

A Strategic Approach to Communications

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Strategic V Tactical – tips to rise up



- **Set frameworks and delegate so everyone rises up**
 - Set comms service and council standards, process and protocols
 - Good measure is Comms leaders, CE / CMT / Mayor's Office as advocates
 - Step away and see what happens.....refine, repeat.
- **Sit at the top table**
 - Be active, be brave, delivering the council's strategic goals
 - Form powerful allies - Directors need comms for success
- **Centralised Control**
 - Have a centralised comms service and a centralised campaigns budget
 - Build your comms infrastructure – audiences, channels, content



Pillar 1: Build it for terminal velocity



- **All comms comes through comms - avoid the thin edge of the wedge**
 - Resources and staff – be tough
 - avoid services having their own comms;
 - more responsibility needs more resource;
 - if you don't ask you don't get – even if you don't, expectations are managed.
- **Planets aligning - Audience, content, channels**
 - Build comms infrastructure that support each other
 - Channels and third-party services (here at the conference!)
- **Play the long game to expand – trust, delivery, relationships, reliability**
 - Build at 360 working with lego approach (interlocked) across comms teams
 - Together be a key mechanism to deliver Strategic Plan
 - Make noise about comms work – don't be a silent force
 - Try to reach terminal velocity



Pillar 2 – Be a control freak...



Old grids	Monday 30 October 2023	Tuesday 31 October 2023	Wednesday 1 November 2023	Thursday 2 November 2023	Friday 3 November 2023	Saturday 4 Nov Sunday 5 Nov	Reactive/TBC
<p>Comms long term and special days plan - rolling for everyone to update.docx</p> <p>Comms request form.</p> <p>External Communications 2023 24 Tracker.docx</p>	<p>Final - Chief Executive Roadshow (Town Hall, Council Chamber, 1-3pm) – live streamed.</p> <p>Investors in People assessment week</p> <p>All week – Town Hall stall for staff and residents – budget consultation</p> <p>Budget consultation press release issued (MD/SH)</p> <p>Community Grants PR issued (MD)</p> <p>Comms 2.0 Unawards Deadline</p>	<p>Landlords of Maddocks House due to appear at Thames Magistrate's Court (HM/EB)</p> <p>YTH – Campaign and media training for Young Mayor applicants with a Cllr (tbc). Town Hall – 5pm to 7pm (CC)</p> <p>Black History Month event organised by Race Equality Network (online, 2pm) - 'Pioneering Black Women'</p> <p>TH now special – TeamsLive with CMT promo</p> <p>Tension Monitoring Group (KH) – possible joint statement to come out (AC)</p>	<p>Tower Hamlets Homes insourced from today, press release, resident newsletter, members' bulletin (EB)</p> <p>THH staff – welcome to the council message on AV screens and on TheBridge</p> <p>TH now – CE topics: welcome THH staff, Chief Executive Roadshows, Corporate Parenting Strategy + Young Employees' Network, Islamophobia Awareness Month, A Season of Bangla Drama + annual leave / International Stress Awareness Week</p> <p>Town Hall stall aimed at staff – flu campaign and winter health and wellbeing</p> <p>Town Hall stall aimed at staff and residents – Islamophobia Awareness Month</p> <p>Final 12 candidates chosen for young mayor/council (CC)</p>	<p>Residents' newsletter</p> <p>Middle East: Palestine vigil 5pm Thursday o/s Town Hall.</p> <p>Innovation POD session – Awards (10.30-11.30am, Town Hall) - MJ Editor Heather Jameson at event</p> <p>Housing: Landlord recruitment drop in event at Town Hall 1-5pm (EB)</p> <p>TH now special: flu vaccine sessions last opportunity</p> <p>Community safety: 130 blue badges checked during a targeted day of action across the borough and 4 cars seized. Presser – waiting sign-off (KH)</p> <p>Trading standards: More than £1m reclaimed by council for renters from dodgy landlords through rent repayment orders. Presser – waiting sign-off (KH)</p> <p>Fantastic Food in Schools working group (HD)</p>	<p>Members' bulletin – include safety advice for cllrs from LGA (AI)</p> <p>Headteachers' briefing</p> <p>Children's DLT Away Day (HD)</p> <p>Town Hall stall aimed at staff – Islamophobia Awareness Month</p>	<p>Israel/Palestine conflict – continue monitoring (LF/KH) - Palestine vigil 5pm Thursday o/s Town Hall.</p> <p>-Stop the War coalition – potential rally in Vicky Park this weekend (AC)</p> <p>Storm Ciarán – keeping watch on Met Office forecasts/weather warnings for Weds/Thurs. Sharing social media updates. (MB)</p> <p>Adults: two women who were taken to Syria by their father when they were children are returning to TH (KH)</p> <p>Shamima Begum appeal hearing took place in court last week, monitoring (HD)</p> <p>MJ – have leaked Peer Review presentation – agreed to hold for a week, response needed this week.</p> <p>Bonner and Virginia primary schools bringing 150 pupils to NTH as part of their Campaign for Climate change on 20 Nov. Deputy Mayor to attend to make a speech – tbc. Reaching out to schools proactively to frame and share story positively. (HD)</p>	

Advertising Infrastructure Grid 2023

Time period	CIPS digital/voidage	CIPS static (bus shelters)	Agripa Panels	Inlinks	Street Banners	Plasma screens	Bins
July Week 27 – Mon 3	Summer Events	TH Venues	Recycling Find it, Fix it Cost of Living Help	Summer Events	Summer Events	Variety of campaigns	Support clean streets
Week 28 – Mon 10				Summer Events			
Week 29 – Mon 17	Summer Events	Summer Events		Summer Events			
Week 30 – Mon 24				Summer Events ITN			
Aug Week 31 – Mon 31	Summer Events ITN	Summer Events		Summer Events ITN	Summer Events ITN		
Week 32 – Mon 7				Summer Events ITN Landlord Recruitment			
Week 33 – Mon 14	Summer Events ITN Landlord Recruitment	Summer Events					
Week 34 – Mon 21							
Week 35 – Mon 28	Young Mayor elections Young Workpath	Young Mayor elections		Young Mayor elections Young Workpath			
Sep Week 36 – Mon 4							
Week 37 – Mon 11	Young Mayor elections VAWG	Young Mayor elections		Young Mayor elections VAWG			
Week 38 – Mon 18							
Week 39 – Mon 25	Young Mayor elections	Young Mayor elections		VAWG			
Oct Week 40 – Mon 2							
Week 41 – Mon 9	BHM/NOX	BHM		BHM/Stoptober/NOX	Nitrous Oxide		
Week 42 – Mon 16							
Week 43 – Mon 23	Season of BD/Budget	Season of BD		Season of BD/Budget			

PS.....We also have a long-term grid and a campaign tracker!

The best of London in one borough



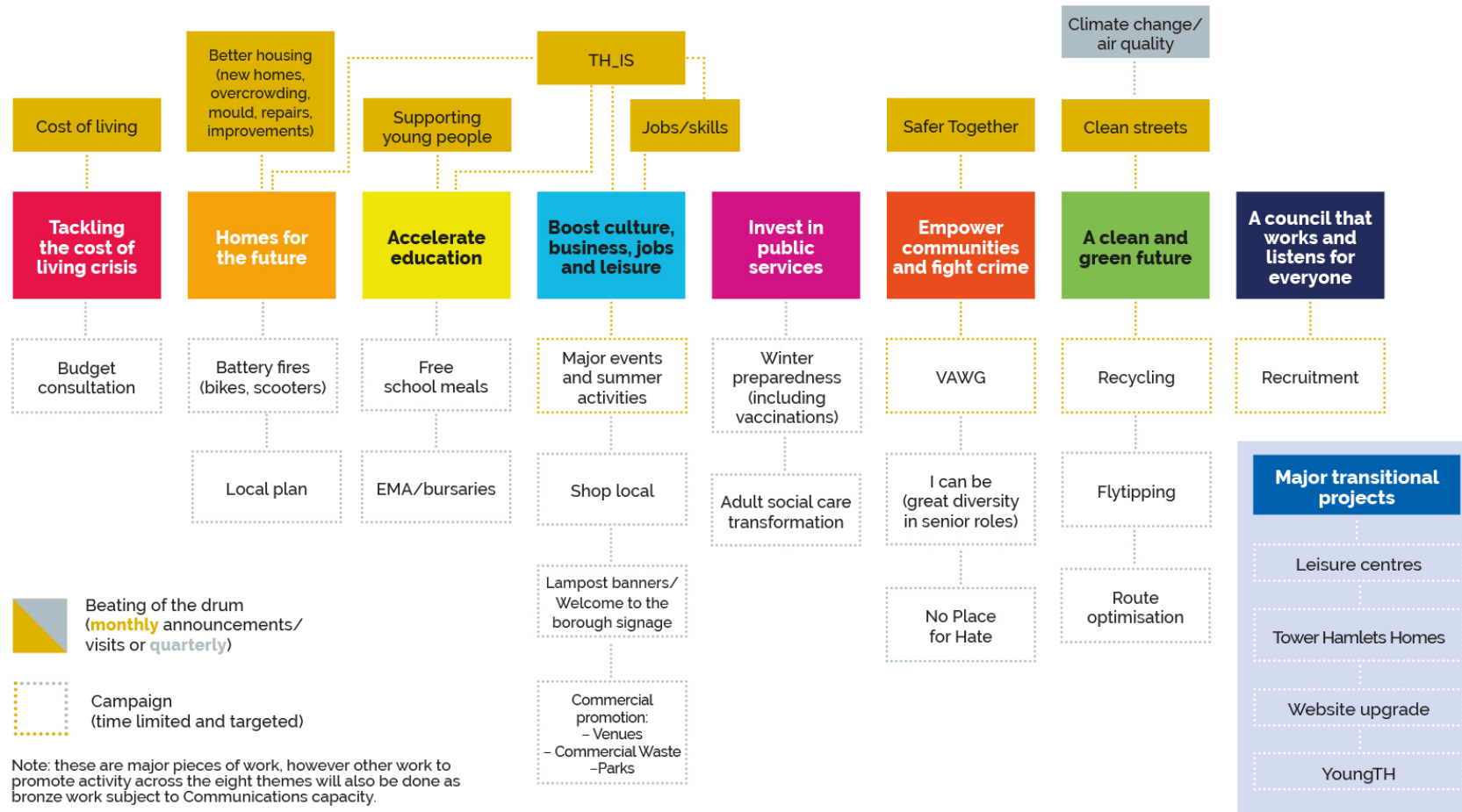
Pillar 3: Comms Strategy is everything



- Key strategic document for the whole council
- Co-created with Directors, Cabinet, Mayor, Chief Exec and CMT
- Place narrative and council narrative for everyone to use
- Gold and Silver campaigns and key comms work
- Supported by comms intranet pages for staff to use
- Supported by brand guidelines
- Supported by comms team plans
- Promotion is constant.....and you control the channels, surveys, content etc!



Pillar 4: Agree your scope



Pillar 5: Narratives = golden thread



Our place narrative

Tower Hamlets offers the best of London in one borough.

The new East End that epitomises the capital's past and its future. London has been moving east and Tower Hamlets is at its heart.

This mix of old and new, combined with award-winning parks, international cultural destinations, world class learning institutions and one of the UK's largest economies makes Tower Hamlets one of the most popular places to live, work, study and visit.

While Tower Hamlets represents a young, vibrant modern city, our history comes from being the hamlets of the Tower of London.

Whether you are in Wapping, Isle of Dogs, Spitalfields, Mile End, Bethnal Green, Canary Wharf, St Katharine Dock, Stepney, East India, Whitechapel or Poplar, every area is a cornerstone of London's history.

Tower Hamlets offers the best of London in one borough because:



We are the fastest growing and most densely populated place in the UK

- Our population has grown by 22.1 per cent since 2011 to 310,300.
- We have fantastic transport links – 26 London Underground and DLR stations serving seven lines – the second highest London borough.
- More homes built here than anywhere else.
- We have the youngest population in London, and fifth youngest in the UK. Our average age is just 30.

We are home to international business districts which generate the third highest economic output in the UK

- Canary Wharf has 120,000 people working in 37 office buildings, 300 shops, cafes and restaurants and more than 200 cultural events every year.
- City Fringe includes Whitechapel, Aldgate and Spitalfields. It is being developed to support London's financial sector, the growing digital-creative businesses in Tech City and has plans for a world-class life science centre.
- World famous markets including Spitalfields, Columbia Road and Petticoat Lane. Brick Lane is a melting pot of food and culture, everything from renowned curry houses and Jewish beigel shops to the Old Truman Brewery with its own market.

free school meals for primary and secondary school children, and the insourcing of services including leisure, youth and housing management.

Our borough is one of the most popular places in the UK to live, work and visit. We provide the UK's third largest economic output, we are steeped in London's history and one of the most culturally diverse places in the world, are the fastest growing and most densely populated place in the UK and Tower Hamlets has a set of destinations that are the envy of any city. It is why we describe ourselves as **the best of London in one borough** (see place narrative)

Hamlets communications strategy 2022-25

council narrative

Our story

Tower Hamlets is one of the UK's best local authorities.

Our services are award-winning and in 2022 we were named Best Local Authority for MJ's Council of the Year.

It's an exciting time in our history. We've moved into our new Town Hall, a Grade II-listed former Royal London Dock building, and we are well underway with our ambitious vision of our new mayor. That vision includes being the first local authority in the country to provide universal

A Tower Hamlets for everyone

We are a borough of contrasts. There is extreme wealth and poverty, and it is our job to broker opportunities to create a Tower Hamlets for everyone.

We build more homes than any other London local authority, yet over 21,000 people are on our housing waiting list, and 70% of those in the top two tiers live in overcrowded conditions.

We have some of the best performing schools in the country, yet 48.7% of children live in poverty and by age 11 over half of our children are overweight or obese.

There are nearly 300,000 jobs in Tower Hamlets, yet our young people need more support to access further education, or training and job opportunities to start their careers.

We know the value that leisure, recreation and learning opportunities can provide our residents. Many of our 120 parks are award-winning including Victoria Park which has been voted among the 10 best parks in the country.

We are investing £28m into our leisure centres which includes five swimming pools, and our Idea Stores are hubs for community life, offering a place for families, students and adults to read, learn, use computers and take part in subsidised training courses.

Equalities and inclusion

Our council is a beacon for diversity and inclusion. It is ingrained in the history of Tower Hamlets from immigration at the docks, to the suffragette movement in Roman Road, or fighting fascists in Cable Street.

We want a borough where everyone feels valued and included, and we want a council that collaborates to deliver excellence. That's why we look for people with our TOWER values of Together, Open, Willing, Excellent and being Respectful.

We have set the goal of being an anti-racist borough and through activities including our staff networks we are creating a culture where everyone is treated well and where discrimination is not tolerated.

Smarter Together

We are a forward-thinking council. Our Smarter Together transformation programme has already delivered online services, our CRM system and hybrid working.

More and more residents are accessing our services online with 4.5 million website visits a year – a million more than four years ago.

Our service improvements are shaped by the three Smarter Together lenses of partnership, outcomes and digital.



The best of London
in one borough



Pillar 6: Do it, know it, sell it!



• Metrics for everything!

- PRing your service (as well as refining your comms)
- Know your audience – what works and what doesn't
- Q reports – CMT, SLT, Cabinet, DLTs.....any officer

• Your Comms Service/Team brand is paramount

- Don't be a silent force – internal promotion (managers/leaders)
- Cover yourself internally (in writing) so your team is not blamed unfairly
- Develop senior relationships - solve issues/make plans face to face
- Safety nets – have multiple ways to catch issues in case one fails
- Think steps ahead – what challenges/ opportunities are coming up - have a solution before the question is asked
- External promotion - Linked In, Blogs, Awards – talk about your work and its success

These priorities support delivery and grow confidence in the Communication Service and position you well for expansion.

Communications quarterly report 1 - April-June 2023

Key communications work

Some of the key highlights of communicating the mayor's eight priorities in quarter one have included:

Homes for the future
Communications work for the housing service continued to be dominated by reactive requests on two main stories: Maddocks House and Coffee Afrique. Both issues have had local and national interest from mainstream and specialised media, including MyLondon, Evening Standard, Guardian, Big Issue and Inside Housing.

Work on e-bike/e-scooter battery campaign (due to launch in Q2) visuals progressed and a lobbying letter drafted on the issue for the mayor. Another letter on the issue of overcrowding for the mayor was also drafted.

We supported the service with a Housing Management Resident Engagement event in May. This involved producing a leaflet and emailing over 1,000 residents who had expressed an interest in future involvement in housing management issues during the Tower Hamlets Homes consultation.

We also managed a mailout to all council tenants with their new tenancy agreement and issued a press release about these changes. In addition, we created slides to be used in the Residents' Hub.

We also issued another press release about a landlord who was fined £20,000 for carrying out unauthorised works to a listed building.

We also got approval for the new hoarding stickers that better reflect the council's new priorities.

Telling our story: New housing
In May we produced a video for social media on the completion of Suifa Kamal House. This video featured Cabinet Member Cllr Ahmed. It was posted on Instagram and has had over 3,000 views to date.



Accelerate education

Free school meals
On 24 May, Tower Hamlets Council announced that it will become the first in England to offer free school meals to all school pupils up to the age of 16 after the proposal was formally approved at Cabinet.

We shared this news via:

- A press release that gained 12 pieces of coverage in national, local and sector news, including BBC News. The story was also covered widely in Bengali media outlets.

- A website story, including a homepage banner, that gained 2.1k page views.
- Social media posts that gained 1.8k likes, 77 comments, 431 clicks, 168 shares, 32.5k reach and 62.4k impressions.
- Articles in the Residents' Newsletter, Headteachers' Bulletin, TH Now and Members' Bulletin.

We also produced resources to support secondary schools, including:

- A resources pack that included a letter from the mayor, FAQs and information about the Conditions of Grant. This was sent to all secondary headteachers via email and included in the Headteachers' Bulletin (June 2023).
- An information webinar with project updates (July 2023).
- A toolkit that included resources to help schools identify and register pupils who are entitled to benefits-related free school meals, and a letter from the mayor addressed to parents'/carers. This was sent to all secondary headteachers via email (July 2023).



Overall snapshot of subscribers and active topics

There are a number of subscriber lists within Granicus, called topics. Some of these are for dedicated e-newsletters, such as the residents' newsletter. Others are lists of people who are interested in receiving updates or bulletins on a range of topics.

The following table outlines the lists that we are using within Granicus and the quarterly change in subscribers to these various topics.

The final column of the table indicates the number of updates we sent to each subscriber list. However, note that these are not necessarily unique to each list so cannot be totalled to give us an overall number. For example, one e-newsletter may have been sent to three lists at the same time and is therefore listed beside each topic in the below table.

Active council newsletters in Granicus system	Subscriptions - end Q4	Subscriptions - end Q3	% increase over quarter	Newsletters sent during Q4
Arts and events highlights	7,996	8,188	-2.54%	3
Arts news & information	2,711	2,748	-1.35%	6
Ask the Mayor	1,823	1,888	-3.57%	0
Bengali newsletter	1,806	1,837	-1.72%	5
Business and skills	5,097	5,151	-1.06%	14
Children and Education	5,191	5,245	-1.02%	7
Clean and Green	4,340	4,404	-1.33%	0
Community safety	2,405	2,497	-3.81%	0
Consultations	2,534	2,696	-2.35%	20
Covid-19 community champions	271	265	+2.21%	25
Early Years Bulletin	256	255	+0.39%	0
Enterprise	2,865	2,913	-1.68%	24
Governance partners	202	199	+1.61%	20
Headteachers' bulletin	322	319	+0.92%	10
Health and wellbeing - coronavirus	5,210	5,348	-2.85%	20
Housing	5,458	5,546	-1.61%	0
Idea Store	19,065	19,153	-0.46%	0
Idea Store Learners	1,017	1,054	-0.15%	0
Liveable Streets (vg)	4,344	4,471	-2.92%	0
Local History	4,728	4,824	-2.03%	2
Online resident panel	420	418	+0.48%	0
Only in Tower Hamlets	48	35	+34.62%	0
Place partners	162	158	+2.47%	20
Residents' Newsletter	8,4244	86,883	-3.13%	20
Voluntary and Community sector	1,636	1,690	-3.85%	3
Young WorkPath	2,107	2,169	-2.94%	1



Questions

