

Communications Action Plan Update

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Executive Summary

This report outlines the progress that has been made by the Communications Team against the Year 1 Action Plan set out in the Communication Strategy 2025-28 and the performance of communications in the last quarter (Jan-March 2026)

2 Recommendations

The Performance and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the information provided in the report.

3 Background

In April 2025 the Communications Strategy was published which set out a three-year Action Plan for the improvement and development of corporate communications in the Service.

This report summarises progress against the Year 1 Action Plan. (The action plan can be viewed as Appendix A) and the performance of the Service key communications channels.

4 Update

Action plan-year 1

Item	timeline	Progress	Comments
Commission and manage the design and adoption of a new website	12 months- due March 2026	Completed	A Website upgrade was completed and this launched on 18 th February. The Service will allow six months for the site to embed before evaluating its performance in July 2026. The intention now is to continue to develop the website on an ongoing basis in order to keep the channel up to date and relevant.
Develop a Warn and inform plan	6 months	Overdue but in its final phases	The plan has been written in partnership with the Ops department and fire control. It is now about to be launched but the supporting materials are being finalised following concerns from Ops.
Create and launch four data led prevention campaigns	12 months- all four to be completed by March 2026	Completed	The team have successfully delivered all four campaigns for financial year 2025/26 and will be starting a new cycle of campaigns in April 2026.
Design and implement an internal Communications strategy	6 months	Overdue	Initial draft is complete and awaiting input at exec level
Carry out social media audit.	12 months	On Going	An initial audit of the existing channels has been carried out, and an action plan will be designed to address short comings and training. Officer training sessions have been scheduled but the audit has been progressing slowly due to capacity.

Carry out On-call recruitment campaign	12 months	Not completed	A full campaign for on call recruitment was not carried out- The comms team carried out ad hoc advertising and updates to on call marketing materials per request, but no plans were made with Area command for a full campaign- this should be address next year.
Develop social media training for Officers and social media champions	3-6 months	Scheduled	Training has been developed and sessions with each Area Command Group have been scheduled
Support equality, diversity and inclusion.	Ongoing	On schedule	The team continue to support EDI throughout the year

Three out of eight of the items are overdue/behind schedule. This is mainly due to capacity both in the Comms team and with the Executive leaders. The lack of resources has meant the Warn and inform plan is behind schedule although it is making progress and is due to launch in the next quarter.

The circumstances around the executive leadership functions have also seen the internal communications strategy hold progress for some time. This will be considered a key priority moving into the next financial year.

Positively the team have managed to launch a new website which as of this week is now 98% compliant with government accessibility requirements with no violations. This project has taken an extensive amount of time and resources. Although the site has been launched the communications team are continuing to evaluate and develop the content in order to increase engagement. Areas of the website such as the HMICFRS are to be developed in the next quarter.

Social Media

The team have also successfully grown a new social media channel, launching an Instagram account in June 2025 - a channel that has been performing well and given the Service a way to communicate with a younger audience.

That being said stats for the Service's social media channels are down this quarter compared to last. This is due to a number of factors including:

- the lack of an external prevention campaign, as the recent Fire kills Campaign was targeted at partners and not the general public
- the spike in engagement during the Major Incident at Whitchurch the quarter before skewing performance figures. The social media engagement has now returned to its normal status, but Appendix A does show a decline in the engagement.
- Other communications priorities such as the new website and budget consultations have meant the team were unable to film and create more engaging content this quarter

It is important to understand the context as to why this has happened. We are expected the channels to perform better in the next quarter when we launch the next prevention campaign.

Campaigns

The team have successfully worked with other departments including prevention on a number of important pieces of work supporting Service Delivery.

The success of the prevention campaigns in particular can be found in Appendix C.

5 Conclusions

In summary the Communications Team is making good progress with Action Plan 1 and although there are items behind schedule there are plans in place to still delivery these pieces of work.

6 Capacity

Although the team has made good progress against the action plan, capacity constraints have meant that some work has had to be deferred or declined. For example, the development and finalisation of the communications portal have been delayed again due to competing priorities such as the Website, major incidents and Cultural projects.

We do not anticipate a reduction in workload and are actively exploring options to address this. This includes developing a business case for an additional role and considering temporary support to help manage immediate pressures and gaps in strategic capabilities. Current limitations mean the team is missing opportunities to better prepare for the year ahead and to strengthen external and stakeholder engagement.

7 Financial Implications

The website upgrade cost £20,000, less than the original planned redesign.

8 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9 Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report.
An e-EQIA is not, therefore, required.

10 Appendices (delete as appropriate)

Appendix A

Comms Action Plan year 1

Appendix B

Social Media analytics

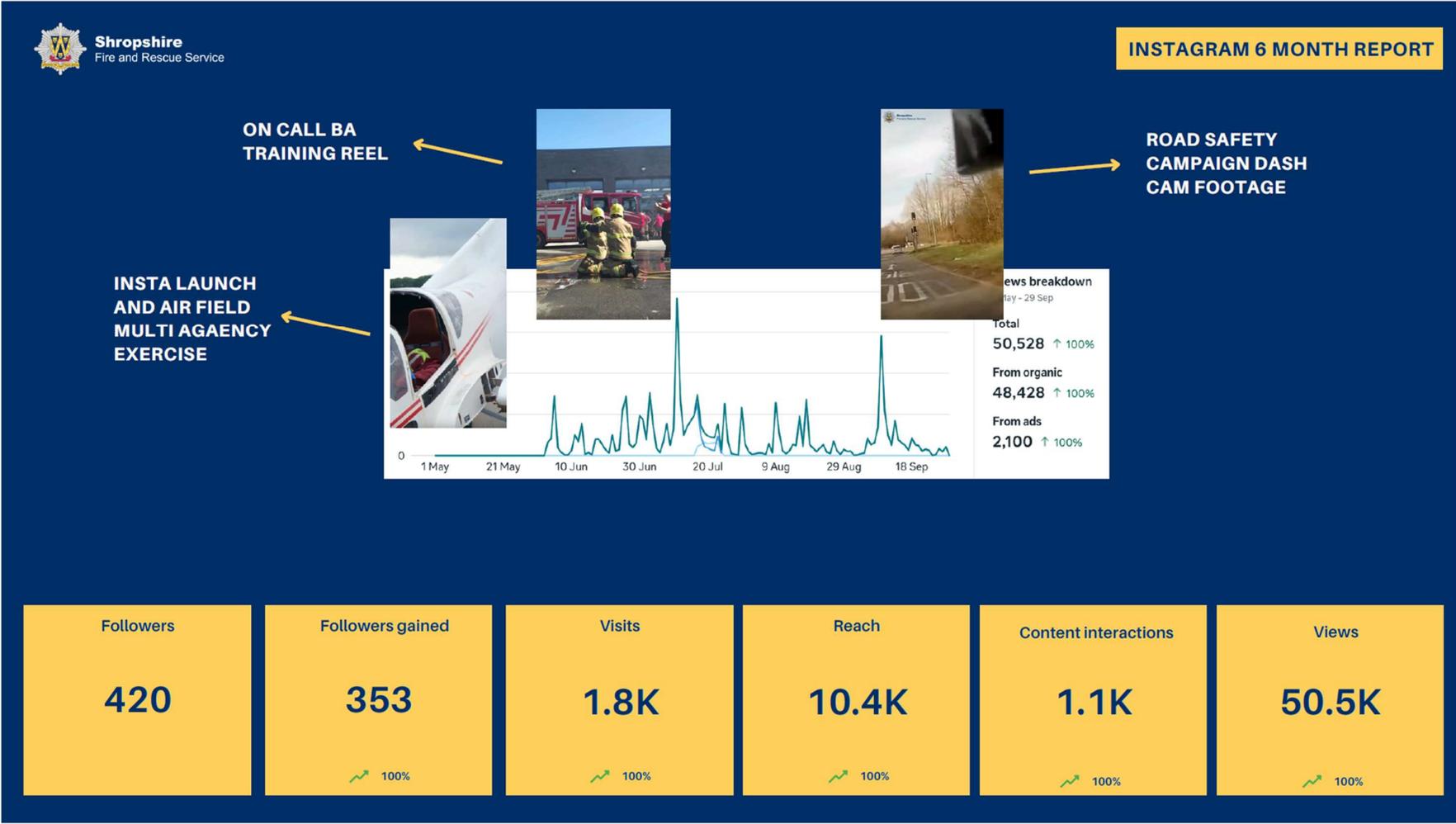
Appendix C

Campaign analytics

11 Background Papers

Communications Strategy 2025-2028

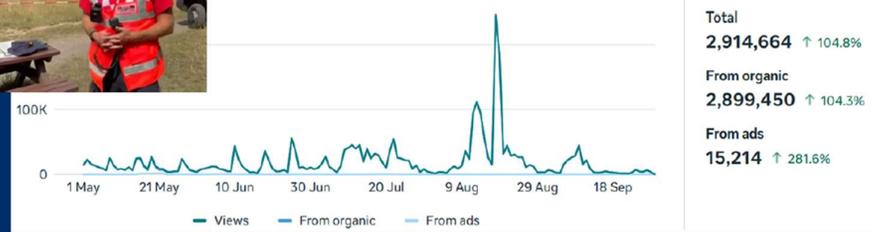
Social Media Analytics



ANY SORT OF INCIDENT WILL CAUSE SPIKES

PASSING OF CHRIS SHORT

ANY SORT OF JOB ADVERT CAUSES SPIKES



Followers	Followers gained	Visits	Reach	Content interactions	Views
18.8K	1.8K	67.4K	743.8K	20.7K	2.9M
	↓ 31.4%	↑ 60.5%	↑ 31.1%	↑ 75.3%	↑ 104.8%



Followers

11.2K

Views per post

467

Engagement

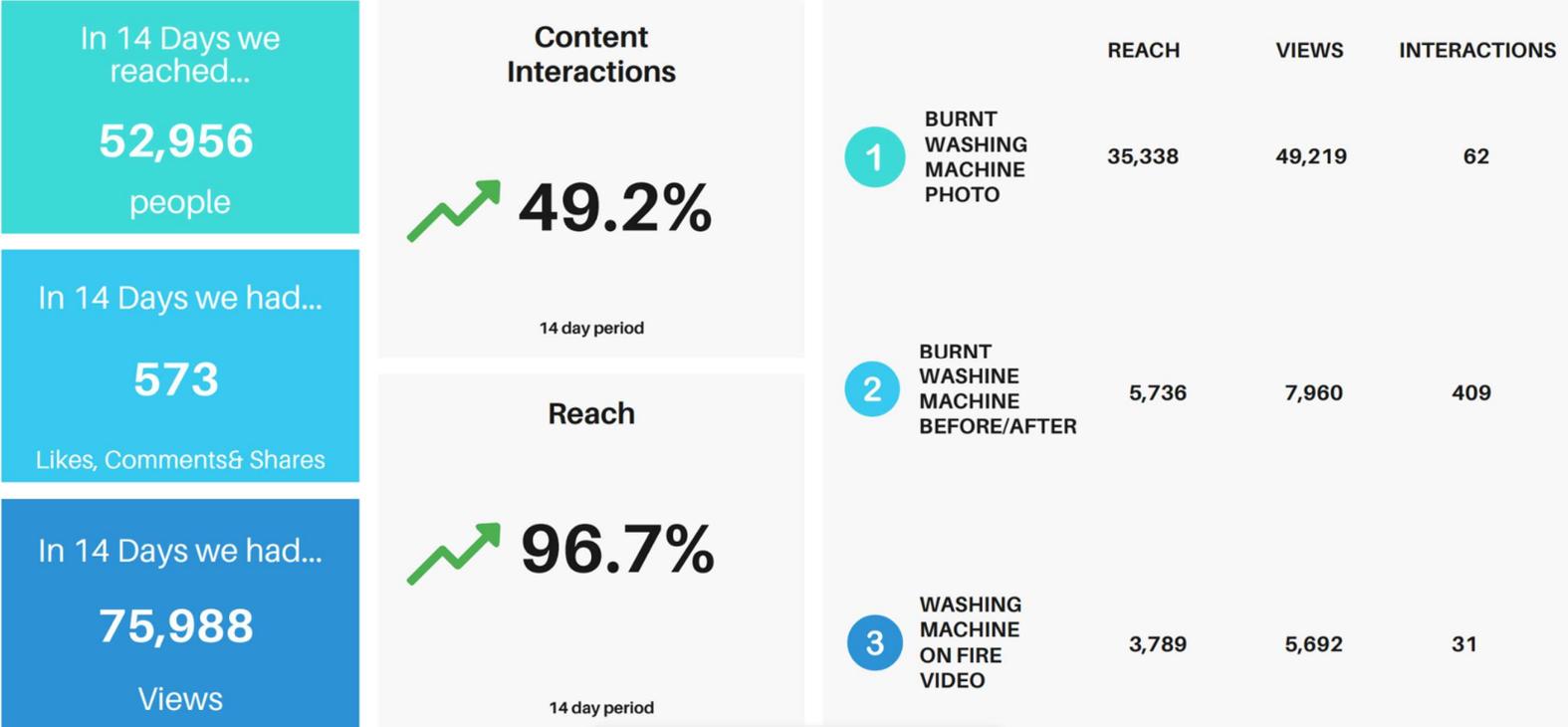
191

Views

46.7K

Campaign analytics

FACEBOOK REPORT STATISTICS FOR THE ROAD CAMPAIGN POSTS



INSTAGRAM REPORT

STATISTICS FOR THE ROAD CAMPAIGN POSTS

In 14 Days we reached...

5,835

people

In 14 Days we had...

108

Likes, Comments & Shares

In 14 Days we had...

9,177

Views

Content Interactions

 **49.2%**

14 day period

Views

 **63%**

14 day period

Visits

 **16.6%**

14 day period

Reach

 **96.7%**

14 day period

TOP COMMENTS

"I've left the washing machine or dishwasher on and turned in, I just thought it was tumble dryers that were the fire risk 😬"

"Anything electrical can catch fire, if there's a fault etc... never leave things like a hairdryer plugged in either, or toasters, air fryers etc. 🙏 Stay safe! 😊"

"It's best to unplug ALL ITEMS FROM THE MAINS WHEN NOT IN USE"



This campaign had a great amount of interactions. There were many conversations in the captions of people discussing what they do and don't do and have learnt from the posts.



I think one reason this campaign did so well is the content was more real. the photos and videos we did of burnt appliances did the best as expected.



One way to improve may be having more talking to camera content. We haven't tried this in a campaign yet and it may work well based on what the public like.



Our main social focus was Facebook due to demographic and as expected the reach and views in particular were really good!

If you look at all statistics this campaign performed incredibly when compared to others especially in the reach and interactions