



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Internal Communications Strategy

28 November 2022

Reference: LG (2022) Paper 059

Executive summary

1. An internal communications strategy for Scottish Parliamentary Service staff is attached at Annex A. An action plan is attached at Annex B which the Colleague Engagement team will follow in order to support delivery of the strategy.

Issues and options

2. The Session 6 Strategic change objective 'a values driven culture' is driving a significant percentage of the People and Culture objectives detailed within the People & Culture Strategy, with there being a specific requirement to develop an Internal Communication & Engagement Strategy. The draft Strategy, which has been shaped through engagement with colleagues is intended to support delivery of the wider strategic plan.
3. The strategy was shared with LG in October where feedback was given which has resulted in an additional section on roles and responsibilities being added. This clarifies who has responsibility for different aspects of internal communications and engagement. It is important to stress the element of personal responsibility for keeping informed and for offices to assume responsibility for communicating effectively both within their teams and between teams.
4. The Colleague Engagement team's plan is attached for information to give LG colleagues assurance on the practical steps that the Colleague Engagement team will take to deliver the strategy.
5. The team intends to adopt a consultancy-based approach for supporting other teams to undertake effective communications and engagement. This will include but is not limited to support to develop communications

plans and intranet pages, with the aim of empowering teams to be accountable for delivery of their obligations without delay.

6. The Colleague Engagement team will seek to establish an internal communications network to support the roll out of the new strategy and approach. This will invite colleagues to champion communications and engagement across the Parliament, share ideas and take forward activities in order to improve internal communication across all groups.

Internal Comms network

7. This will be an opportunity for those who would like to build their communication and engagement skills. The network would be responsible for:
 - identifying stories
 - reading drafts of messages/intranet pages where appropriate
 - helping to identify where more engagement is needed
8. In return these colleagues will have the chance to:
 - produce content
 - learn about content design and accessibility principles
 - build relationships across the Parliament
9. The network will start small. In the spirit of iterative design and continuous improvement, we'd then seek to grow the network if it proves effective. The opportunity will be advertised throughout December with the network commencing in 2023.
10. This strategy is for SPS staff only. The People Services team already engages well with Members and their staff and the Colleague Engagement team leads on the Members' staff caseworker forum which has proved successful over the past 12 months.

Governance

11. Effective internal communications and engagement underpins and will enable us to achieve our strategy and delivery plans. If colleagues know what needs to be done, and what their role is in achieving this, they can align their efforts to effective implementation of communications and engagement thus contributing to the delivery of the strategic objectives.

Communications

12. We will share the internal communications strategy and plan with colleagues via the intranet. A page will be updated to reflect quarterly progress against the plan.

Next steps

13. The next steps are to:
 - communicate the plan to colleagues
 - seek notes of interest in the internal communications network.

Decision

14. LG is invited to discuss and agree the internal communications strategy.

Colleague Engagement

People and Culture

November 2022

Annex A

Extract - Draft Colleague Engagement Team Plan

Actions	Target Date
Develop a consultancy approach to all activity – detail in Strategy & develop supporting material including templates e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intranet development guidance • Staff survey guidance 	Feb 2023
Review and develop educational material to support all colleagues to deliver communication and engagement activity including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘how to’ guides 	Mar 2023
Create and develop a communication champions network <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idea sharing • Urgent communications network • MS Teams to support 	Ongoing
Review regular communications and Corporate intranet pages – work with Champions network – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose • Frequency • Timetable • Maximise intranet capabilities – e.g. sign in landing page is the intranet, automatic pop ups for top news, TRS link etc • How do we direct to the intranet – culture change Empower teams to manage own bulletins/intranet pages • Staff survey activity and coordination • Leadership Team intranet pages and activity 	Ongoing

Internal Communications and Engagement Strategy

Inform, involve, inspire

1. Introduction

This strategy sets out our approach to how we will communicate and engage with our internal audiences over the lifetime of the [Session 6 Strategic Plan](#).

It is informed and driven by:

- a commitment to put our people at the heart of what we do in the Scottish Parliament;
- our values of excellence, stewardship, inclusiveness and respect;
- our four change objectives in the [Strategic Plan](#); and
- the six priority areas in the [People and Culture Strategy](#).

Importantly, this strategy has been shaped by the views of colleagues. It comes with a strong commitment to continue engaging with people as part of an on-going process of adapting and refining our internal communications approaches to best meet people's needs.

2. Our mission and objectives

The overarching mission for internal communications is to inform, involve and inspire people in the organisation, its vision and priorities. This includes providing support to ensure that effective internal communication happens within offices and teams as well as corporately.

This strategy aims to provide people with the opportunities and support to:

- engage with and understand what is happening and why;
- share their experiences and successes and learn from others;
- have their voice heard and listened to.
- Fulfil their role as a manager and team in communicating well

In so doing, our communications and engagement activity will play an important part in helping people feel a sense of connection to the organisation, its purpose and its values.

3. Colleague feedback

Colleagues' feedback, gathered through a number of sources, has shaped this Internal Communications and Engagement Strategy.

This includes the Staff Survey 2021, particularly the feedback on the areas where staff said the organisation needed to improve - learning and development, leadership and managing change, and wellbeing.

The Internal Communications Staff Survey, carried out in spring 2022, and followed by a series of focus groups explored views on communications and engagement channels, people’s sense of connection to the organisation, and the use of internal content. [The key findings](#) have been a major influence on the approaches set out in this strategy, in particular the use of our internal communications channels and content, and how we support people to stay informed and connected.

4. Priorities

Priorities for the Internal Communications and Engagement Strategy are aligned to the Session 6 Strategic Plan, to the People and Culture Strategy and to our values.

They also take account of what staff and others have told us through surveys, internal communications focus groups and other feedback mechanisms.

Our priorities represent the areas where Internal Communications and Engagement can play a key role in helping the organisation realise its ambitions. These will be the primary focus of our internal communications and engagement activities.

The five priorities identified are:

- Provide opportunities for people to stay informed, involved and connected
- Inspire excellence
- Promote a culture of inclusion and diversity
- Help people look after their wellbeing at work
- Support leaders to be visible, effective and have impact.

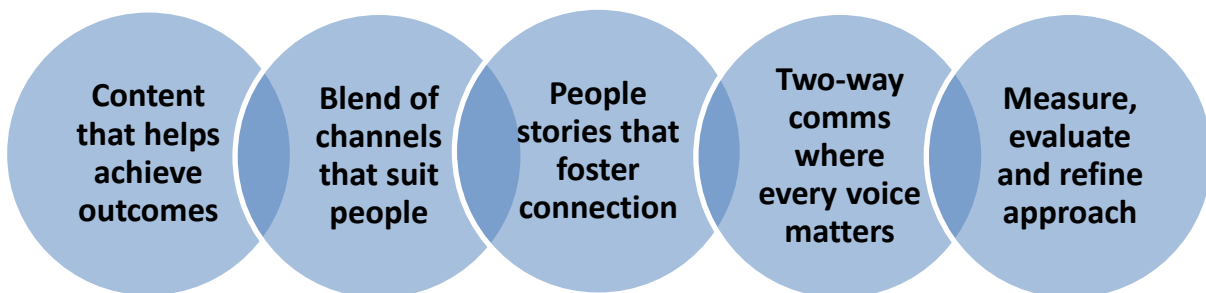


Section 6 sets out more on why these priorities are important, the anticipated outcomes and the actions for each priority.

5.How we'll do it – five key aims

We have listened carefully to what people have told us and used their feedback to develop key principles which we will put at the heart of our approach to internal communications and engagement. These will guide us in every piece of work we do.

- We engage and inform our audiences with compelling content that helps achieve agreed outcomes
- We use a blend of channels that suit people and their needs
- We help people share their stories, fostering connection to the organisation and collaboration across teams
- Every person's voice matters and we strive for effective engagement and two-way communications
- We review our communications, measure and evaluate against agreed outcomes and refine our approaches.



6.Priorities, outcomes and actions

<p>Priority 1 – Provide opportunities for people to stay informed, involved and connected</p>
<p>Why it's important This internal communication and engagement priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports Strategic Change Objective - Creating a values-driven culture that brings us together around our vision and values, creating a clear sense of connection • supports People and Culture Strategy Priority 5 - Feeling informed, involved and supported

- responds to staff feedback particularly around use of channels, sense of connection to organisation and need for more information about other teams
- is driven by our values, particularly inclusiveness
- engages colleagues with our strategic change objectives

Anticipated outcomes

More people feel informed, regularly stay up-to-date and feel a sense of connection, as measured by staff and Internal Communications surveys

Increasing usage and engagement in communication channels including Corporate Bulletin and intranet, as measured through analytics

Increased engagement in all-staff events and initiatives

Priority 2 – Inspire excellence

Why it's important

This internal communication and engagement priority:

- supports Strategic Change Objectives - **Operational Excellence**
- supports People and Culture Priority 6 - **Building the organisation of the future and refocusing our workforce**
- is driven by our values, particularly excellence and stewardship
- helps address staff feedback around connections with other teams.

Anticipated outcomes

Colleagues and teams inspire each other in excellence by sharing their stories of achievement and success through our channels

We engage and inspire more people through internal content to participate in learning and development opportunities, supporting their development

Satisfaction with learning and development opportunities improve, as measured through staff survey

Priority 3 – Promote a culture of inclusion and diversity

Why it's important

This internal communication and engagement priority:

- supports strategic Change Objective: **Values-driven culture**
- supports People and Culture Priority 2: **Creating a diverse, respectful, and inclusive working environment**

- is driven by our values, particularly inclusiveness and respect.

Anticipated outcomes

We have a welcoming culture where all staff feel valued and respected for who they are

Colleagues feel they have a voice which is listened to, as measured through staff survey indicators

People understand and champion equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and our content reflects that

Priority 4 – Help staff look after their wellbeing at work

Why it's important

This internal communication and engagement priority:

- responds directly to feedback from colleagues about the importance of wellbeing, including through staff survey
- supports People and Culture Priority 5: **Feeling informed, involved and supported**
- supports Strategic Change Objective: **Values-driven culture**
- is driven by our values; excellence, stewardship, inclusiveness and respect.

Anticipated outcomes

Improved engagement scores for wellbeing in staff survey

Improved attendance for work

Strong awareness of wellbeing resources and opportunities offered at Parliament

Continued sense that wellbeing is an important part of our organisational culture.

Priority 5 – Support leaders to be visible, effective and have impact

Why it's important

This internal communication and engagement priority:

- responds to feedback including in the staff survey around leadership and change
- supports People and Culture Priority 1 – Developing effective leadership and cultural change

- supports delivery of all strategic change objectives.

Anticipated outcomes

Engagement with leadership events and communications shows continuous improvement

People feel motivated, confident and are active contributors to delivering and responding to change and improving how we work

Leadership and change engagement score shows upward trend

7. Who does what (roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities)?

All SPS colleagues are responsible for keeping themselves up to date with what is happening in the organisation.

We are all responsible for:

- engaging with information provided through our channels such as:
 - the Corporate Bulletin
 - the intranet, particularly news on the front page
 - information from the Clerk/Chief Executive and Leadership Team members whether in writing or at staff meetings
- providing constructive feedback at team meetings or through corporate channels

Office Heads and Team Leaders are responsible for:

- Ensuring that new colleagues are appropriately briefed at induction on internal communications channels and the expectation of personal responsibility
- Briefing their teams on corporate issues
- Providing opportunities for colleagues to feedback their views
- Ensuring effective internal communication and engagement within teams and across teams
- Ensuring the team is skilled and equipped to manage their own intranet pages with support from the Colleague Engagement team

Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Setting a clear vision and direction to be communicated to staff
- Aligning communications with our strategic goals and direction
- Open and transparent communications and engagement about decisions

The Colleague Engagement team is responsible for:

- Supporting Leadership Team to be visible, effective and to have impact and to deliver their responsibilities
- Working with PCO to develop communications, ensuring consistent and timely messaging both internally and externally.
- Supporting the Organisational Development function to communicate and engage with colleagues on important people-focussed change initiatives
- Developing guidance, tools and information to empower managers and their teams to take ownership of their own communication and engagement activity
- Providing consultancy advice to offices and teams so that they can lead their own internal communication and engagement plans and manage their own intranet pages

8. Measuring success

Success will be measured in many different ways. Our approach to measuring our success will be a continuous process of collaboration, reflection, review, and improvement.

We will use a range of hard and soft metrics to measure the impact of our actions and ensure that people are central to the success of our internal communications and engagement activities.