

Agenda item 9

For information: Update on talking newspaper for the town council

Written by: Matthew McLaughlin, Communications Officer

Background

In January, officers presented the Community & Wellbeing committee with a report outlining that we would explore the need and demand for a talking newsletter for the town council.

The NHS says the purpose of a **talking newspaper** is to bring print to life for blind, visually impaired and print-disabled people.

As part of the exercise, the Communications Officer made a brief recording for a talking newsletter.

We shared this recording along with a short survey to gather people's opinions on whether there was a need for a talking newspaper.

Project update & survey results

The survey was published in early February 2024 and was open to the public until Friday 15 March.

It asked the following questions – to which 14 people responded:

Do you live in Bradford on Avon?

Yes – 14

Would you be interested in an audio version of BoA Snippets?

No – 10

Yes – 4

Would you be interested in an audio version of the town council's quarterly newsletter?

No – 10

Yes – 4

Can you think of a family member, friend or neighbour who might be interested in an audio version of BoA Snippets or our quarterly newsletter?

No – 11

Yes – 3

If you or someone you know is blind, visually impaired or print-disabled; how do you or they usually access information on what is happening in Bradford on Avon?

This question allowed people to respond with their written answers. The responses indicated that blind, visually impaired and print-disabled people were getting important local information through a mix of digital tools and assistance from friends or family.

Next steps

Due to the needs of its intended demographic being through other services – it is recommended that the town council does not further pursue the project.

It was, however, a worthwhile exercise in measuring the need and demand for the service.