

**USE OF WEBCASTING – COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERS AND  
OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

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**1.0 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Following the meeting of the Media Platforms Short Life Working Group on 19 November 2012, the Communications team was asked to provide a short report on how community planning partners and other local authorities make use of webcasting.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The group is asked to note the report.

**3.0 DETAIL**

- 3.1 We spoke with communications officers at a number of the council's community planning partners, including Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, Strathclyde Police and the NHS.

Perhaps surprisingly, use of webcasting is somewhat limited. Strathclyde Police, for example, do have a YouTube channel but there are restrictions placed on how videos can be viewed and how they are used. They advised that there was no definite policy on use of webcasts and the reasons for the restrictions in place arose from the fact that many of the videos were produced by community policing staff outwith the corporate communications department. The Scottish Police Services Authority tends to use webcasts more, for example board meetings. NHS Highland provides some webcasts, for example its annual review and certain board meetings. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue's use is very limited.

We then carried out some internet research, looking at how other Scottish local authorities use webcasts.

YouTube channels are fairly similar in terms of content for most councils. There is a mix of councillor speeches on a variety of topics; how-to guides, for example filling in a ballot paper; spotlights on initiatives like recycling; promotional films for the area and, in some cases, coverage of local events. Quality ranges from simple stills/slideshows with voiceover to high quality promotional

filming with soundtrack and commentary. Highland and East Renfrewshire councils have particularly eye-catching promotional videos aimed at tourists. The latter authority has a wide selection of films on local events and there are several examples of local residents and council staff taking part in webcasts. Upload of film seems to be sporadic and infrequent with gaps of several months between new films.

It is clear that films with local colour and interest are more frequently viewed than the public information broadcasts. For example, on Argyll and Bute Council's own YouTube channel, a webcam compilation 'Seven Days in Dunoon' has attracted 2,879 views. Coverage of the 2011 Holyrood election has only 29 views. A video guide to the Core Path Plan has been selected 196 times.

Some councils provide webcasts of meetings using the Public-I service, including Edinburgh, Moray and Highland. These webcasts are hosted on an external website with the council's logo and branding. Highland Council's Public-I website has a range of meetings from full council to smaller committees. There are links to agenda documents, the facility to view only specific agenda items of interest and a share facility. The Public-I pilot costs around £30,000 and is to be evaluated after a year.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 There is potential for Argyll and Bute Council to expand its use of YouTube with limited impact on resources. Provision of webcasting for council meetings would require to be examined in more detail.

#### **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Policy - none
- 5.2 Financial - none
- 5.3 Legal - none
- 5.4 HR - none
- 5.5 Equalities - none
- 5.6 Risk - none
- 5.7 Customer Service - none

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