

Meeting of South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership	Strategic Planning Advisory Group	
Held on:	19th March 2024	
Agenda Item:	7	
Title:	Communications Strategy 2024 - 2027	
Summary:		
<p>The purpose of this report is to update the Strategic Planning Advisory Group on progress of South Ayrshire HSCP Communications Strategy 2024-27. The report sets where we are now and next actions on the development and sign off of this strategy.</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. Note progress made in the development of this Strategy. II. Provide any comments or changes required to draft. 		
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> <p>An initial update was provided to SPAG on 19th December 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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Strategic Planning Advisory Group on progress of South Ayrshire HSCP Communications Strategy 2024-27. The report sets where we are now and next actions on the development and sign off of this strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Strategic Planning Advisory Group:

- I. Note progress made in the development of this Strategy.**
- II. Provide any comments or changes required to draft.**

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 to formalise our communications processes and embed priorities to the work being taken forward.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 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.

- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 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).
- 3.9 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.
- 3.10 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. REPORT

- 4.1 Communications strategy is a regular item on the Communications monthly update to DMT.
- 4.2 An initial draft of the strategy content was taken to SMT for comment and input on Thursday 25 March 2024.
- 4.3 Communications Officer is meeting with SAC Communications manager on Friday 8th March to discuss this strategy and general working of the two teams. This will become a monthly meeting to ensure good communication between the teams and to work closer together on joint messaging where appropriate.
- 4.4 Communications Officer will be meeting with the Pan Ayrshire Communications group (as chair) on Thursday 21st March 2024. Communications strategies will be on the agenda and comments and input will be requested from partners in this group.
- 4.5 A Communications survey was developed and distributed in February 2024. This survey is open to both the general public of South Ayrshire as well as staff working in the South Ayrshire HSCP. This survey closes **on Friday 15th March**.
- 4.6 Feedback from this survey will be used to further develop the content of the Strategy, in particular looking at the Action Plan for 2024-27. A temporary

section has been added with feedback so far, a full analysis will be done and updated on the strategy document once the survey has been concluded.

4.7 Survey also included questions specifically for SA HSCP staff (only asked when user indicated they were a staff member). These questions asked specifically about internal communications including, how we communicate, how often we communicate and areas for improvement. This will be fed into the Action Plan for the survey and will influence changes internally to ensure we are meeting the needs of our staff.

4.8 The draft strategy will be shared on screen at today's meeting and circulated after for comments. Comments and changes will then be addressed with a view to submission at IJB for final approval.

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

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

6.2 Human Resource Implications

6.2.1 There are no HR implications to agreeing this report.

6.3 Legal Implications

6.3.1 There are no legal implications to agreeing this report.

6.4 Equalities implications

6.4.1 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.

6.5 Sustainability implications

6.5.1 There are no sustainability implications to agreeing this report.

6.6 Clinical/professional assessment

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

7. CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

7.1 A Communications Survey was issued out to staff, partners and the general public asking a series of questions to evaluate thoughts and opinions on communications at the moment and to advise on preferred routes for

improvement in our communications activity. This survey closes on **15th March 2024** and feedback will be featured in the Strategy and will shape the Action Plan aligned to this strategy.

- 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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