

12.4 REVIEW OF BRIGHTON COMMUNITY NEWS:

AUTHOR: Chief Operations Officer
(Mr J Dryburgh)

Background:

At its January 2020 Ordinary Meeting, Council determined to undertake a review of the *Brighton Community News* (BCN) via a council workshop. After agreeing the scope of the review, the workshop was held on March 10.

A number of matters were discussed relating to potential cost savings, content, advertising, postage and distribution, community involvement and the mix of internal and external resources.

It was unanimously agreed to the following actions, some of which will require a gradual implementation/transition:

- No change to number of issues per year.
- Scheduling in December – January to be looked at (not necessarily changed).
- Discontinue BCN website and Facebook page.
- Host BCN with a section on Council’s website.
- Post BCN-related items with BCN banner on Council’s Facebook.
- Greater internal control of Council’s Social Media.
- Continue increased involvement of Council’s Executive Officer in content creation and contact liaison.
- Increase price of political ads.
- Discontinue Uncle Chris publication and include a ‘well-being’ or similar type section in the BCN.
- Continue with current postage/ distribution; Deputy General Manager to try to negotiate a better deal.
- Review calendar/what’s on section, to make it clearer/more user friendly.
- Continue to ensure a high level of community content, access and engagement.
- Maintain council control of BCN and its content.
- Include more content on health/healthy living.
- Ensure impartiality (issue-focussed).

Consultation:

Consultation has occurred amongst the Senior Management Team, Executive Officer and Councillors.

Risk Implications:

It is important for council operations, reputation and for a number of community functions that council has a good quality, regular publication such as the BCN. Not having it would make essential communications with the community and stakeholders difficult and would reduce council's control over how it is perceived.

Financial/Budget Implications:

The proposed actions represent a saving of over \$20,000 per year.

Social Implications:

The BCN is extremely important to community organisations and is very important for council to be able to communicate broadly with the community, and advocate on issues of local importance.

Environmental/ Climate Change Implications:

None.

Economic Implications:

The BCN providing a cheap/free platform for local businesses and organisations to advertise or to reach a wide audience with information.

Strategic Plan:

The BCN is consistent with all the social goals within council's Strategic Plan.

Options:

1. As per the recommendation.
2. Other.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council endorse all the agreed actions from the workshop, as listed earlier in this report.

DECISION: