

Freedom of Information – Response – 26756

I am writing to make a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This request relates to your authority's marketing, communications and engagement activity, including associated staffing, budgets, spend and functions. I am seeking this information to better understand how local authorities resource and deliver communications, engagement and consultation activity.

For the most recent full financial year for which data is available, please provide the following:

NOTE – the responses below are for the Communications and Public Affairs Team only and cover the financial year 2024/25.

1. Organisational structure and staffing

a) The total number of employees (FTE) working wholly or primarily in marketing, communications, media, public relations, engagement, consultation or related functions.

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b) The directorate, department or service area in which these staff sit.

Communications and Public Affairs, Corporate Services

c) A breakdown of roles or grades where available (e.g. senior leadership, managers, officers).

FTE:

Assistant Director Communications and Public Affairs x1 FTE

Communications and Public Affairs Manager x4 FTE Grade 7 and 8

Senior Communication Officer x5 FTE Grade 6

Communication Officer x 4 (inc. one 0.5 FTE) Grade 5

Senior Graphic Designer x1 FTE – grade not provided as individual could be identified.

Senior Analyst x1 FTE – grade not provided as individual could be identified.

Executive Assistant 0.5 FTE – grade not provided as individual could be identified.

2. Budget and expenditure

a) The total annual budget allocated to marketing, communications and engagement activities.

The total budget in 2024/25, the most recent complete financial year, is £859,398. This is allocated to Communications, Consultation and Engagement budgets.

b) The total actual spend for the year.

The total spend in 2024/25, the most recent complete financial year, is £952,672. This is spend against Communications, Consultation and Engagement budgets.

c) A breakdown of spend between:

- *Staff costs (including salaries, on-costs and temporary staff or contractors) - broken down by post*

Assistant Director Communications and Public Affairs x 1 = £126,417
Comms Managers/Consultation Manager x 4 = £313,006
Senior Communications Officers x 5 = £279,448
Communications Officers x 4 = £99,165
Other Posts x 3 = £118,305

- *External suppliers or agencies*

ACE (ANGLIA) LIMITED £1,050
ADVANIA UK (CCS) LTD £357
BOTANICA £364
CAPSULE MARKETING - £5,025
CLEARSCORE LTD £225
CONSULTATION INSTITUTE £21,102
DAN SLEE C2 LTD £245
EVENT FLAG HIRE COMPANY – £300
GETTY IMAGES £1,650
IMPRESS IPSWICH £3,730
INSIDE OUT MARQUEES LTD £2,400
IPSERV LTD £586
IPSOS (MARKET RESEARCH) LTD- £78,000
LGCOMMS £250
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION £275
NLA MEDIA ACCESS LIMITED £3,383
SETPOINT PRODUCTIONS LTD £10,000
SMARTSURVEY LTD £10,082
SQUIRCLE CREATIVE £150
ST JOHN AMBULANCE £471
SUFFOLK AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION £8,812
T H MOSS & SONS LTD £989
THE COPYRIGHT LICENSING AGENCY LTD £7,773
VERTAS IPSWICH LTD £6,910
VUELIO £9,167

- *Advertising and media spend*

The figures below are already included above under total spend, but we have included them here as they are specifically attributed to Advertising and media/marketing. Therefore, please do not double count.

CAPSULE MARKETING - £5,025
EVENT FLAG HIRE COMPANY – £300
IMPRESS IPSWICH £3,400
INSIDE OUT MARQUEES LTD £2,400
IPSERV LTD £586
IPSOS (MARKET RESEARCH) LTD £78,000
SQUIRCLE CREATIVE £150
ST JOHN AMBULANCE £471
SUFFOLK AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION £6,987
VERTAS IPSWICH LTD £5,098

- *Website development*

N/A not on this budget

- *Graphic and digital design*

N/A as undertaken in house

- *Print expenditure*

£1,632

- *Events, consultation exercises and engagement programmes*

Included above

- *Any other significant categories of spend* Included above

Included above

3. Core activities

Please outline the core activities undertaken by the marketing, communications and engagement function(s), for example:

- *Corporate communications and media relations*
- *Campaigns and public information*
- *Internal communications*
- *Digital and social media*
- *Web development*
- *Advertising/recruitment advertising/public notices*
- *Public consultation and engagement*
- *Community engagement*
- *Stakeholder or partner communications*

Core activities carried out by the Communications and Public Affairs Team:

- *Media relations; press releases, briefings, responding to media enquiries*
- *Public affairs*
- *Campaigns*
- *Consultations*
- *Internal communications*
- *Digital communications: social media, online copy*
- *Community engagement and events*
- *Stakeholder and partner communications*

4. Discretionary vs non-discretionary activity

Please indicate:

a) Which marketing, communications and engagement activities are considered essential or statutory (including any required by legislation or regulation).

We do not hold this information.

b) Which activities are considered discretionary or non-essential.

We do not hold this information.

c) Any distinction you make between internal, external and community-based engagement.

We don't make any distinctions in how those resourced, as we don't have individual teams to do those. Our communications officers are expected to carry out all three of those requirements within the boundaries of their job descriptions.

5. Consultation and engagement spend

Please confirm:

a) Total spend on consultation and engagement activities (internal and external).

The figures below are already included above under total spend, but we have included them here as they are specifically attributed to consultation and engagement. Therefore, please do not double count.

IPSOS (MARKET RESEARCH) LTD- £78,000

CONSULTATION INSTITUTE £21,102

SMARTSURVEY LTD £10,082

b) How this spend is categorised or recorded within your authority (e.g. as part of communications, policy, regeneration, public health or other budgets).

All data provided has been extracted from the Communication and Public Affairs budget within the corporate services directorate.

Smartsurvey is used across all Suffolk County Council directorates.

IPSOS and Consultation Institute costs relate to the 2024 Devolution Consultation and were subsequently recharged to a dedicated project account.

Other spend will sit within service directorates however this is beyond the time limits of this request.