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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM: 11</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE 2012</b>	<b>CATEGORY: DELEGATED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>	<b>OPEN</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>KEVIN STACKHOUSE</b> <a href="mailto:Kevin.Stackhouse@south-derbys.gov.uk">Kevin.Stackhouse@south-derbys.gov.uk</a>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>COMMUNICATIONS ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12 AND ACTION PLAN 2012/13</b>	<b>REF:</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE:</b>

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## **1.0     Recommendations**

- 1.1     That Members note performance against the Communications Action Plan 2011/12 shown at Appendix A and that the Communications Action Plan for 2012/13 shown in Appendix B is approved.
- 1.2     That Members approve the continued use of the current Corporate Campaigns until 31/3/2012, shown at Appendix C.
- 1.3     That Members note the key communication achievements for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.

## **2.0     Purpose of Report**

- 2.1     This report looks back at the outcomes achieved in external and internal communications during 2011/12 and presents an action plan for 2012/13 that details how communication activities will support the delivery of key priorities set down in the Corporate Plan 2009/14.

## **3.0     Executive Summary**

- 3.1     This Committee approved a refreshed Corporate Communications Strategy for the Council in September 2010. This is the Annual Report to the Finance and Management Committee and details the achievements of the approach to external and internal communications, along with an evaluation of the effectiveness of the 2011/12 corporate campaigns.
- 3.2     The Communications Team's work in external communications through strengthening brand and corporate identity guidelines and advances in e-communications has increased the awareness of South Derbyshire District Council across the district, regionally and nationally. Improvements in internal communications have had a positive impact on the workforce.

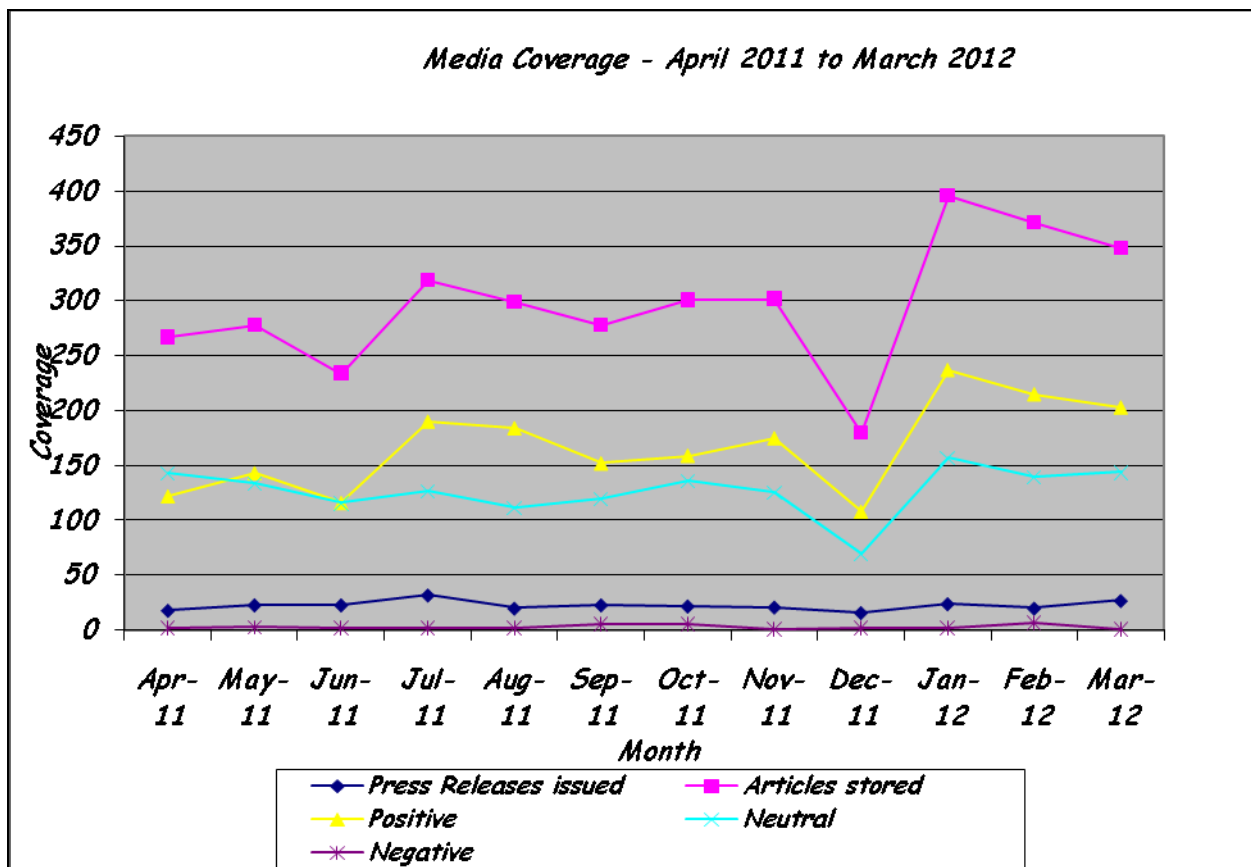
## 4.0 **Detail**

- 4.1 The Communications Team uses media management, graphic design, new media, social marketing, the website and the intranet along with reputation and brand management to inform residents, businesses, tourists, partners and stakeholders about the services and levels of performance provided by South Derbyshire District Council.

### ***External communications***

- 4.2 The Council's reputation has been successfully promoted using targeted campaigns linked to the Corporate Plan priorities
- 4.3 Increased positive media coverage, showcasing our achievements as an organisation as well as those of individual Councillors and members of staff, has provided case studies directly linked to our strategic priorities and corporate responsibilities. Regular articles have appeared in local newspapers, such as the Burton Mail and Derby Telegraph, along with increased coverage by community magazines as well as local radio stations including Radio Derby and Touch FM with some television coverage.
- 4.4 On average, 22 press releases have been issued each month. We have shown an increase in the amount of coverage we are receiving in the local media, particularly positive coverage. The amount of negative coverage remains very low. A breakdown of all activity over the year is shown in Graph 1 below.

**Graph 1 – Media Coverage between April 2011 and March 2012**



- 4.5 **Web/Social Media** – Online access channels are increasingly being used as the way people access the information they need from the Council. This year 306,635 visits were made to the website with the number of page views topping the 1 million mark (1,001,323). Ten percent of visits were made via mobile platforms (phones and tablets) with Apple devices leading the way. The most popular sections of the website were ‘Planning & Building Control’ and ‘Leisure, Culture & Tourism’.

With social media channels being increasingly used by our customer base and their expectations of being able to access information online 24/7, we endeavoured to maximise our online communications through the collaborative use of social media channels and the website, together with innovative ways of presenting information, shown below:

4.5.1 **Elections**

The elections on 6 May saw a successful collaboration of online media channels to communicate the results for South Derbyshire. On the day 3,413 visitors used the website and the Elections page attracted 5,767 views. Using a link from this page direct to our Twitter feed @sddc, 469 people went straight to Twitter where the results were being posted as they were announced. As a result of this activity our Twitter feed acquired an additional 40 followers.

4.5.2 **Free Trees**

For the first time this year applications for the Free Trees scheme were submitted exclusively through the website and 155 forms were received. This proved to be an extremely efficient mechanism for managing the scheme reducing the telephone calls received by both Customer Services and the Environmental Education team to almost zero.

4.5.3 **Google Maps**

In March 2012 a map was created and embedded in the website of all of the Paypoints that can be used by South Derbyshire residents to make payments to the Council:

[http://www.south-derbys.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/council\\_tax/pay/paypoint\\_map/default.asp](http://www.south-derbys.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_tax/pay/paypoint_map/default.asp)

This was created to provide an easy visual aid to encourage people to locate and use their local paypoint. To date the map has attracted 108 views.

4.5.4 **Magazine format document readers**

In addition to documents being available to download from the website, the use of in-page magazine readers has been successfully used. Typically they attract a greater number of readers than their downloadable counterparts.

Publication & time on website	Total readers	Total page views
Annual Report (9 months)	225	2,700
What's On guide (12 months)	1450	14,910
Walking festival programme (5 months)	671	4,733
Sports Directory (5 months)	83	1,089

#### 4.5.5 **Facebook**

Facebook pages are being used by a number of services to engage with their customers and links have been embedded in the relevant webpage to encourage visitors to link directly to the Facebook pages for further information.

#### 4.5.6 **Twitter**

In August our Twitter followers exceeded 1,000 and now number over 1,600. We have used this media channel throughout the year to support our traditional media and the website communications. Tweets covered information such as press releases, events, and consultation, lost dogs, changes to recycling and job vacancies.

In October we successfully brought the Cox & Hound round Britain race to Rosliston Forestry Centre by using Twitter to get the greatest number of people to vote on the Cox & Hound Facebook page. The event was covered on national television and provided great coverage in the local press.

Throughout the year the banner on the homepage has successfully promoted initiatives such as the Festival of Leisure, The National Forest Walking Festival, LDF Planning Consultation, Swadlincote Pancake Races, Tree consultation, Swadlincote Town Centre Vision, Empty Properties Consultation.

4.6 **Graphic Design** – The Annual Report was the first publication to carry the new visual branding. This branding is now used on all the design work the Communications Team. The photography used within publications is of genuine South Derbyshire locations and people. To showcase this work we completed over 70 design projects throughout the last year; supporting statutory functions including the election canvass, supporting the promotion of leisure and community events by publishing the 'What's On' guide and promoting events being held on the newly refurbished Delph Town Square in Swadlincote.

4.7 A Communications report is produced on a monthly basis for staff/members that summarises all the main activities in the campaigns as well as web/social media activity and non-campaign issues which have occurred during the month. This report also includes information on Web/Social Media along with how we have supported the campaigns with Graphic Design.

The media report shows the work being completed across the Council as part of our corporate campaign themes along with photos and other relevant information to capture the outcomes achieved.

#### 4.8 **Corporate campaigns 2011-2012**

During the last year, activity has been focussed around five corporate campaigns to support the delivery of key priorities identified in the Corporate Plan 2009-2014. The campaigns included the following:

##### 4.8.1 **Promoting the district and supporting economic growth**

This campaign centred on promoting the work of the Council in the opportunities it provides for tourism, economic development and job creation across the district. Main achievements have included:

- Enhancing South Derbyshire's blossoming reputation as a vibrant tourist destination in the heart of The National Forest.
- Promoting the work being done to help make Swadlincote a better place to live, work and visit. Developments such as the Pipeworks and initiatives like the Gateways Scheme have received wide ranging media coverage.
- Developing productive relationships with community groups, such as Rosliston in Bloom, to raise the profile of their work.

#### **4.8.2 Improved Value for Money**

This campaign focussed on communicating the message that the Council is ensuring that proper arrangements are in place to enable resources to be used efficiently and effectively whilst driving down costs and improving the customer experience. Highlights from this campaign included:

- Promotion of the Council's award winning activities, including RoSPA, EMAS and Investors in Excellence.
- Production of the Annual Report, outlining how Council Tax is spent and some of our key achievements.
- Continuing to raise the profile of the partnership with Northgate Public Services to accentuate its aims and aspirations.

#### **4.8.3 Improved Recycling**

We used this campaign to communicate the change that is happening to the recycling service, clearly articulating the vision for the service by managing the short-term messages whilst focusing on the longer-term vision. We achieved this through a concerted campaign during the year. Particular initiatives included;

- The launch of a recycling survey to ask residents what they would like to see from the new kerbside scheme. A series of press releases have also been issued to keep residents informed every step of the process
- Raising awareness of major campaigns, including litter picks, to show some of the ways we are helping to create a cleaner, greener District
- Educating householders about the national changes to the composting scheme meaning that cardboard can no longer be positioned in the brown bins

#### **4.8.4 Improved lifestyles built on the legacy of the Olympics**

This campaign sought to support the full range of sporting, leisure and cultural activities in the run up to, during and following the Olympics. The main ones include:

- Continuation of the Burton Mail leisure article for the fourth consecutive year, enabling us to highlight up and coming events and ways that residents can get fit, healthy and active.
- Developing links with key partners, such as Derbyshire Sport, to promote key milestones in the Olympic countdown, including the Canadian and Australian badminton teams training at Etwall Leisure Centre.
- Ensuring a continued and sustained flow of attractive and interesting stories to inform people of all ages and abilities how they can benefit from the arrival of the greatest show on Earth.

#### 4.8.5 **Improved feeling of safety and security**

This campaign set out to promote the message that South Derbyshire is a safe place to live and the activities that are happening across the district to promote community cohesion and deter crime and Anti Social Behaviour. It also focussed on promoting independence for older and vulnerable people through the provision of decent housing. Activities included:

- Working closely with the Safer South Derbyshire Partnership to help residents feel safe and secure and highlight issues closest to communities.
- The launch of Dreamscheme, an innovative youth involvement project aiming to cut anti-social behaviour, bridge generational gaps and encourage young people to learn new skills, make new friends and take pride in their neighbourhoods.
- Showcasing key events, including Liberation Day and number plate security drop in sessions, to provide details about the wide variety of services and products available to protect against crime.

#### **Internal communications**

- 4.9 We have continued to develop 'Better' our eye-catching electronic staff magazine. We have developed a lively and interesting format for 'Better' providing a wide range of information for staff/members to keep them informed about activities across the Council alongside human interest stories.
- 4.10 We have reintroduced blogs following feedback as a two-way conversation between senior officers, members and staff. Blogs during 2012/13 have included discussions about the 2012/13 budget round, the changes with the HRA self-financing and the impact on the Council and how South Derbyshire is preparing for the Olympics.
- 4.11 Over the last year we have continued to improve our internal communications by:
- revamping 'Better' by introducing an array of new features, providing a new democracy page (as requested in the Internal Communications Survey) and modernising the layout to offer a fresh, contemporary look and feel.
  - reintroducing the blogs to focus on the issues that are important to staff and that are affecting the Council.
  - reminding managers about the importance of holding regular team meetings, and continuing to encourage teams to consider other activities, such as team building or personal development (e-learning) that could also be held during this time.
  - reviewing the content on the intranet and removing out of date information.
  - looking at new/innovative ways to use social media. We have widely used Twitter to get our short timely message to nearly 1,700 followers. We have used You Tube to enter an online video submission for funding and have developed Facebook with the South Derbyshire Sport and South Derbyshire Energy pages.

#### **5.0 Looking Ahead**

- 5.1 Our external work will primarily focus on the achievement of the key priorities under the Corporate Plan 2009/14 through the provision of corporate campaigns. Internally, our work will focus on raising the profile of the Council as an employer of choice and improving staff engagement. An Action Plan is appended but a

summary of some of the key actions that need to take place in 2012/2013 is covered below.

- Building on corporate campaigns linked to the delivery of the key priorities within the Corporate Plan.
- To continue to develop the relationship with the media and that an approved response given to all media enquires within 2 working days.
- Monthly internal newsletter/s (Better and the Hub) produced, approved and circulated to the client and partnership.
- Delivery of social media training for officers/members.
- Developing the internal communications channels (Newsletters, blogs and briefings).
- Maintaining accurate information on the Council's website with new content edited and published within agreed timescales.
- Develop the use of Social Media to improve communication by increasing the number of effective channels they have to convey messages to improve the reputation of the Council. It is expected that during the year the Council will have 2000 followers on its 'Twitter' account.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 All activities in the last year have been funded from existing resources and it is intended to continue developing and innovating communications without increased expenditure.

## **7.0 Corporate Implications**

- 7.1 The Communications Team delivers on those projects set out in the Corporate Communications Strategy, which all link back to the Council's Corporate Plan themes and priorities.
- 7.2 Communications campaigns are directed towards improving the reputation of the Council and improving satisfaction with Council Services.

## **8.0 Community Implications**

- 8.1 Through improving accessibility to information and promoting the work of the Council, members of the Community will be better informed about their area and the services provided. This will enable the Community to better understand the challenges and opportunities that are present and provide them with different channels to offer their views on how the District should be developed in the future.

## **9.0 Conclusions**

- 9.1 Through its Action Plan for 2012/13 the Council will further develop its reputation locally, regionally and nationally. The Council will through its commitment to residents, staff, partners, businesses and visitors, keep them better informed and involved so that they can better influence the quality and nature of Council services in South Derbyshire.

## **10.0 Background Papers**

- 10.1 Corporate Communications Strategy 2010-2015

## Appendix A - Communications Action Plan 2011/12

Area	Actions Required	KPI	Progress	Target Met
<b>Media Management</b>				
Media Management	To successfully deliver the Corporate Communications Campaigns.	Campaign delivered and outcomes achieved	All campaigns delivered and outcomes achieved.	Yes
Media Management	To continue to develop the relationship with the media and that an approved response given to all media enquires within 2 working days.	90% within 2 working days	100%	Yes
Media Management	Monthly internal newsletter/s (Better and The Hub) produced, approved and circulated to the client and partnership.	Monthly circulation	100%	Yes
Media Management	Achievement of actions within the Council's Communications Action Plan, to achieve 90% completion.	90% completion	91.67% (11/12 complete)	Yes
Media Management	Delivery of media training for officers/members.	1 session held for both officers and members	Training held with members and individual support given to key officers in dealing with the media.	Yes
Media Management	Developing the internal communications channels (Newsletters, blogs and briefings) for the Client and across the partnership and wider Northgate.	Internal Communication Channels developed	Blogs reintroduced and internal survey to be held in May 2012	Yes



Area	Actions Required	KPI	Progress	Target Met
<b>Graphic Design</b>				
Graphic Design	To carry out Graphic Design work as agreed with the Council.	95% of all edits within 3 days 90% of new projects within 2 weeks.	100%	Yes
<b>Web/Social media</b>				
Web Management	Maintaining accurate information on the Council's website with new content edited and published within agreed timescales.	90% content published within 3 days	100%	Yes
Web Management	Develop the use Social Media to improve communication by increasing the number of effective channels they have to convey messages to improve the reputation of the Council.	2 pilot schemes to test social media.	Ran a facebook/twitter campaign for Rosliston  Twitter used to communicate election results as they were announced.	Yes
Web Management	Undertake a review of the Council website/intranet sites.	Review produced with recommendations over future options.	Review commenced not completed as yet.	No
<b>Print Services</b>				
Print	To carry out Print work for the Council.	90% of all print jobs completed as per timescales agreed with user.	98.45%	Yes

## Appendix B - Communications Action Plan 2012/13

Area	Actions Required	KPI	Target Date
<b>Media Management</b>			
Media Management	To successfully deliver the Corporate Communications Campaigns.	Campaign delivered and outcomes achieved	31/03/13
Media Management	To continue to develop the relationship with the media and that an approved response given to all media enquires within 2 working days.	90% within 2 working days	Monthly
Media Management	Monthly internal newsletter/s (Better and The Hub) produced, approved and circulated to the client and partnership.	Monthly circulation	Monthly
Media Management	Achievement of actions within the Council's Communications Action Plan, to achieve 90% completion.	90% completion	31/03/13
Media Management	Delivery of social media training for officers/members.	1 session held for both officers and members	31/12/12
Media Management	Developing the internal communications channels (Newsletters, blogs and briefings) following the internal communications survey.	Internal Communication Channels developed following survey.	31/10/12
<b>Graphic Design</b>			
Graphic Design	To carry out Graphic Design work as agreed with the Council.	95% of all edits within 3 days 90% of new projects within 2 weeks.	Monthly

Area	Actions Required	KPI	Target Date
<b>Web/Social media</b>			
Web Management	Maintaining accurate information on the Council's website with new content edited and published within agreed timescales.	90% content published within 3 days	31/03/12
Web Management	Develop the use of Social Media and online tools to improve communication by increasing the number of effective channels available to convey messages to improve the reputation of the Council.	<p>Social media training – members</p> <p>Evaluate benefits of extending use of SMS messaging service</p> <p>Review cost and effectiveness of online tools, incorporating where appropriate</p>	31/12/13
Web Management	Undertake a review of the Council website/intranet sites.	Report produced with recommendations over future options.	30/09/12
<b>Print Services</b>			
Print	To carry out Print work for the Council.	90% of all print jobs completed as per timescales agreed with user.	Quarterly

## Appendix C - Corporate Campaigns 2012/13

Name	Description	Area	Theme	Measures/Projects
Improved feeling of safety and security	Promoting the message that South Derbyshire is a safe place to live and the activities that are happening across the district to promote community cohesion and deter crime and Anti Social Behaviour.	Community and Planning  Housing and Environment	Safe and Secure	<b>Measures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the number of ASB calls to service.</li> <li>• Reduce proportion of people who feel unsafe when outside in their own neighbourhoods at night-time.</li> <li>• Reduce proportion of people who feel unsafe when in their own homes at night-time.</li> </ul> <b>Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refocus the Safer Neighbourhood Wardens on the prevention of anti-social behaviour and enviro crime.</li> <li>• Work with Partners to ensure diversionary activities are being delivered in 'target' locations.</li> <li>• Ensure 'Safer Neighbourhood' funding is used effectively to combat local crime and disorder issues.</li> <li>• Develop a protocol with all relevant partners with a view to resolving neighbourhood disputes.</li> <li>• Enabling vulnerable people to remain in their own home for longer.</li> </ul>
Improved lifestyles built on the legacy of the Olympics	Supporting the full range of sporting, leisure and cultural activities in the run up to and during the Olympics.	Community and Planning	Lifestyle Choices	<b>Measures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult participation in sport.</li> <li>• Satisfaction with sports provision in the local area.</li> <li>• Number of participants in Sports &amp; Health Development, Play schemes, Get Active in the Forest, Cultural Activity and Leisure Centres.</li> </ul> <b>Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support local communities in delivering cultural events across the district.</li> <li>• Deliver improved leisure facilities for the Community.</li> <li>• To increase levels of participation in sport and physical activities.</li> </ul>

Name	Description	Area	Theme	Measures/Projects
Improved opportunities to promote the district and support its economic growth.	Promoting the work of the Council in the opportunities it provides for tourism, economic development and job creation across the district.	Community and Planning	Sustainable Growth and Opportunity	<b>Measures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total Visitor Spend.</li> <li>Total Number of Visitors.</li> <li>Net additional commercial / employment floor space created.</li> <li>Net additional homes provided.</li> </ul> <b>Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the vitality of the district's town centres.</li> <li>Deliver the 'National Forest' Tourism Action Plan.</li> </ul>
Improved Recycling	Communicating the change that is happening to the recycling service over the next year, clearly articulating the vision for the service by managing the short-term messages whilst focusing on the longer-term vision.	Housing and Environment	Sustainable Growth and Opportunity	<b>Measures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residual household waste per head of population.</li> <li>Household waste recycled and composted.</li> </ul> <b>Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop the opportunities for increasing the range of materials recycled through the re-tendering exercise.</li> </ul>
Improved Value for Money	Communicating the message that the Council is ensuring that proper arrangements are in place to enable resources to be used efficiently and effectively whilst driving down costs and improving the customer experience.	Corporate Services	Value for Money	<b>Measures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish a 'fit for purpose' Medium Term Financial Plan.</li> <li>Disposal of assets deemed 'surplus to requirements' to generate income.</li> <li>Maximising the take up of grant income for the Council.</li> <li>On-going efficiency savings.</li> <li>% of satisfied customers contacting or dealing with the Council.</li> <li>Respond to 95% of all official complaints within 10 working days.</li> </ul> <b>Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue the programme of procurement and service transformation reviews in accordance with the Council's Business Improvement Plan.</li> <li>Communicate and engage with our communities to ensure that the Council is delivering services appropriately.</li> <li>Develop and adopt a Customer Access Strategy.</li> </ul>