



Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) - Communications Strategy

Communications Strategy, Cabinet 22 April 2026

Stage	Title	Purpose
1	Preliminary Assessment	Initial assessment of possible impact.
2	Equality Risk Assessment	Scoring to assess the level of risk.
3	Equality Impact Assessment- Addressing Impact	Level of detail depends on risk assessment scoring but any removal or reduction in service must go through Stage 3.
4	Sign Off	Approval and decision-making details.
5	Implementation	Action Plan to implement and minimise impact.

Stage 1 – Preliminary Assessment

Question	Response/Consideration
1.1 Decision being assessed	Approval and implementation of the Castle Point Borough Council Communications Strategy 2026 , which sets out a modernised, strategic, inclusive and proactive approach to internal and external communications.
1.2 Lead Officer	Ben Brook – Assistant Director, Performance, Policy & Customer
1.3 What are the aims or function of the service or policy?	The Communications Strategy aims to: • Provide clear, consistent, accessible and proactive communication across all channels. • Support the Council's Corporate Plan and transformation programmes. • Improve transparency, trust and resident engagement. • Strengthen internal communications to ensure all staff feel informed, included and valued. • Modernise and professionalise the communications function following previous under-resourcing • Ensure information is accessible to diverse audiences across the Borough.
1.4 Which policies relate to the delivery of this service?	• Corporate Plan 2025–2028. • Customer Strategy. • Fit for the Future Transformation Programme. • LGR and Devolution–related programme changes

Question	Response/Consideration
1.5 Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected?	- Residents (inc. vulnerable groups, digitally excluded residents). - Businesses. - Employees (desk-based and non-desk-based). - Members. - Media and partners. - Community groups and voluntary sector.
1.6 Will removing, reducing or changing this service/policy lead to members of the community being treated less favourably and so contribute to inequality?	No. The strategy is designed to improve equality of access by increasing transparency, improving information flow, addressing digital exclusion, and strengthening internal communication—particularly for staff without regular digital access

Equality Aims – consider how the decision meets the three Equality Aims listed in the Equality Act.

Aim	How does the proposal / policy / service meet the equality aim?
To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Commits to accessible, inclusive communication for all audiences, including those with low digital access. Improves clarity and transparency, reducing barriers to understanding Council decisions. Strengthens staff communication so all employees receive consistent information.
To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic	Supports equal access to Council information and services by improving digital and non-digital channels (magazines, website, social media, internal channels). Reduces disadvantage for non-desk-based staff through more inclusive internal communications.

and those who do not	Encourages two-way engagement and listening, increasing opportunities for all groups to have their voice heard.
To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	Builds trust and transparency between the Council and the community. Promotes positive stories and community pride. Enhances engagement and partnership working with residents, media and businesses.

Stage 2 – Equality Risk Assessment - Protected Characteristic Groups

Place an 'X' in against either 'positive impact', 'negative impact', 'no impact' for each protected characteristic group

2.1 Assess the Equality Risk

	Age	Disability	Gender	Race	Sexual Orientation	Religion	Gender Reassignment	Marriage/Civil Partnerships	Pregnancy/Maternity
Positive impact	X	X		X					X
Negative impact									
No impact			X		X	X	X	X	

2.2 Conclusion – if there is 'No Impact' for all of the protected characteristics then stages 3 – 5 do not have to be completed

Some positive impacts identified—particularly for older people, disabled residents, digitally excluded groups and internal staff without digital access.

Stage 3 – Equality Impact Assessment – Addressing Impact

Question	Response/Consideration
3.1 What is the reason for the proposed decision/change?	To deliver a modern, strategic communications function that addresses historical under-investment, improves transparency, increases resident engagement, and strengthens internal communications during a period of significant organisational change.
3.2 What consultation activity has been undertaken or is planned?	Significant staff insights through the People Survey. Consultation with service leads and communications specialists Ongoing resident feedback through complaints, contacts and surveys. Future Residents' Survey to inform communication priorities (survey closes on 26 th March 2026)
3.3 Service Users – What methods are used to monitor the characteristics of service-users with protected characteristics?	Through surveys, consultations and engagement insights (residents and employees). Website analytics. Social media insights. Contact centre and service usage data
3.4 Referring to Stage 2, which 'protected characteristic' group(s)	Positively affected:

are most likely to be affected by this change? Describe any negative impacts identified in more detail. Outline ways in which negative or positive impacts will be addressed?	• Older residents • Disabled residents • Digitally excluded residents • Non-desk-based staff • Residents needing accessible information • Employees requiring more consistent communication Negative impacts identified: None directly, but risks include digital exclusion if online channels become overly dominant. Mitigation: • Retain non-digital channels (magazine, print, posters). • Improve website accessibility standards. • Develop inclusive content standards. • Improve internal communication access for operational staff. • Ensure content is written in plain English.
3.5 If the decision involves a service/policy being reduced/removed will this lead to missed opportunities to promote equality of opportunity?	Yes. Reducing or removing communication activities would reduce transparency, increase inequality of access, disadvantage digitally excluded groups, and weaken internal cohesion.

3.6 What outcome does this assessment suggest we take? Select one option and action to be taken

Option	Outcome	Tick Selected Option	Explanation
1	Continue with proposed changes No discrimination or adverse impact identified	☐	
2	Continue with proposed changes Suitable adjustments to lessen the impact identified	☒	The strategy enhances equality overall. Adjustments will ensure inclusiveness for all protected groups and those experiencing digital exclusion.
3	Continue despite adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality	☐	
4	Stop and rethink Actual or potential discrimination identified	☐	

What plans are in place to monitor the actual impact of the proposal?	Resident surveys and feedback mechanisms. Website accessibility metrics. Staff engagement insights and communication audits. Social media and press monitoring. Reporting through Corporate Plan performance and transformation programme governance.
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Stage 4 – Sign-off

	Details
Director/Assistant Director approved by:	Ben Brook – Assistant Director Policy Performance & Customer
Date:	16 March 2026
Member Approval (Date and Title of Committee):	TBC – presented to Cabinet June 2026
Committee Decision:	TBC - To approve the Communications Strategy 2026–2029

Stage 5 – Implementation

5.1 Referring to **Stages 1 (preliminary assessment)**, **Stage 2 (equality risk assessment)** and **Stage 3 (equality impact assessment)** please list what tasks/actions you will take to minimise the impact of this change.

Task	Outcome	Lead	Resources	Deadline
Create accessible content standards	Consistent, inclusive communication	Communications Team	Existing staff	2026
Improve internal communication channels	Better reach for all staff including non-digital workers	Communications Team working with the People Team	Teams, SharePoint	Ongoing
Enhance website accessibility	Improved access for disabled and digitally excluded users	IT Team working with the Communications Team	Existing staff	2026

Task	Outcome	Lead	Resources	Deadline
Maintain non-digital communication	Protect access for older/low-income residents	Communications Team	Budget for print	Biannual
Roll out staff engagement channels	Improved inclusion and organisational cohesion	Communications Team	CEN network	Ongoing
Monitor analytics and feedback	Continuous improvement	Communications Team	Survey tools	Quarterly