencers.

The service has also supported the delivery and promotion of 3 civic events:

- Tuesday 16 October Civic Reception
- Monday 12 November Civic Honours
- Thursday 29 November Civic Reception

### **Recycling 2018-2019 Campaign Plan 'Are You A Recycling Hero?'**

The new 'hero or zero' recycling campaign launched on 24 September 2018 to coincide with this year's Recycle Week.

The campaign focuses on reinforcing existing positive behaviour among recyclers, while encouraging behaviour change in those who recycle less, not at all, or incorrectly. This approach is endorsed via the research results and guidance received via WRAP.

The 'hero' concept itself is rooted in the idea of telling Mid Ulster's recycling story, not from the Council's perspective, but from our residents'. And every story has a hero. So who are the recycling heroes in Mid Ulster?

This campaign changes the traditional recycling narrative to engage with local people at a range of levels, using a specially devised online quiz for participants to test whether they are a recycling hero or a recycling zero; tapping into the on-going popularity of superheroes with children and young people by using superheroes like Batman and Spiderman and our own Mid Ulster heroes Eco-Eddie and Eco-Edwina; taking the message practically to the local community via a partnership with Tesco in the 3 main towns; refreshing the recycling education programme's theme to reflect the hero story and online interaction; re-framing routine recycling-related activities to reflect the hero story.

The campaign is structured to be omni-channel i.e. where every channel we use is seamlessly connected visually, verbally and virtually, while prioritising a digital first approach.

By mid-November:

- The recycling hero web page had more than 2,300 page views, with the average time spent on the page recorded as a very positive 1 minute 54 seconds,
- 1,269 people had taken the online quiz
- 223 quiz-takers had left us their 'recycling hero' stories, providing a wealth of material to generate fresh social media content and for further 'story' work.

A cinema ad, using the recycling hero theme will run w/c 14 December for 2 weeks, coinciding with the release of 2 superhero movies.

The campaign will then also adopt a seasonal flavour for the Christmas period.

### **Leisure & Outdoor Recreation**

Two major pieces of work have been completed for leisure and outdoor recreation in the form of draft marketing strategies and action plans for each element of the service. These will now be reviewed and finalised with the Department for on-going implementation.

The non-user survey work is due for completion by the end of December and the outcome will help to inform the future development and shape of the leisure offering to residents.

On-going support continues to be provided on specific campaign development and delivery to promote programmes, which has most recently included the Junior Gym in Dungannon, the new coach education programme and the up-coming swim programme.

Resources are also being dedicated to the Portglenone Blueway meetings and to work with tourism/event organiser to maximise profile for the project and the anticipated European Championships.

### **Digital Development**

A wider review of our key digital channel, the Council's web site, has resulted in a new digital development project.

Now almost 4 years old, the site went live to coincide with Mid Ulster District Council coming into being on 1 April 2015. The existing site has remained largely static in terms of design, content structure and functionality.

In the intervening years, the digital landscape has evolved and customer expectations have grown alongside in terms of digital access and, perhaps more crucially, digital expectation.

Allied to Corporate Improvement Objective 3 which focusses on increasing access to our on-line services, the service has now reviewed the design and structure of the current site with a view to:

- in the short-term, making use of our existing digital technology to create greater interaction and engagement with customers, improving how we meet our customers' and our business needs
- planning for a longer-term digital strategy for Mid Ulster District Council.

Our initial review work will now lead to the development of:

- a new framework for the homepage
- a completely new content structure for economic development
- a completely new content structure for leisure, with other elements of the site to follow.

The new-look site should be completed by March 2019.

### **Insight Magazine**

Insight, the Council's magazine for residents, was written, edited and designed in-house for distribution to more than 50,000 homes in Mid Ulster w/c 13 November.

The 16-page magazine featured Christmas events, recycling, community planning, investment in leisure, local villages, tourism and waste, as well as useful winter-related information and contact numbers.

## Core Service Activity Levels

News releases issued in September and October 2018.

*Note: news releases are not an end in themselves and are often simply the core script. Further creative content and messaging evolves to suit different audiences and translates into activity across channels.*

	No issued	Breakdown by service area:
<b>Sept 18</b>	17	Environmental Services 5; Econ Dev 3; Environmental Health 2; Parks 2; Leisure 1; Tourism 1; Culture & Arts 1; Council General 1; Chair 1.
<b>Oct 18</b>	21	Events 5; Econ Dev 4; Council General 3; Culture & Arts 3; Environmental Services 1; Environmental Health 1; Good Relations 1; Leisure 1; Chair 1.

## Media Enquiries

The volume of media enquiries in July came close to the highest levels to date (May 2018 at 49) and the service performed well in terms of response timeliness, particularly given the holiday period.

	No received	No answered in 4hrs	Fastest response time	Slowest response time	Top Topic(s)	Top Source(s)
<b>Sept 18</b>	18	12	12mins	9hrs 59mins	All individual subjects.	Ulster Herald (3); Derry Post (3); Tyrone Courier (3)
<b>Oct 18</b>	28	22	Immediate	7 days	Dark Sky project (4); GP provision, Dungannon (3)	Tyrone Courier (9); Dungannon Herald (8)