

Communications Plan

Money Advice Service 2021

Responsible Officer: Barry Hancock

Version number: 01

LIVE DOCUMENT



1.0 - RESEARCH

1.1 Situation summary

The Money Advice Team has received some post-COVID-19 funding to help support Powys residents better during the next year, which will include having another officer in post.

It wants to be more proactive in publicising what it does and the support it offers. This includes making referring agencies and departments more aware of what is available.

During the last tax year (2020/21), the Money Advice Team received 529 referrals and achieved benefit gains worth £2,046,118.65 for its clients.

1.2 - Situation analysis

SWOT Analysis	STRENGTHS Good working relationship with Macmillan. Give good advice to people they talk to, resulting in around £1.5 million in income being gained for Powys residents. The team is able to offer a holistic advice service rather than being divided into different specialities and is able to visit residents in non-COVID-19 times	WEAKNESSES Lack of awareness about the service offered among members of the public. Lack of awareness of what is available among referring agencies and departments.
	OPPORTUNITIES Extra funding and the appointment to an additional post means that there is currently more capacity within the service. It also allows the service to be more proactive and may allow earlier interventions.	THREATS Residents who are struggling financially because of COVID-19 might not be accessing the help they need. Poor awareness among referring agencies and departments could result in a patchy service, with some getting help and others being missed. Loss of income to the county due to those who are eligible not claiming the benefits they are entitled to.

1.3 – Target audience

This communication campaign will target the following key audience:

- Powys residents who are struggling financially because of COVID-19.
And especially:
 - Furloughed workers
 - Private renters
 - Professionals who refer residents to the service, from:
 - Within the council
 - External or partner bodies such as health (especially GP practices)
 - Employers
- Private landlords

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2.0 – COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

To assist the Money Advice Team to reach its targets of dealing with an extra 200 referrals and gaining an additional £500,000 in income for its customers over the next 12 months.

The team also has ambitions to deal with additional contacts, in line with its increase in referrals, and to deliver 12 advice sessions, either face-to-face or digitally, over the next 12 months.

3.0 – STRATEGY

To primarily deliver a factual campaign, providing information to raise awareness of the service that is available and secondly offer reassurance by reminding people that help is available if they are struggling.

3.1 - Key messages

- If you are struggling financially, because of COVID-19, we are here to help you.
- If you know someone who is struggling financially, because of COVID-19, refer them to us.
- Contact us as early as you can, if you think you are going to struggle, so that your situation doesn't reach crisis point.

3.2 – Campaign Tactics

Phase 1:

Activity	Description	Audience	Outcome	Lead	When
Information pack	Information pack that includes digital and printable resources.	Professionals who refer to the Money Advice Team.	Greater awareness of the service and more referrals from a wider range of agencies and geographical locations.	BH	Ready to go out early in September.
Internal & partner message to promote the new information pack	Intranet article and All-Powys email, along with text and images that can also be used by partner organisations.	Professionals who refer to the Money Advice Team.	Greater awareness of the service and more referrals from a wider range of agencies and geographical locations.	BH	Early September.
Case studies	Anonymised case studies of people who have been helped and how they have benefitted.	Powys public and professionals.	Will help to reinforce why it is a good idea to get in touch or to refer a client.	BH	Early September so they can go out with the information pack if needed.
Quarterly updates on the help provided	Social media posts and internal/partner messages on the number of people helped and the value of that help.	Powys public and professionals.	A way of keeping the service in the public/professional 'eye'	BH	First update at the end of September for the previous three months.
Social media posts	Graphics and text to promote the availability	Powys public in	Greater awareness of the service and more	BH	October

	of the service and how to get in touch.	financial difficulty.	people in need asking for help.		
Advisor videos	Short videos from members of the advice team saying who they are and what they do. Could be linked to the festive period, around people getting into debt? For social media channels.	Powys public.	Make the service seem more approachable to those who need help.	BH	November
Cabinet Member video	Video promoting the service and how to get in touch.	Powys public, professionals and politicians.	Raise awareness generally and will probably be a voice that is listened to within the farming community.	BH	October

Phase 2:

Activity	Description	Audience	Outcome	Lead	When

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4.0 – EVALUATION

How do you know it works?

1. Don't leave evaluation until the end of your campaign. Regularly monitor the change in perceptions or behaviours by taking temperature checks of your audiences throughout your campaign. This will allow you to review strategy and tactics and amend messages accordingly.

2. Your evaluation should not simply be a statement of activity – how many leaflets sent out, how many column inches or opportunities to see – it should demonstrate how you have met the business objectives.

Measure changes to perceptions or behaviours in your audiences and, if possible how this relates to the business bottom line. For example, increasing tonnage of recycling will relate to savings for the council. You need to prove how effective you have been – not just how busy.

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