

# Publications Panel

## What is it?

The Publications Panel will:

- 1) Approve the production of marketing and communications materials for Somerset County Council.
- 2) Make sure any approved marketing materials meet corporate guidelines.

## Why do we need it?

The Publications Panel will make sure that any marketing materials approved meet equalities, branding and publication standards, represent good value for money and ensure key points of information are delivered in the most effective way.

The Panel may also be able to suggest ways to improve the layout or distribution, and different or additional ways to achieve your aims.

## What is the scope?

- Any marketing materials (printed publications, e-comms, mass circulation letters, websites, social media, posters etc) that incur a spend in excess of £100.
- Any letter, flyer or e-communication that does not incur a cost in excess of £100 but will be distributed to 100 people or more.
- If planning to produce 50 or more posters

If you aren't sure whether or not something needs to come to panel, please speak to a member of the communications team on (01823) 355020 or email [communicationsteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:communicationsteam@somerset.gov.uk). The Publications Panel will need to be flexible and will adopt a common sense approach. It will also seek to avoid regular/repeat materials having to come through the panel every time.

## What is out of scope?

Some examples of comms that **don't** need to come through the panel are:

- Internal messages to your own staff
- Core Brief, Our Somerset, County Hall and "all user" emails
- Policy and planning documents
- Committee reports
- Communications between the Council and Somerset schools

The panel will aim to review any submissions as quickly as possible and will look at materials on a case-by-case basis.



## Partnerships

Speak to the Comms Team on 01823 355020 if you are producing publications with a partner as the level of partnership will need to be explored to determine the best way forward. In general, it must come via the Publications Panel if:

- 50 per cent or more of the partnership project is funded by Somerset County Council
- If the County Council is the lead partner
- It is promoting a County Council service
- The audience should perceive the publication as a County Council service.

## When did it start?

The Publications Panel started in 1 April 2011.

## Who is involved?

- Director of Corporate Affairs
- Cabinet Member (when appropriate)
- The Communications Team
- Equalities Team
- DAS – our internal design and print team
- Reprographics (when relevant for in-house printing)
- Web Team (when a website is required)

## How do I submit a publication proposal?

The Publications Panel is involved at two stages:

### *Stage 1 – approving the publication concept*

The service area completes a Publication Panel Submission Form available at <http://intranet.somerset.gov.uk/communications/publications/> explaining their proposal and what they want to achieve.

1. The service area should send completed proposals to the Panel at [communicationsteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:communicationsteam@somerset.gov.uk).
2. Your brief will be discussed by a panel of appropriate officers (see “who is involved?” above) at the earliest opportunity and they will either agree, reject or propose alternatives. A member of the Communications Team will contact you with feedback about this decision and will talk you through the remaining process.

### *Stage 2 – approving the publication design*

1. If the concept was approved by the Panel at Stage 1, a proof will be issued by DAS (or designer) to the Publication Panel for review.
2. Once approved by the Panel (Lead Comms Manager has final say), the draft is then sent to the Client for approval by the lead Comms Officer.



3. In some cases the Panel may ask to see a further draft for approval, if a large number of changes are requested.

**Questions/concerns?**

If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with the Communications Team on (01823) 355020 or [communicationsteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:communicationsteam@somerset.gov.uk).

