

# Communication Strategy

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## The Organisation

### Organisational overview

Burgess Hill Town Council serves over 33,000 residents, providing services and events. Our Communication Strategy needs to serve residents, informing them of the Council's work, updates on the town, and what is going on in the community. The Strategy also needs to serve Town Council staff and Councillors.

Community Engagement Team (CET) will have 4 members of staff from April 2026. Currently there is a HEAD OF Community Engagement (Full time 37 hours) and two Events, Communication and Administration Officers (one full time 37 hours and one part time at 32 hours – the new role will be 37 hours). All communication is issued from CET allowing for a more cohesive communication strategy, and these means of communication to be streamlined and approved.

Purpose of Strategy document is to ensure all staff and Councillors are aware of how we communicate with our residents.

### Existing Forms of Communication

External Communications	
Social Media – Facebook and Instagram	Immediate form of communication which can provide urgent updates on the town, up to date information on events. Promotion of Town Council events, community events, information from other councils and local organisations. Contact point for residents for queries. Paid advertising can be used to increase reach.
Event Notification	Email sign up for residents to be notified of all town events. This was set up at the end of 2021 and the current sign up for this as at January 2026 we have 750 email contacts.
Town Council website	Meets statutory requirements to display Councillor information, Minutes and Agendas and other important Council information. Source of information on Council services, and information on Burgess Hill. Changeable noticeboard section on the front page for promotion of events.
About Town magazine (residents communication via post)	Delivered to all households in Burgess Hill via Royal Mail, reaches residents who are not online, three times a year to over 15,000 households. Digital copy also available on our website.
About Town digital distribution	Email sign up for residents to be sent a digital copy of About Town

Noticeboards	Locations around the town, updated maximum once per week. Reaches residents who are not online. Priority goes to Council documents and posters.
Help Point window and display screen	Visible town centre location, regularly checked by people, particularly those who are not online.
Press Releases	Distributed to press list, Town Council staff and Councillors.
Banners and Posters around town	Primarily used for events, these can be hung at various points around town with visibility from the roads and roundabouts.
Residents Feedback	For each event delivered, shared during the event, as well as after via social media, and emailed to attendees if it was a bookable event. There is also a link on our website. Feedback can be left for any event across the year, irrelevant of how long since the event has passed.
Leader Updates	Created by Town Council Leader with dedicated section on website and promoted via social media.
Mayor's and or Leader Updates on the radio	A regular session with the Mayor on Mid Sussex Radio, to be publicised by Burgess Hill Town Council and released on our social media and website after the event. Questions can be taken from residents to be answered by the Mayor or Leader.
<b>Internal Communications</b>	
Briefing Note	A weekly update sent to all staff and Councillors via Mailchimp, with updates from the Town Council and external organisations.
Press Releases	Press Releases are sent to all staff and Councillors to keep them informed.
Microsoft office	Internal use of Emils – officers and councillors have burgesshill.gov.uk email addresses

## Goals and Tactics

Below are set out overall goals for the Town Council's Communications, and what can be done to achieve these goals.

- a) Support Town Events and wider community engagement programme
- b) Inform residents of what is going on in Burgess Hill
- c) Inform staff and Councillors of Town Council work and what is going on in Burgess Hill.

- Overall Goal A: Support Town Events and Engagement Programme

- Sub goal 1 Promote Town Events programme to residents
  - Activity: Consistent reach of publicity to include online and offline publicity
  - Tactics to complete the Activity:
    - Calendar of events for the coming months to be released quarterly to give advanced notice of events
    - Event-specific promotion to start 5-6 weeks before
    - Event pages to be set up on Facebook if working with co partners
    - Regular social media posting, including boosted posts if required
    - Press Releases to be sent out before events, and on upcoming events calendar
    - Noticeboards and Help Point displays to be used for posters and graphics to reach those not online
    - About Town articles on upcoming events
    - Events notification email list to be used
- Sub goal 2 Ensure Support for events
  - Activity: Encourage Councillor support and commitment from Community Groups
  - Tactics to complete the Activity:
    - Briefing note to be used to sign up Councillors
    - Meetings to be held with Community Groups to maintain relationships
    - Advanced communication with Community Groups to let them know of upcoming events and allow them to plan and prepare – circulate quarterly events calendar
- Overall Goal B: Inform residents of what is going on in Burgess Hill
  - Sub goal 1 Promote External events to residents
    - Tactics to complete the Activity:
      - Town Council social media and website to be used to promote events from local community groups
      - Noticeboards and Help Point window to display posters of events
      - About Town articles on external events

- All staff to give relevant information to CET
  - Sub goal 2 Inform residents of Town Council and other local authorities/utilities work in Burgess Hill (e.g. road closures, flooding issues, water shortages, major building works)
    - Tactics to complete the Activity:
      - Town Council social media and website to be used to share information from the Town Council and other local authorities
      - About Town articles
      - All staff to give relevant information to social media and Communications Officer
- Overall Goal C: Inform Staff and Councillors of Town Council work and what is going on in Burgess Hill
  - Tactics to complete the Activity:
    - Briefing Note sent out weekly compiling all useful information
    - Staff meetings – full staff meetings, Management team monthly meetings, one-to-one meetings – responsibility of Management team.
    - All staff to give relevant information to CET

### **About Town Review Due Quarter 4 2026**

Currently About Town is distributed three times a year, with a copy delivered to all households in Burgess Hill via Royal Mail. The cost per issue is made up of print costs, editorial costs, and Royal Mail delivery costs. The total cost for March 2026 edition is £7,360. There is some income coming from advertising but this does vary. This is available online to residents to access too. At Council in May 2022, it was agreed that Burgess Hill Town Council would continue to deliver written communications and CET feel this is very important to ensure all our residents are reached. About Town reaches those residents who are not online, and this should not be dismissed.

The current tender is due to end with the November 2026 edition, and this may be an opportunity for Council to consider distribution channels again as part of a cost review.

Policy produced and approved July 2022.

Reviewed in January 2026 by Head of Community Engagement.

To be reviewed in January 2029.