

## **SMT June 2019**

### **Marketing & Communications Update**

#### **Summary**

This update relates to the 3 month period from February 2019 to April 2019.

- Media relations work following the Greenvale Hotel tragedy was significant across both March and April, accounting for 41 of a total 114 media enquiries received.
- Media enquiries in March and April were at the highest levels to date.
- Election planning and preparation was a core focus in the period.
- PR for village renewal capital projects was a priority, with press and digital coverage delivered for 8 schemes.
- 'Event season' has begun with substantial resources allocated to marketing and communications campaign development and delivery. The concept for April's 'Wild Adventure Weekend' was well-received and the weekend itself a success in terms of reach, engagement and business feedback.
- Intensive work on the new web site has continued with a go-live date of June 2019.
- The Mid Ulster 'Recycling Heroes' campaign has been shortlisted for the National Recycling Awards.

#### **Major Incident**

Managing media relations in response to the Greenvale Hotel major incident was a significant element of the service's work in March and April.

Activity has spanned 3 phases to date, beginning with the initial crisis response in the first days following the tragedy, moving to public information provision in the support and (initial) recovery phase, and the third element relating to the Council's consideration of the Hotel's entertainment licence.

#### **Election 2019**

Marketing and Communications was responsible for the planning and delivery of admissions, information and media management at the election count.

#### **Recycling Campaign: Awards**

The Mid Ulster Recycling Heroes campaign was placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the external campaigns category of the first ever NI Public Sector Communications awards in March.

This was one of the most competitive categories and valued recognition from the communications' profession.

The campaign has also been shortlisted in the National Recycling Awards 'Campaign of the Year' category, with a final presentation to be delivered on 27 June 2019 to a judging panel in advance of that evening's awards ceremony.

#### **Event Marketing & Promotion**

*Wild Adventure Weekend*

The Wild Adventure Weekend (13 – 14 April), an event created by tourism's Outdoor Recreation and Events cluster, was directly supported by the service.

The initiative aimed to kick start the tourism season and contribute to the development of outdoor adventure and activity product in Mid Ulster. The service developed and delivered an integrated campaign in the weeks leading up to the event.

Evaluation demonstrated high levels of reach (over 84,000 people via 3 Facebook pages) and engagement (over 4,000 people reacted to posts), with feedback from businesses extremely positive. Jungle NI, for example, called the weekend a 'big hit', identifying major positive change in visitors from RoI over the weekend.

### *Parks*

As an outcome of the new Parks Marketing Strategy, a new campaign concept was developed and is now at delivery stage for 16 parks 'play near me' and 'summer sounds' events which take place across the summer months.

While a full evaluation will be undertaken on completion, initial evidence suggests that the re-shaped events with their focus on the local is proving popular, with higher than normal engagement and high participation rates.

### *FIPSeD European Coarse Angling Championship*

As well as ongoing support for the Portglenone Blueway and associated capital projects, marketing and communications is contributing to the 25<sup>th</sup> FIPSeD European Coarse Angling Championships (24 – 30 June) including via public relations, event organisation, promotion and press liaison.

### **Davagh Dark Skies**

As the newest flagship visitor attraction now under development, the service is giving increasing focus to the project.

A pre-opening calendar of potential promotional activity has been developed, while the core 'Question and Answer' document has also been drafted and remains live until project completion.

Brand development will begin in early June and the formal marketing strategy is now in development, informed by an initial customer mapping and persona development workshop with members of the project team.

The next significant element of work is web development and the identification of a ticketing solution.

### **Dungannon LC**

Marketing and Communications is supporting the capital works project now underway at Dungannon Leisure Centre with a tailored communications plan.

Covering both internal and external communications aspects, the plan is being delivered around 3 distinct phases:

1. Pre-renovation - key communications milestones e.g arrangements for staff and customers; award of contract.
2. During renovation – key communications milestones e.g. closure; contractor on site.
3. Post-renovation – key communications milestones e.g. preparation of centre for reopening; official launch.

### **Digital Development**

On completion of design work and content structure for the Council's new web site, the project reached technical build stage and content population is now underway.

Development of fresh content, which reflects the new look and, crucially, the navigability of the site in mobile responsive mode, has been intensive work, as has the editing of existing content to suit the new site.

The new site is scheduled to go-live at the end of June 2019,

Beyond the web site development work, Marketing and Communications has also brought its expertise in on-line booking and customer journeys to the cross-service team (IT and Leisure), involved in the delivery of a new consumer-facing online booking system.

The service continues to champion a 'digital first' approach'.

### **General Communications Support**

Communications support continues to be provided across departments and services and encompassing a wide range of projects and issues.

In the period under consideration, the villages programme was notable in this regard, with 8 schemes profiled in local press and online and the draft Local Development Plan launch and consultation also featured prominently in the service's work plan.

### **Core Service Activity Levels**

*News releases issued in November and December 2018 and January 2019.*

*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.*

|                 | <b>No issued</b> | <b>Breakdown by service area:</b>   |
|-----------------|------------------|---|
| <b>Feb 19</b>   | 20               | Economic Development 3; Chair 2; Parks 2; Planning 2; Community Development 2; Village Renewal 2; Council General 2; Leisure 1; Tourism 1; Arts 1; Environmental Health 1.        |
| <b>March 19</b> | 26               | Village Renewal 6; Economic Development 4; Arts 3; Chair 2; Greenvale Hotel 2; Leisure 2; Community Development 2; Tourism 2; Policy 1; Sustainability 1; Environmental Health 1. |
| <b>April 19</b> | 3                | Environmental Health 2; Leisure 1.  |

## Media Enquiries

The volume of media enquiries .

|                 | No received | No answered in 4hrs | Fastest response time | Slowest response time | Top Topic(s)   | Top Source(s)                                  |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|--|
| <b>Feb 19</b>   | 37          | 21                  | Immediate             | 3days, 7hrs, 3mins    | Rates (6); Advice Services (5)                             | Tyrone Courier (15); Dungannon Herald (9)      |
| <b>March 19</b> | 57          | 42                  | Immediate             | 30days 40mins         | Greenvale Hotel Tragedy (22); Seamus Heaney HomePlace (10) | Irish News (10); BBC (9); Dungannon Herald (7) |
| <b>April 19</b> | 57          | 51                  | Immediate             | 35hrs 12mins          | Greenvale Hotel Tragedy (19); Election (10)                | Irish News (26); Dungannon Herald (6)          |

### Service Priorities (June – September 2019)

- Marketing planning and delivery, including out of hours social media coverage, for corporate events:
  - Continental Market (1-2 June 2019)
  - Tafelta Festival (21-22 June 2019)
  - Lumarina (16 – 17 August 2019)
  - Walled Garden (24 August 2019)
- Delivery of a digitally-focussed campaign for the leisure summer programme in July and August.
- Finalisation of the action plan associated with the Leisure Marketing Strategy and move to implementation.
- Agreement and subsequent implementation of campaigns to tackle disability parking bays misuse at council facilities and to promote the GP referral scheme.
- Completion of Davagh Dark Skies marketing strategy and on-going development support (brand, web development).
- Content, design and edit of summer issue of residents' magazine, Insight, (to be delivered w/c 5 August 2019).

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24 May 2019