

Meeting of South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership	Strategic Planning Advisory Group	
Held on:	19th December 2023	
Agenda Item:	8	
Title:	Communications Strategy 2024-2027	
Summary:		
<p>The purpose of this report is to seek approval by the Strategic Planning Advisory Group to provide oversight to a new Communications Strategy for South Ayrshire. The report sets out why the timing is right for the work to begin and what the HSCP's ambitions will be for communications for the next period.</p>		
Author:	Kirsty Pyper, Planning and Performance Officer (Communications)	
Recommendations:		
<p>It is recommended that the Strategic Planning Advisory Group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Agrees to provide oversight and direction to a new Communications Strategy for South Ayrshire HSCP. II. Notes that progress reports will be brought to the Strategic Planning Advisory Group until the strategy is agreed by the Integration Joint Board by mid-2024. III. Note that a separate Engagement Plan for the South Ayrshire HSCP will be developed later in 2024. 		
Route to meeting:		
<p>The development of the communications strategy was agreed within the Strategic Plan. The strategy timeline was agreed by the Directorate Management Team on 6th September 2023.</p>		
Directions:		Implications:
1. No Directions Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Financial <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Directions to NHS Ayrshire & Arran	<input type="checkbox"/>	HR <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Directions to South Ayrshire Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	Legal <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Directions to both SAC & NHS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Equalities <input type="checkbox"/>
		Sustainability <input type="checkbox"/>
		Policy <input type="checkbox"/>
		ICT <input type="checkbox"/>

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2024-2027

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek approval by the Strategic Planning Advisory Group to provide oversight to a new Communications Strategy for South Ayrshire. The report sets out why the timing is right for the work to begin and what the HSCP's ambitions will be for communications for the next period.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Strategic Planning Advisory Group:

- I. Agrees to provide oversight and direction to a new Communications Strategy for South Ayrshire HSCP.**
- II. Notes that progress reports will be brought to the Strategic Planning Advisory Group until the strategy is agreed by the Integration Joint Board by mid-2024.**
- III. Note that a separate Engagement Plan for the South Ayrshire HSCP will be developed later in 2024.**

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Effective communication is at the very heart of achieving of the vision of the South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership. A key objective of the IJB's Strategic Plan is for the HSCP to be transparent and listen to our communities.
- 3.2 In preparing the Strategic Plan, the HSCP had to be innovative in its methods to engage meaningfully with communities and received support from partners to do this. Feedback on the HSCP's engagement with communities was gathered during the Strategic Plan consultation. A quarter of respondents felt that the HSCP engages poorly with communities. Suggestions to build on engagement so far included listening to people who use services, engaging face-to-face using a variety of communication methods.
- 3.3 Work has already taken place to improve the HSCP communications activities following the consultation period of the Strategic Plan, this has included the appointment of a dedicated Communications Officer for the organisation.
- 3.4 We have seen a significant improvement in our communications activities over the last 2 years. We now require formalising our communications processes and embed priorities to the work being taken forward.

4. REPORT

- 4.1 The HSCP previously developed a Participation and Engagement Strategy and a Communication Strategy which have been used as guidance documents for engagement and consultation work. South Ayrshire's Wellbeing Pledge emphasises the HSCP and communities working together to contribute to a common goal. The HSCP committed in the Strategic Plan to refresh our Communications and Participation and Engagement Strategies.
- 4.2 The current Communications Strategy will be reviewed and our intention is to publish a new Communications Strategy by mid-2024. Since the previous strategies were drafted a dedicated Communications Officer has been recruited by the HSCP to take forward the development of this strategy and the accompanying implementation plan which will see us deliver on our outcomes during the lifespan of the strategy.

Proposed Drafting Process

- 4.3 A Strategy Development Group will be established. This group will meet approximately monthly from January 2024 throughout the period of developing and writing the strategy.
- 4.4 A consultation plan will be developed to make sure all stakeholders are aware that a strategy is being developed and are aware of the part they can play in its development. As this strategy has a universal scope, communications will need to be made accessible. This will include HSCP staff, voluntary/third sector partners and the general public of South Ayrshire.
- 4.5 There will be close partnership working with South Ayrshire Council who presented their recently refreshed Communications Strategy to Cabinet on Tuesday 28th November 2023. Colleagues at NHS Ayrshire and Arran will also be consulted throughout the process and engaged with regularly.
- 4.6 It will be important to know how well the implementation of the plan is progressing. Therefore, the implementation plan should include detail on measurable performance indicators and outcomes, agreed responsibilities with timescales, a clear reporting process, a feedback loop process that ensures the HSCP learns along the way and enables it to change course when needed, and a plan for stakeholders to continue to influence the plan (engagement is not just for the strategy development phase).
- 4.7 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the strategy development process. This will be revisited at regular intervals during the strategy development process to ensure a fully inclusive approach.
- 4.8 A separate South Ayrshire HSCP Engagement Plan document will be developed later in 2024. The current engagement plan is still fit for purpose but requires a refresh. This will be progressed once the new structure of locality teams are fully established, and Partnership Engagement Officers are once again at capacity.

- 4.9 The monitoring and review of the Communications Strategy will be undertaken between the IJB and its sub-committees (SPAG and Performance and Audit Committee as appropriate).

5. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- 5.1 Effective communication is at the very heart of achieving of the vision of the South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership. A key objective of the IJB's Strategic Plan is for the HSCP to be transparent and listen to our communities.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial Implications

There may be financial implications of the Communications Strategy, but these implications will be brought to the IJB as appropriate.

6.1 Human Resource Implications

There are no HR implications to agreeing this report.

6.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications to agreeing this report.

6.3 Equalities implications

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this strategy and will be revisited throughout the strategy drafting process to ensure this is robust.

6.4 Sustainability implications

There are no sustainability implications to agreeing this report.

6.5 Clinical/professional assessment

The views of professional groups will be taken into account as the strategy is developed.

7. CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- 7.1 Consultation and engagement is key to the development of this strategy. A period of consultation will take place starting in January 2024 with updates brought to the Strategic Planning Advisory Group.
- 7.2 There is ongoing conversation with colleagues in both South Ayrshire Council and NHS Ayrshire and Arran Communications teams.
- 7.3 Further feedback will be sought through established communications groups including the Pan Ayrshire Communications Group (including NHS Ayrshire & Arran, Fire & Rescue, Police Scotland) and the National HSCP Communications group.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1. There are no risks associated with this paper.

REPORT AUTHOR AND PERSON TO CONTACT

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

4th December 2023