

## case study

# Shropshire County Council – internal communications audit

**Challenge** – Shropshire County Council’s first staff attitude survey revealed that the overwhelming majority of employees enjoyed their jobs and were proud to work for the Council. However, 25% of the lowest satisfaction ratings in the survey were related to communication. The survey pin-pointed specific internal media that required attention, including the bi-monthly staff newsletter and the Council’s intranet. The authority felt that it was important to review *all* of the opportunities the Council had for communication with its employees and commissioned **agenda** to conduct an audit.

**Approach** – The first domino in **agenda**’s three stage approach was to facilitate a half day forum with the corporate communications team which secured their ‘buy-in’ to the whole process and importantly, tested the approach to ensure it was robust. This was followed by a series of focus groups with peer groupings across the Council and a number of face-to-face interviews with senior and other key employees. The discussions in each of these settings generated feedback and ideas about what employees wanted to know, the best way to reach them with that information and how best to give them an opportunity for asking questions and offering ideas.

**Outcome** – The project, including a comprehensive management report, was delivered within ten weeks. The report identified practical actions for the Council to take – including several which addressed the ‘barriers’ to communication between employees in the ‘central’ Shire Hall departments and their colleagues in buildings around the County. Some outcomes were relatively easy to address - and solutions were implemented within 12 months of the project - others are the subject of on-going work.

Brendon Hills, Head of HR and Development, said: ‘Effective communication with staff across the diverse services provided by Shropshire County Council is always going to be a challenge. **agenda** helped us focus on the practical things we could do to improve.’