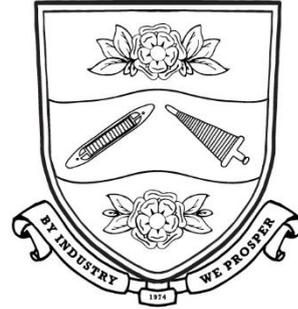**TODMORDEN TOWN COUNCIL**

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

(FIRST DRAFT)

Prepared by

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Town Clerk   Dec 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This plan is aimed at guiding how Todmorden Town Council seeks to provide a structure through which to take forward delivery of its services and to improve its communication with its internal and external stakeholders.

1.2 This plan operates under an emerging 5-year Strategic Overview of Todmorden Town Council, which whilst under consideration, is likely to focus on three key areas:

- ➢ Enabling and Facilitating
- ➢ Informing and Persuading
- ➢ Delivering limited Direct Services

that each contribute towards:

- ▪ Promotion of the Town
  - o Visitors- shoppers and tourists
  - o Living and working in Todmorden
  - o Businesses operating in Todmorden
- ▪ Growth of community groups operating in a voluntary capacity for the benefit of all.
- ▪ Prevention of flooding through influencing policy.
- ▪ Improving Community Relations
- ▪ Assisting residents to access higher tier authority services.

1.4 This plan will be reviewed against the emerging Strategic Overview and adapted accordingly should focus change.

1.5 Underpinning this Marketing Plan is a Communications plan that will through its actions help deliver the direction the Town Council wishes to move forward with and focussing on:

- • Keeping residents informed
- • Listening to their concerns
- • Helping the public inform our decision making

2. METHODOLOGY OF PLAN

2.1 The following model is adopted when considering the structure of this plan.

PR Smith's SOSTAC® Planning System (Smith, SOSTAC(r) Planning)

3. Situational Analysis – where are we now?

3.1 The Council has limited resources to dedicate towards driving forward public engagement and must therefore be structured and discipline in how it deals with this.

3.2 Engagement with the public has historically been though Member contact and public meetings.

3.3 Engagement with the voluntary sector is usually by affording grant assistance and through external representation of outside bodies.

3.4 Engagement with higher tier authority/other controlling bodies has historically tended to be in formal letter form when raising issues on behalf of residents.

3.5 Our reach must be for all which presents a challenge as to how best to communicate.

3.6 Political policy/direction tends to be more at higher authority level and focus on delivering outcomes for residents /groups regardless of political bias.

3.7 Our financial resource is limited without increasing Precept and income earning opportunity is highly restrictive given we do not deliver any services of an income generating nature.

3.8 Our audience has not traditionally engaged with us other than to bring to our attention issues and we have not taken the opportunity to be proactive about what we do.

4. Objectives -   Where do we want to be

4.1 We wish to engage more with our public and to keep them informed about what we do.

- ❖ telling people in formation to influence and change attitudes – proactive.
- ❖ Giving information to residents they want to know – reactive.

4.2 We wish to encourage greater feedback on what services we do provide.

- ❖ to raise resident's satisfaction, trust and confidence levels
- ❖ to raise awareness of services provided by the Town council

4.3 We wish to understand more how the Town Council through what it does, can help residents.

4.4 We want our voice to be heard at higher tier level

4.5 We want to support elected Members in their role as Community Leaders

4.6 We want to make best use of technology to innovate and engage with hard – to reach groups such as young people and BME audiences.

4.7 We need to proactively challenge inaccuracies and misrepresentations that might undermine the brand image or integrity of the Town Council.

5. Strategy – how do we get there?

5.1 This will be through a process of engagement and a more structured approach to communications, including a limited time, but nevertheless allocated resource of staff involvement.

5.2 Progress will generally be incremental as each area of a proposed Communications Plan starts to be implemented and importantly maintained.

5.3 Engagement with our Community will be the key to ensuring wea re doing what is expected of us and to ensure we are transparent in all our actions.

5.4 Communication will play an integral part in how we influence our residents view in a positive manner and will involve detailed practical action plans to be formulated covering how we approach each element

6. Tactics- how exactly do we get there?

6.1 Engagement will consist of:-

- At every Town Council and Committee meeting time will be set aside for members of the public to address the Town Council.
- The Annual Parish meeting will be promoted for the public to have the opportunity for their say in an open forum session.
- Continuing opportunity for residents to discuss matters with Town Councillors
- Continuing to appoint Town Councillors on outside bodies.

- Continue to use the website for receiving comments from the public.
- More active consultation on specific projects including:

  - identifying and engaging with key stakeholders
  - publicising widely and clear end date
  - why the need to consult and how used in decision process
  - consideration of timing – to avoid clashes with holidays
  - consideration of format

6.2   A more coordinated use of different media channels will be used:

- Press releases – widen circulation and plan more regularity to keep Town Council name in minds of public
- Publish regular newsletter
- Use website – keep current and news articles readily available
- Develop social media platforms and encourage multi-channel approach.
- Decide which medium to use

6.3   Throughout all Communication Channels we need to ensure the Town Council brand is consistent and linked to services:

- Making sure all staff and Town Councillors have access to electronic logo's and templates for press releases and or letters.
- Using a uniform font type- all printed communication should display the council logo and should use xxxx font sixe xxx

- Develop, a photographic library which supports the Town Councils brand and is available to staff, journalist, and partners online.
- If we do advertise to ensure the brand is reinforced
- Business cards for Town Councillors and staff
- Email footers
- Public notice advertisements
- Staff uniforms – if applicable at some future time.
- Signs on pieces of land owned by the Town Council
- Signs on benches owned by the Town Council.

6.4   Whilst focus is inevitably on external delivery, it is important to also ensure our internal customers- staff and Town Councillors are kept informed of all aspects of media communication, including an awareness of all Committee activity.

7.   Actions - the details of tactics?

7.1   Whilst there is an overarching Communications Plan, each area of media being used will have its own detailed action plan and will include: -

- Responsibilities and Structure - who/what/when
- Systems and Processes
- Checklists and guidelines
- Activity calendar

7.2   Key to success will be a co-ordinated approach to how we integrate all of our Communications and especially social media in terms of how we:

- Listen
  - Who are our customers
  - What make is of interest
- Plan
  - To increase public exposure

- Brand awareness
- Online support
  - Strategy
    - Content for different social media
    - Evaluation matrix
  - Tools
    - Short message/blog/photo/video/audio
    - Facebook/twitter/podcast/

7.3 It is important that after having carried out this activity, we know what it means in terms of success or otherwise to inform future strategy.

Measurement should capture:

- Raised awareness of the Town Council and the services it provides
- Attitudes towards Todmorden Town Council
- Participation and engagement with Council projects, initiatives and consultation processes

And will be carried out through:

- Consultation with residents – perception and satisfaction surveys
- Measure press coverage for saturation and against press releases for content usage
- Hits on website
- Number of Friends and Followers on Social Networking sites (if applicable)
- Staff survey