



## Staff Report

**Report Title: Communications Status Report June 2024**

**Date: Jun. 3, 2024**

**Report Number: CLK-2024-06-27**

**Department: Legislative Services**

**File Number: C11 CLK24**

**Prepared By: Kristen Prentice**

**Attachments: N/A**

---

### **Recommendation:**

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole receives for information Report CLK-2024-06-27 prepared by Kristen Prentice, Communications Coordinator.

### **Background:**

The Huron-Kinloss Communications Strategy and Action Plan was approved by the Committee of the Whole in November 2021. The Communications Coordinator works to achieve the objectives defined within the goals of the Action Plan:

1. Build a Foundation of Successful Communications
2. Create a Culture of Two-Way Communications
3. Provide Clear, Concise, Accurate and Timely Messaging

The Township aims to create content for our audience that aligns with the Guiding Principles and Strategic Directions of the 2023-2033 Strategic Plan.

### **Discussion/Analysis/Overview:**

The Communications Coordinator holds monthly meetings with the Communications Committee for information sharing and communication planning purposes. An annual communication schedule has been developed to ensure consistent and reliable corporate messaging.

Our external communications take a multi-faceted approach by using several channels to reach our audiences, including:

- **Social media accounts:** Facebook and Instagram (Corporate and Tourism)
- **Website News:** Notices, updates, and alerts published to our website and delivered to Website News subscribers' inboxes
- **Local newspapers:** Kincardine Independent, Kincardine News, Lucknow Sentinel, Kincardine Record (online)
- **Community Events Calendar:** For community and charity, volunteer, and non-profit organizations' events

- **H-K Connects:** Monthly e-newsletters delivered to subscribers' inboxes with departmental updates and notices
- **Press Releases, Poster Boards, Pony Express (Mennonite newsletter)**

By leveraging these various channels, we ensure that our messages reach the broadest possible audience, allowing residents and visitors to stay well-informed and engaged.

#### FACEBOOK

The Corporate Huron-Kinloss Facebook Page has seen consistent growth in followers and engagement during the first half of 2024. The Page gained 178 new followers, bringing the total to 3,581. Visits to the page increased by 16.7% compared to the same period last year, and interactions with the content (likes, reactions, saves, comments, shares) went up by 33.5%. The Township now averages 69 posts per month, an 11.3% increase since the previous update. This consistent audience growth aligns with our strategic approach to communications, noticeably optimizing our online presence.

With the conclusion of the Women in Construction program we have significantly decreased the number of paid ad campaigns. Our most successful organic (unpaid) posts were Press Release announcing Fire Chief Jeff Bradley, Half Load Limit Restrictions Lifted, Welcome Back to Huron-Kinloss (Slow Moving Vehicles), Total Solar Eclipse, Renovations Begin at the Ripley Medical and Child Care Centre Press Release.

In addition to posting organic content, the Township page consistently shares and promotes community organization and non-profit groups' social media content with resident focused event information.

#### H-K CONNECTS NEWSLETTER

The Township of Huron-Kinloss eNewsletter, H-K Connects, is issued on the last day of each month delivered directly to subscribers' inboxes. The focus is to provide up to date information from all Township departments; information covers Public Works, Community Services, Treasury, By-Law, Clerks, Fire and Emergency Services. The newsletter continues to see growth in subscribers and readership. There are 986 subscribers, with a 21% click rate (a subscriber who opens and clicks a link at least once). The newsletters purpose is to provide brief messaging that then directs readers to comprehensive information on the Township website by using these click through links.

#### DISCOVERY GUIDE

The 2024 Discovery Guide was completed and printed in April 2024 and has since been distributed to Huron-Kinloss residents and tourism kiosks in the area, marking a significant milestone in the Township's community outreach efforts. This project is a collaborative effort of the Business Development Coordinator managing advertisement sales and distribution, the Communications Coordinator creating all graphic design and content, and the Manager of Strategic Initiatives providing project management and support.

#### **Financial Impacts:**

Expenses related to paid Facebook campaigns are designated to departmental and project specific budgets for which the funds have already been allocated. There are no additional budget implications associated with this report.

**Performance Measurement:**

The Communications Status Report is a key performance measure conducted twice a year to measure how information is being shared with the Huron-Kinloss audiences (residents and visitors). By evaluating the effectiveness of our communication methods and analyzing engagement metrics, feedback, and overall reach, this report helps find the best ways to keep residents informed in Township news.

**Strategic Area:**

- Embrace a thriving rural lifestyle
- Enhance Municipal Service Delivery
- Prepare for Inclusive Growth
- Ensure Financial Stability

**Strategic Goal: Encourage strong communication and community engagement**

**Respectfully Submitted By: Kristen Prentice**

**Report Approved By:**

Jodi MacArthur, Chief Administrative Officer