

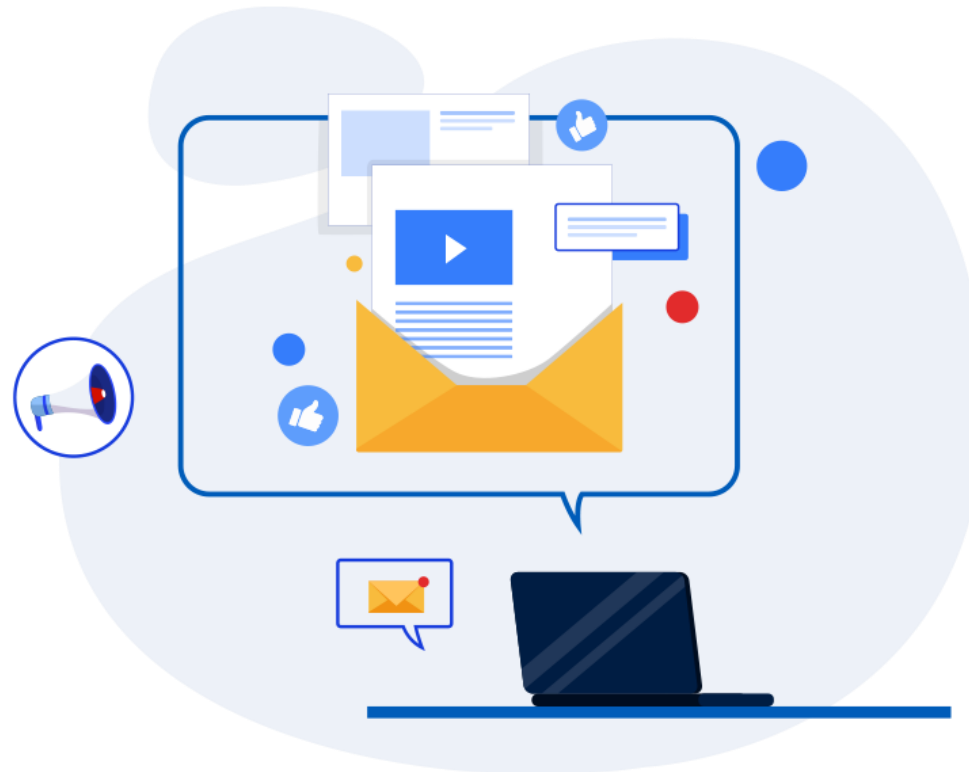
Communications and Engagement Strategy

Executive summary

The Communications and Engagement Strategy sets out how communications and engagement activities will reinforce the goals and ambitions of the Trust's five year strategy, and provide cohesive and engaging communications for a range of internal and external stakeholders. The strategy outlines how communications will enhance the profile of the organisation and protect its reputation.

Internally, there will be a focus on evaluating the effectiveness of existing communication channels and working to enhance and strengthen the Trust's ability to communicate and engage effectively with staff. Externally, there will be a stronger and more robust focus on evaluation and on stakeholder and partner engagement. Work will continue to build a strong online presence to enhance and support the Trust's growing reputation with a wide and varied audience, notably with the development and launch of a new Trust website. There will be a greater focus on marketing, media and public relations to continue to optimally position the Trust on a regional and national footing.

The strategy has been designed to meet the needs of a changeable environment and will be treated as a living document. Therefore, it will be regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the organisation and its audiences.



Context

To achieve its strategic aims, the Trust must build on its reputation as a provider of excellent specialist care and treatment, an employer of choice and an innovative and collaborative partner. As demand for healthcare services increases and patient expectations continue to rise, high quality communication and engagement is more important than ever before.

The NHS Constitution states that staff and patients have a right to be kept informed and to be engaged with by the NHS. This principle goes beyond regulatory requirements, and it is widely acknowledged that effective communications and engagement with workforce and stakeholders lie at the core of a successful organisation.

The COVID-19 pandemic will have a lasting effect on the NHS and the Trust in terms of operational changes, demand for services, collaborative working across health economies and a greater utilisation of technology. The pandemic has demonstrated a public appetite for more technology-based services e.g. video consultations, and this presents an opportunity for clinical services. Responding to this will require robust communications and stakeholder management to embed new approaches and to ensure the organisation can deliver on the opportunity for transformation. The development and launch of a new Trust website will play a large role in ensuring external stakeholders' needs are met through a much improved online offering.

Communications team will enable the Trust to achieve the ambitions of its five year strategy:

- Deliver best practice care and treatments in our specialist field: in particular the Communications team will showcase the Trust's delivery of excellent services in the neurosciences.
- Provide more services closer to patients' homes, driven by the needs of our communities, extending partnership working: the Communications team will support Trust ambitions to deliver more technology-based services for patients.
- Be financially strong, meeting our targets and investing in our services, facilities, and innovations for patients and staff: investment in a new Trust website and an increased focus on evaluating Communication activities will enhance performance.
- Lead research, education, and innovation, pioneering new treatments nationally and internationally: stakeholders will be informed about cutting edge research, innovation and educational approaches supported by the Trust.
- Adopt advanced technology and treatments enabling our teams to deliver excellent patient and family-centred care: new technologies and treatments adopted by the Trust will be showcased.
- Be recognised as excellent in our patient and family-centred care, clinical outcomes, innovation, and staff wellbeing: an increased focus on engagement and marketing will enhance delivery of key initiatives and the Trust's reputation.

The Communications and Engagement Strategy will need to flex and adapt to the needs of patients, their families, staff and other stakeholders to support the delivery of the Trust's Five Year Strategy (2018 – 2023). It will also need to reflect new ways of working and meet the expectations of people as the longer term effects of COVID-19 on the health service and the Trust are understood.



Aims of the Communications and Engagement Strategy

The Communications and Engagement Strategy will establish and embed an approach that enables The Walton Centre to achieve its corporate objectives, ambitions, and vision. Through effective high-quality communications, audiences will be informed about the Trust's objectives, vision and values, and how the organisation supports patient care, staff wellbeing and the efficient use of resources. Activities will focus on:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure staff have the information they need to deliver the best care for our patients. • Create a culture of staff engagement and involvement to ensure staff are fully involved in the Trust's commitment to deliver high quality safe care. • Support staff to deliver their own communications, events or initiatives. | <p>Patients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring patients are informed about the availability, quality, and safety of the services provided. • Strengthen confidence in the standard of care provided at The Walton Centre. | <p>External stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve stakeholder engagement, identifying and coordinating relationships with a wide range of stakeholders including new and existing relationships. • Increasing the confidence that commissioners have in the Trust and its ability to deliver high quality services and outcomes. |
| <p>Trust brand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the brand and reputation of the Trust through effective engagement, high quality accessible information, proactive media management and the development of marketing expertise. • Effective management of the Trust's identity and style to safeguard its image and reputation. | <p>Fundraising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the Trust's charity to maximise fundraising opportunities. • Support the charity's donor recognition work, highlighting and celebrating the work of supporters and what their contributions have helped realise. | <p>Research and Innovation opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Trust's research and innovation agenda. • Support the Trust in its aims to become an Anchor Institute. • Support the Trust's work to build and develop successful commercial connections, relationships, and opportunities. • Promote achievements externally. |

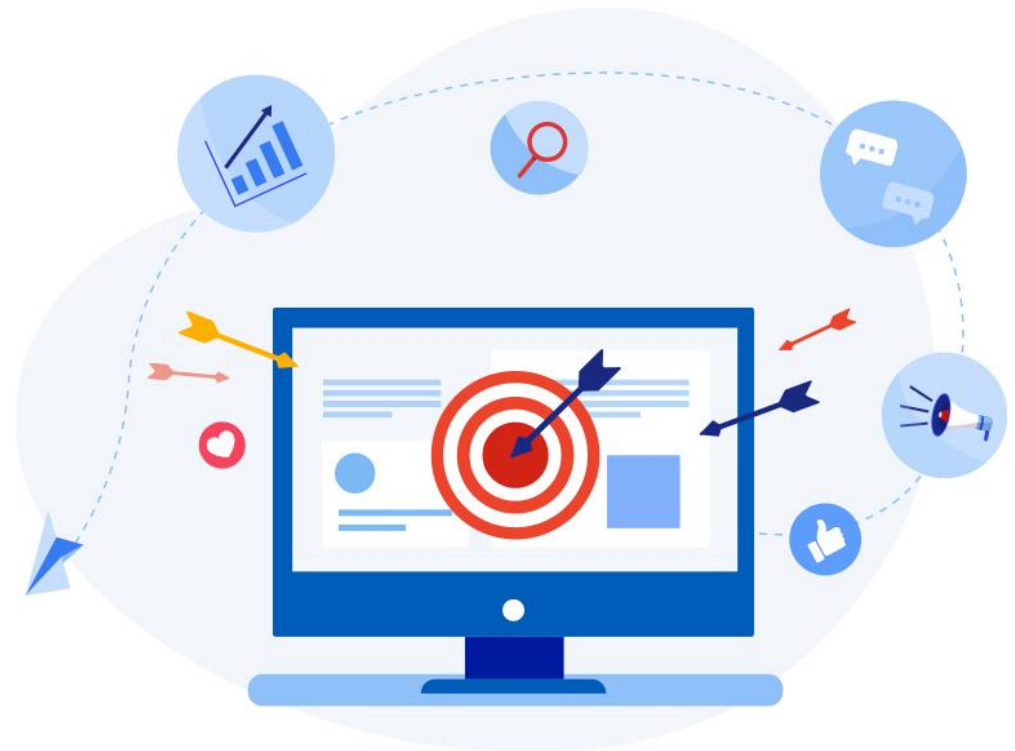
Delivery

The priority of this strategy is to ensure effective two-way communication and engagement exists between the Trust's key audiences, notably staff, patients, and other external stakeholders. This strategy will be underpinned by robust communication plans for specific projects and campaigns as required. The plans will contain the detailed elements of communications channels and audiences/stakeholders to be engaged to deliver projects (please see sections below on communications channels and stakeholders).

All communication and engagement activity will be:

- Clear, timely and accurate
- Planned, consistent and professional
- Consistent with the Trust's brand, mission, vision and values
- Targeted and relevant to the audience's needs
- Based on research, insight and emerging issues
- Available on a range of channels, using different communications techniques to reach different audiences.

The Communications team utilises a range of different channels to best meet the needs of the Trust's audiences. Going forward, a renewed focus on engagement to ensure two-way communication takes place will be important to give patients, staff, the public, and stakeholders a voice wherever possible and an opportunity to give feedback and help to shape communications in the future.



Internal communications

Effective communication with staff is central to the success of the organisation as well as the achievement of its strategic ambitions. This ranges from regular information updates and alerts to long-term campaigns and engagement. Internal communications fosters a sense of connection between the workforce and leadership, and supports the health and development of the organisation's culture.

Key internal communications objectives include:

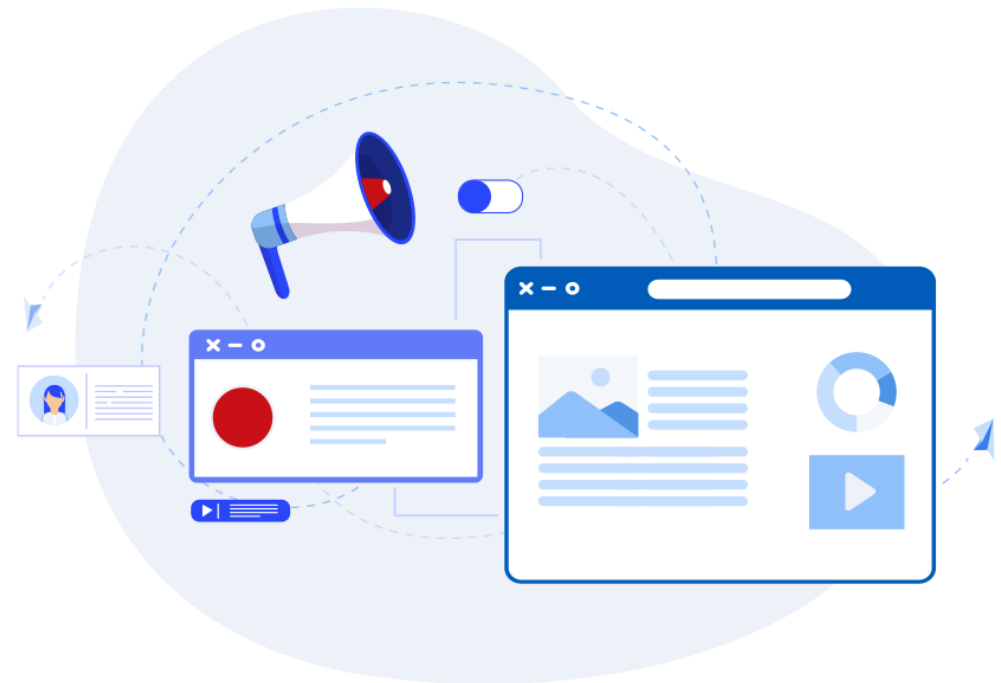
- Ensure staff are informed about all applicable information and developments to help facilitate their best work.
- Enhance meaningful and productive dialogue between the Trust's leadership and its workforce.
- Enhance the effectiveness of communications through an increased focus on evaluation.
- Ensure staff are recognised for their accomplishments, and that best practice is shared and celebrated.
- Deliver Trust campaigns, initiatives and events, and help promote the organisation's successful Health and Wellbeing programme.
- Embed and refine the Trust's 'voice' to ensure all internal communications fit the internal brand.
- Plan for the development of a new intranet.

External communications

Proactively managing the Trust's reputation is vital to maintaining the confidence in its services, quality of care and status as an employer of choice. Reputation is essential for the effective recruitment and retention of the best staff, contributes directly to the way patients and their families feel about receiving treatment and influences the Trust's ability to attract the best collaborators. It also increases the confidence that commissioners have in the Trust's ability to deliver high quality services and outcomes. Reputation is also an essential component in the success of The Walton Centre Charity where experiences, reputation and perception of the organisation are major motivators for involvement and donations.

Key external communications objectives to protect and enhance the Trust's reputation include:

- Reflect the Trust's Strategy, objectives and values in all communications activity.
- Actively promote and publicise the Trust's Strategy, building a narrative to ensure objectives are understood.
- Champion staff and patient achievements that demonstrate outstanding care and innovative ways of working.
- Deliver the new Trust website.
- Proactively manage activities and emerging issues through effective horizon scanning.
- Enable the Trust to engage and build strong relationships with stakeholders, increasing the opportunities for collaboration and charity support.
- Develop marketing expertise, utilise new approaches to communications and make more use of analytics to effectively evaluate and improve future communications and marketing activity.



Social Media

Social media is an increasingly valuable communications channel, providing direct and instantaneous engagement with patients, other external stakeholders, and staff. Currently, the hospital primarily uses Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn, and collectively on these four social media accounts the hospital has over 20,000 followers. These followers include patients, visitors, staff, medical professionals and wider supporters. The Trust provides engaging content that showcases the outstanding services and innovative treatments on offer. The Trust endeavours to provide open and inviting communications channels where patients and potential patients can feel empowered to ask questions and seek advice on how to benefit from our world class services.

Through effectively utilising social media the team will:

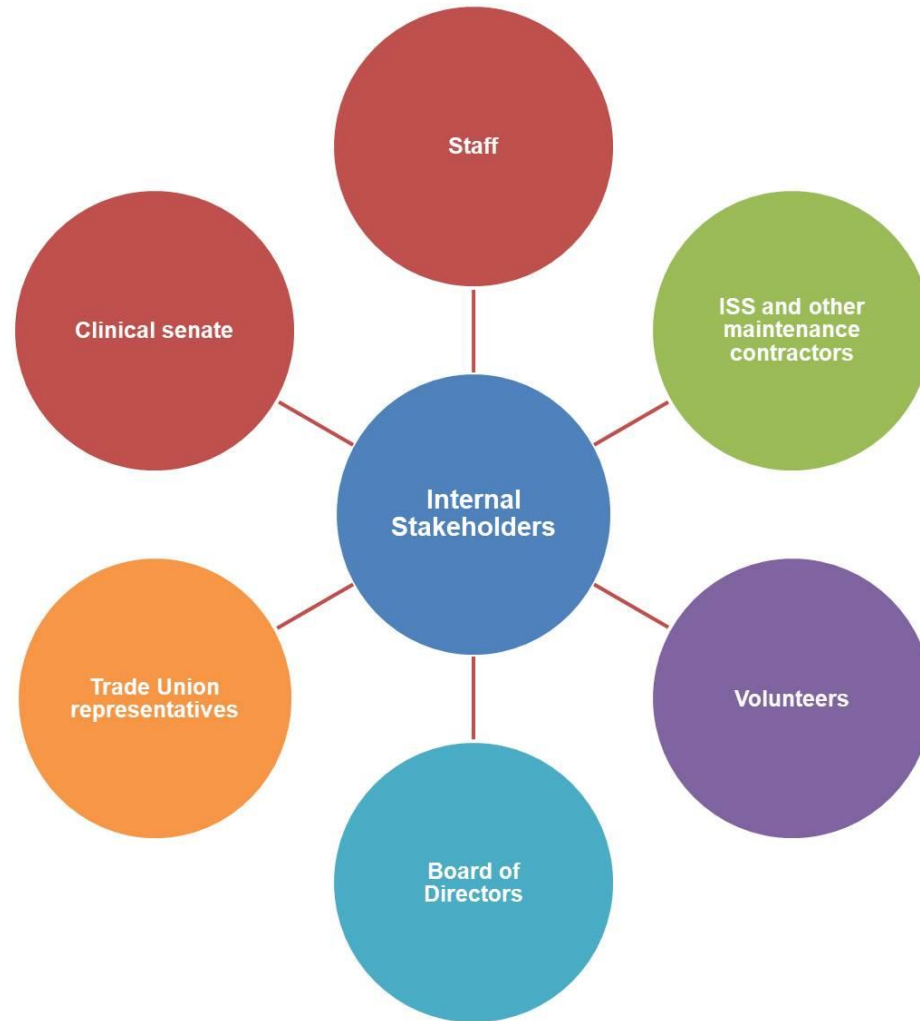
- Keep patients, visitors and staff informed of the latest patient outcomes and the best patient, family and carer experiences. This includes promoting the high standards we already have, as well as showcasing pioneering techniques, use of innovation and advanced technology.
- Share stories of patients and staff which evidence best practice care and treatments, and highlight Trust work in bringing care closer to home for patients.
- Promote new services and facilities which benefit patients and staff.
- Promote successes and innovations which enhance The Walton Centre nationally and internationally.
- Highlight the hospital's learning culture, which empowers staff to continuously improve.
- Inform patients and visitors of any applicable service or operational changes, including crisis communications during major incidents.
- Continue to build an online community around the hospital.
- Increase awareness of The Walton Centre brand and service as a whole.

Social media is an ever changing, ever growing platform. Over the next few years, the Communications team will monitor new trends/approaches and assess their usefulness in serving existing and new audiences. Content will continue to be created along the themes described above, but will also extend more into new areas such as innovation and the use of technology to better serve patients. Due to the success rates of video content in recent history, an increase in creating more video content will be implemented, resources permitting. This greater emphasis on video will be evaluated regularly to ensure that prioritising this kind of content is still valid.

Details of actions to operationalise communications and engagement objectives are included at the end of the Strategy.

Stakeholders

The Communications team has mapped the Trust's internal and external stakeholders, which are summarised in the diagrams overleaf. Going forward, activities will be undertaken to engage stakeholders more comprehensively.





Channels

The range of existing communication channels used by the Trust are listed overleaf. They support awareness-raising and engagement across a range of broad audiences/stakeholders, support one way communication (awareness) and two way communication (engagement). Channels also facilitate the development of relationships and enable information sharing, engagement and promotion of the Trust's strategy and objectives.

| Activity | Channel | Awareness (A)/ Engagement (E) | | Frequency |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Staff | | | | |
| Walton Weekly | Email | A | E | Weekly |
| All user emails | Email | A | | To meet needs of business |
| Posters | Print | A | | To meet needs of business |
| Service improvement displays on site | Print | A | | Quarterly |
| Team Brief | Face to face/virtual & digital | A | E | Monthly |
| CEO blog | Email | A | | Monthly |
| Chair blog | Email | A | | Monthly |
| Executive director blogs | Email | A | | To meet needs of business |
| Neuromatters magazine | Print & digital | A | | Quarterly |
| Intranet | Digital | A | | Ongoing |
| Staff Facebook group | Digital | A | E | Ongoing |
| Hayley's Huddles | Face to face & virtual | A | E | Quarterly |
| Schwartz Rounds | Face to face & virtual | | E | TBC |
| Berwick sessions | Face to face & virtual | | E | TBC |
| Executive team walkabouts | Face to face | | E | Weekly |
| Ask Hayley | Email | | E | Ongoing |
| Listening Weeks | Face to face | | E | Quarterly |
| Campaigns | All channels | A | E | To meet needs of business |
| Vivup platform | Digital | A | E | Ongoing |
| Patients and the public | | | | |
| Social media | Digital | A | E | Ongoing |
| Website | Digital | A | | Ongoing |
| Neuromatters magazine | Print & digital | A | | Quarterly |
| Posters on site | Print | A | | To meet needs of business |
| Service improvement displays on site | Print | A | | Quarterly |

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|---------------------------------|------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|
| Leaflets | Print & digital | A | | Ongoing |
| Digital screens (waiting rooms) | Digital | A | | Ongoing (approval required) |
| Events (e.g. recruitment days) | Face to face & virtual | A | E | To meet needs of business |
| Media | Print & digital | A | | Ongoing |
| Campaigns | All channels | A | E | To meet needs of business |
| Members | | | | |
| Neuromatters | Print & digital | A | | Quarterly |
| Annual Member Meeting | Face to face & virtual | A | E | Annual |
| Ask an Executive email | Email & digital | | E | Ongoing |
| Governor surgeries | Digital | A | E | Quarterly |
| Governors | | | | |
| Email update | Email | A | | Fortnightly |
| Email updates: emerging issues | Email | A | | To meet needs of business |
| Council of Governor meetings | Face to face & virtual | A | E | Quarterly |
| Partners | | | | |
| Stakeholder briefing | Email | A | | Quarterly |
| Face to face meetings | Face to face & virtual | A | E | To meet needs of business |
| Whole system meetings | Face to face & virtual | A | E | |
| Stakeholders | | | | |
| Stakeholder briefing | Email | A | | Quarterly |
| Face to face meetings | Face to face & virtual | A | E | To meet needs of business |

Evaluation

The Communications team recognises that the successful delivery of the strategy will require continuous evaluation and the measurement of key performance indicators. Enhanced emphasis will be placed on evaluation of communications activities going forward. The key performance indicators to be utilised will address the following four themes:

- How we are perceived by our staff, stakeholders and the wider community
- How we engage and involve our staff, stakeholders and our community in setting, delivering, and reviewing our strategy
- How we capture insights into our stakeholders' experiences
- How we plan, deliver and evaluate our communications and engagement activity







The following metrics and indicators will be refined and monitored to assess strategic progress and enhance services:

- Annual internal and external communications survey
- Quarterly Staff Listening Week feedback
- National Staff Survey results
- Social Media performance data including follower count and engagement
- Media monitoring including proactive and reactive communications, ongoing press relationships
- Website analytics
- Vivup platform analytics
- Ad hoc surveys and polls, anecdotal feedback where applicable






This list is not exhaustive and the transition to newer systems during the life of the strategy (for example the delivery of a new intranet system) will create new opportunities for data collection.

Operationalising the Strategy

This Strategy will be operationalised through the delivery of the following outputs by the Communications team, subject to developing issues and priorities.








| Activity | | | Timeframe | | |
|-----------------|--|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | 2020-2021 | 2021-2022 | 2022-2025 |
| Staff | | | | | |
| Walton Weekly |  DELIVER | Investigate solutions to provide analytics/audit and evaluation | | | |
| | | Implement changes as applicable following evaluation and engagement | | | |
| All user emails |  DELIVER | Explore options for analytics/audit and evaluation | | | |
| Team Brief |  DELIVER | Complete an audit to evaluate the new style, ensuring effective cascade | | | |
| | | Continue to host as a virtual event, recording and making available digitally and explore options for expanding attendance by hosting virtually as well as potentially face to face again in the future. | | | |
| CEO blog |  RECOGNISE | Investigate solutions to provide analytics/audit and evaluation | | | |
| Chair blog |  RECOGNISE | Investigate solutions to provide analytics/audit and evaluation | | | |
| Executive |  RECOGNISE | Investigate solutions to provide analytics/audit and evaluation | | | |

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| director blogs | | Assess the potential benefits of producing vlogs | | | |
| Neuromatters magazine |  | Survey readership and assess differences in print copy versus electronic copy for members/staff/general public | | | |
| | | Evaluate whether meeting the needs of the audience | | | |
| Intranet |  | Explore possibility of replacing the existing intranet with a new Content Management System | | | |
| | | Depending on viability of a new solution, assess what quick-wins can be achieved on the existing intranet to improve user experience | | | |
| | | Develop a business case | | | |
| Staff Facebook group |  | Review activity after first 12 months, survey users to evaluate and plan a future direction for the group | | | |
| Hayley's Huddles |  | Embed new mechanism for delivering the huddles | | | |
| Schwartz Rounds |  | Identify whether these engagement sessions will take place and provide support where necessary | | | |
| Berwick sessions |  | Identify whether these engagement sessions will take place and provide support where necessary | | | |
| Executive team walkabouts |  | Identify ways to better communicate when these happen and outcomes | | | |

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| Ask Hayley |  DELIVER | Set up new initiative, launch and continue to promote | | | |
| | | Audit and evaluate | | | |
| Listening Weeks |  RECOGNISE | Assess viability of hosting F2F events during the pandemic and what alternatives can be provided in the meantime e.g virtual | | | |
| | | Improve feedback mechanisms and evaluation of events | | | |
| | | Improve evaluation mechanisms | | | |
| Campaigns |  DELIVER | Develop, plan and launch as required by the business | | | |
| | | Plan campaigns to support other local and national initiatives | | | |
| Vivup platform |  RECOGNISE | Enhance the content based on user feedback and analytics | | | |
| Brand |  RECOGNISE | Continue to develop and embed Trust 'voice' in all internal communications | | | |
| Patients and the public | | | | | |
| Social media |  RECOGNISE | Increase followers and engagement | | | |
| | | Increase use of video produced in-house ensuring relevant hardware is purchased to support this | | | |
| | | Increase use of calls to action to increase engagement and support Trust objectives | | | |
| | | Extend the range of organisations followed | | | |
| | | Increase visibility and activity on LinkedIn, moving followers across to new Trust page | | | |
| | | Develop a performance dashboard which also encompasses media relations, internal and external communications | | | |

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| | | Seek funding for digital management tools | | | |
| Website |  | Build new website | | | |
| | | Launch new website | | | |
| | | Audit and evaluate website | | | |
| Neuromatters |  | Survey readership and assess differences in print copy versus electronic copy for members/staff/general public | | | |
| | | Evaluate whether meeting the needs of the audience | | | |
| Posters on site |  | Replace current noticeboards with new clip frames | | | |
| | | Assess content requirements for the new noticeboards and design assets as necessary | | | |
| | | Devise an effective schedule to manage the content regularly | | | |
| Service Improvement displays on site |  | Devise a plan, or add it to an annual work plan to ensure the displays are updated regularly | | | |
| | | Work closely with staff to produce relevant information in an attractive format | | | |
| | | Consider if position and number of displays meets audience needs | | | |
| Leaflets |  | Launch new branding and format for patient information leaflets | | | |
| Digital screens (waiting rooms/corridors) |  | Revisit the latest proposal, liaising with IT and executive directors as required | | | |
| | | If approved, develop a communications approach to the management of content spanning corporate communications, PEFT, clinical information. | | | |
| Events (e.g. recruitment days) |  | Provide support as required to manage and deliver corporate events or to support staff to deliver their own events | | | |

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|------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Media |  RECOGNISE | Prioritise broadcast opportunities, building relationship with BBC Radio Merseyside and other local media outlets | | | |
| Campaigns |  DELIVER | Develop, plan and launch as required by the business, working with key staff on specific campaigns | | | |
| | | Support other local and national initiatives with promotion and support | | | |
| Brand |  RECOGNISE | Develop Trust Branding - aligned with the national NHS Brand Guidelines | | | |
| | | Create brand guidelines document for use internally and with external suppliers | | | |
| Members | | | | | |
| Neuromatters |  RECOGNISE | Survey readership and assess differences in print copy versus electronic copy for members/staff/general public | | | |
| | | Evaluate whether meeting the needs of the audience | | | |
| Annual Member Meeting |  RECOGNISE | Work with the Membership team to devise and deliver a virtual meeting for 2020 | | | |
| | | Support the Membership team to utilise technology to deliver virtual member events in the future to enhance accessibility. | | | |
| Ask an executive email |  DELIVER | Launch in conjunction with the Membership team | | | |
| Governor surgeries |  DELIVER | Launch in conjunction with the Membership team | | | |
| Governors | | | | | |

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| Email update |  DELIVER | Support the Membership team as necessary | | | |
| Email updates: emerging issues |  DELIVER | Support the Membership team as necessary | | | |
| Council of Governor meetings |  RECOGNISE | Support the Membership team as necessary | | | |
| Partners | | | | | |
| Stakeholder briefing |  RECOGNISE | Investigate options for improving presentation, accessibility, functionality | | | |
| | | Identify a solution to provide analytics and evaluation | | | |
| Stakeholder mapping |  RECOGNISE | Plan further approaches to map and engage stakeholders | | | |
| Anchor Institution |  DELIVER | Develop communications approach to support the Trust's ambition to be an Anchor Institution | | | |
| Resources | | | | | |
| Team development |  DELIVER | Develop team profile within the Trust (potentially including through the delivery of training for Trust staff) | | | |
| | | Develop annual work plan to ensure effective proactive management of activities | | | |
| | | Explore opportunities to develop new communication tools and channels | | | |

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| | | Develop marketing expertise | | | |
| | | Identify hardware and software required to better support and deliver communications in an agile workplace | | | |