BERGRIVIER MUNICIPALITY



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

 DATE APPROVED
 RVN011/05/2016 - 31/05/2016

 COMMITTEE
 MAYORAL COMMITTEE



2016-05-31

Item number: RVN011/05/2016 APPROVAL OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY FOR BERGIVIER MUNICIPALITY

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RVN011 / 05 / 2016 APPROVAL OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY FOR BERGIVIER MUNICIPALITY 12/2/2/21

The Municipal Manager gave a brief summary of the item under discussion . The Speaker read the recommendation to the members of Council for consideration .	
RESOLUTION : That the Council approves the draft Public Participation Policy .	MANAGER : STRATEGIC SERVICES

Chairman: Raadsheer J Raats (Speaker) This is to certify that this is a true copy of the Original Resolution

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Draft Public Participation Policy

May 2016

Bergrivier Municipality



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"Active citizenry and social activism is necessary for democracy and development to flourish. The state cannot merely act on behalf of the people – it has to act with people, working together with other institutions to provide opportunities for the advancement of all communities..."

– National Development Plan 2030

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1. Introduction and Overview

Public participation, which is per definition the active involvement by the community in government affairs, continues to emerge as a key constitutional imperative for successful democracies, both in South Africa and internationally.

On local government level the Municipal Systems Act¹ 2000, (Act 32 of 2000) provides the main legislative framework that underpins public participation in municipal planning, implementation and evaluation in South Africa.

Bergrivier Municipality recognises the value of the input from its citizens in achieving its various objectives² and seeks to promote a culture of active citizenship that promotes strategic collaboration between the political structures of the Council, the administration and citizens³ to address the most pressing challenges in the municipal area. These challenges are responsive to the specific socio-economic context in Bergrivier.

The Municipal Structures Act⁴, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998) promotes the ward committee as the legal vehicle for public participation, but Bergrivier uses various other legal mechanisms as well to involve communities and key stakeholders in the fulfillment of the municipality's mandate.

Bergrivier's public participation efforts are coordinated by the Strategic Services Department in the Office of the Municipal Manager. Figure 1 in page 9 gives a clear composition of the relationships between the main components of public participation in Bergrivier Municipality.

2. Definitions

In this Policy, unless the context indicates otherwise⁵ -

- Constitution means the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996;
- > Council means the Council of Bergrivier Local Municipality;
- Councillor means a member of the Council;
- CSI means Corporate Social Investment;
- DLG means Developmental Local Government;
- Local community, community or public in relation to the Municipality means that body of people comprising any or a combination of the following:
 - The residents of the Municipality;
 - The ratepayers of the Municipality;

- Any civic organizations and non-governmental, private sector or labour organizations or operational bodies within the boundaries of the municipality which are involved in the local affairs of the Municipality.
- LED means Local Economic Development;
- > MERO means Municipal Economic Review and Outlook;
- > MFMA means the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003, (Act 56 of 2003)
- Municipal Manager means the person appointed in terms of section 82 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act,1998 (Act 117 of 1998);
- Municipality when referred to as "an entity" means municipality as described in section 2 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems, Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000); and when referred to as a geographic area means a municipal area determined in terms of the Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act, 1998 (Act 27 of 1998);
- NDP means National Development Plan;
- Petition means a written statement, proposal or grievance addressed to the Municipality; office bearer or employee of the Municipality and as many as possible signatures of people within the municipal area needed or a smaller number of key individuals;
- PERO means Provincial Economic Review and Outlook;
- Policy means this Public Participation Policy;
- > Provincial Government means the Western Cape Provincial Government;
- SDBIP means Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan;
- Structures Act means the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998 as amended);
- > Systems Act means the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000 as amended).
- 3. The value of Public Participation at Bergrivier Municipality
- 3.1. Give effect to Bergrivier's Vision and Mission⁶

Bergrivier Municipality's vision is to:

"Strive towards a satisfied community through sustainable service delivery".

Our mission is:

"To create an effectively governed administration that is committed to sustainable development of the municipal area and the delivery of services that are responsive to the unique needs of the Bergrivier Community".

In order to be responsive to the unique needs and context of each of Bergrivier's nine (9) urban settlements, community input needs to be obtained and collaboration encouraged; and in order to enhance future sustainability of the area, joint planning with all the capacity in all spheres of the communities, needs to take place.

3.2. Promote Developmental Local Government

According to the White Paper on Local Government of 1998, Developmental Local Government (DLG) is local government committed to working <u>with</u> citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives.

One of the characteristics of DLG is democratizing development. According to the White Paper municipalities can do a lot to support individual and community initiative, and to direct community energies into projects and programmes which benefit the area as a whole.

Promoting a culture of community participation is central to DLG and empowering active citizens is central to Local Government.

3.3. Assist the municipality in strategic decision-making

Although the gathering of public input related to the needs of the community and the drafting and review of the IDP(Integrated Development Plan) are critical elements of public participation process, public participation has the potential to provide Bergrivier Municipality with direction in terms of the identification of relevant stakeholders and service providers and to assist the municipality in the implementation of programmes and projects, especially related to local economic development (LED).

With regards to the identification of needs, Bergrivier Municipality's IDP refers to municipal service needs and cross cutting needs. Municipal service needs are mostly based on individual town assessments, with cross cutting needs referring to local economic development, environmental conservation (biodiversity and climate change) and social development.⁷

Draft Public Participation Policy – Bergrivier Municipality 3.4. Promote active citizenship in the municipal area

Public participation creates an environment wherein citizens can collectively contribute to processes that affect their own development. A sense of community ownership is instilled. Encouraging active citizenship promotes participatory democracy, as people are motivated to be active citizens apart from of election periods only. Although active citizenship is critical to gathering community input, it is also an end in itself as it leads to a feeling of empowerment amongst the citizens involved.

3.5. Increases Transparency8 and Accountability

Public participation creates a platform for the community to provide strategic oversight in order to ensure that the municipality fulfills its mandate.⁹

3.6. Implement the three circles

The three circles refer to the composition of the municipality and includes, according to Section 2(b) of the Systems Act, the political structures (Council), the administration and community of the municipality. Cooperation between these three (3) elements are of critical importance for effective public participation to take place:



Figure 1: Composition of a municipality

Draft Public Participation Policy – Bergrivier Municipality 4. Regulatory Framework for Public Participation

4.1 Legal Framework

i Constitution

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Section 152(1)(e) of the Constitution reads that one of the objects of local governance is to encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government.¹⁰

According to Section 195(e) of the Constitution in terms of the Basic values and principles governing public administration – people's needs should be responded to, and the public should be encouraged to participate in policy-making.¹¹

II. Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000

Chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act deals comprehensively with Community Participation in local government. The chapter requires from municipalities to develop a culture of community participation and describes various procedures for public participation and the enabling environment which is necessary for participation to take place. It includes guidelines on communicating the municipality's public participation efforts and notices regarding meetings.

Public participation is also referred to in other chapters of the **Sys**tems Act, with the provisions therein to be included in subsequent sections of this Policy.

Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 1998 (Act 117 of 1998)

The only public participation institution that is required by law to be established in all Category A and some types of Category B municipalities, is the ward committee. The ward committee system is governed by Sections 72 - 78 of the Structures Act. Bergrivier Municipality is a Section 9(d) Municipality which is a Category B municipality *with a mayoral executive system combined with a ward participatory system*.

According to Section 72(3) of the Structures Act the object of a ward committee is to enhance participatory democracy in local government. The provisions of the Structures Act are included in Bergrivier Municipality's Ward Committee Policy, with some provisions highlighted below.

Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003)

Various sections of the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) state that the local community must be involved in government decision-making. The objectives of the MFMA and Municipal Systems Act are aligned. Public participation processes referred to in the MFMA must be completed within specific time frames.¹²

v. The White Paper on Local Government, 1998

The White Paper on Local Government establishes the basis for a system of local government which is centrally concerned with working with local citizens and communities to find sustainable ways to meet their needs and improve the quality of their lives.

The White Paper is aligned with the Constitution and focuses on a new developmental local government system, which is committed to working with citizens, groups and communities to create sustainable human settlements which provide for a decent quality of life and meet the social, economic and material needs of communities in a holistic way. The section on Developmental Local Government puts forward a vision of a developmental local government which centers on working with local communities to fund sustainable ways to meet their needs and improve the quality of their lives.

4 2. Policy Framework

- International Protocols and Memorandum of Agreements
 - Manila Declaration on People's Participation and Sustainable Development

The Manila Declaration promotes people-centered development practices that are just, sustainable and inclusive and encourages a sense of ownership and sovereignty amongst the public as actors in their own development.¹³ ¹⁴ The Declaration was one of the outcomes at the *Inter-Regional Consultation on People's Participation in Environmental Sustainable Development*, which was held in Manila, Philippines in 1989.¹⁵

IAP 2 Core Values

IAP2 is an international association, founded in 1990, as a response to a global increase in the practice of public participation. The development of the Core Values for Public Participation was a two year process with broad international input. According to the IAP2 website the purpose of these core values is to help make better decisions which reflect the interests and concerns of potentially affected people and entities.

The core values of the IAP 2 are:

 Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process;

- Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision;
- Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers;
- Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision;
- Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate;
- Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way;
- Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision¹⁶.

The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation

The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation was accepted at the *International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa*, hosted in Arusha, Tanzania, in 1990. Various organizations and governments in Africa collaborated with United Nations Agencies in order to obtain a collective understanding of popular participation. According to the Charter, popular participation is a means as well as an end in itself. As a means it is an instrument of people-based development that encourages collective commitment by people. As an end, popular participation refers to the fundamental right of people to participate in decisions that impact their lives. The Charter also states that African Governments have a critical role to play to fostering popular participation through creating spaces to participate.

ii National Development Plan 2030

The National Development Plan (NDP), released by the National Planning Commission (NPC) in 2012, is South Africa's main strategic development framework that encourages all sectors in South African society to contribute to the country's socio-economic progress and achieve Vision 2030, a desired long-term goal for the country.¹⁷

According to Chapter 15 of the NDP on Nation Building and Social Cohesion, "all South Africans must contribute and work towards realizing the vision of a cohesive society". The NDP encourages municipalities to develop their own mechanisms for public participation, alongside existing legislation.¹⁸ An Active Citizenry is put alongside Strong Leadership and Effective Government in the centre of the Cycle of Development, as can be seen below:



Figure 2: NDP Cycle of Development

The NDP further states that one of its six interlinked priorities is promoting active citizenry to strengthen development, democracy and accountability.

III. Provincial Guidelines

Provincial Strategic Plan 2014 2019

The Provincial Strategic Plan 2014-2019 sets out the vision and strategic objectives of the Western Cape Provincial Government.

The Province's five strategic goals are as follow:

- Create opportunities for growth and jobs;
- > Improve education outcomes and opportunities for youth development;
- Increase wellness, safety and tackle social ills;
- > Enable a resilient, sustainable, quality and inclusive living environment;
- Embed good governance and integrated service delivery through partnerships and spatial alignment.

One of the Joint Planning Initiative Game Changers for the 5th Strategic Goal is the strengthening of governance "through meaningful public participation and efficient use of ICT technology¹⁹".

Provincial Economic Review and Outlook 2015²⁰

The Provincial Economic Review and Outlook (PERO) is an *analytical reference point for the* Western Cape Government's *"economic development policies, strategies and interventions"*. PERO 2015's key focus is on inclusive growth. According to PERO 2015 socio-economic inclusion, benefit-sharing and participation are critical instruments to *achieve and sustain inclusive growth*. A special focus in PERO 2015 is on the spatial dimension of inclusive growth, which recognises the effect of the interaction between geography and institutions, has on development. Partnerships between different levels of local government must be formed, in order to build local institutions and gather input from local knowledge.²¹

Municipal Economic Review and Outlook 2015

The Municipal Economic Review and Outlook (MERO), established in 2012, provides valuable economic intelligence to municipalities within the Western Cape in support of enhanced planning for economic growth, job creation and socio-economic upliftment.

In Chapter 5 that discusses the West Coast District, *participation in political and human life* is part of the Human Development Index (HDI). In 2003 Bergrivier was at 0.66, the same as the national HDI. The information contained in MERO must be, as deemed necessary, communicated to the public for informed public participation to take place.

Bergrivier Integrated Development Plan22

Public participation is an integral component in the drafting of Bergrivier Municipality's Integrated Development Plan (IDP) every five years, as well as in the annual review of the IDP. The IDP is in principle the strategic planning document of the Municipality, with all planning and development within the municipal area that needs to be aligned, integrated and coordinated alongside it. The IDP further contains important provisions as to how public participation processes must be implemented at Bergrivier Municipality.

The IDP contains a time schedule (called a Process Plan) of the IDP Revision process, which includes the time frames for public participation inputs and report backs. It further refers to Bergrivier Municipality's public participation mechanisms and procedures, dates of ward committee and town based public meetings, as well as information about the IDP Representative Forum, and Public Participation Process Outcomes (Community Needs).

- v. Bergrivier By-laws Policies and Strategies
 - By laws

According to section 160(4)(b) of the Constitution no municipal by-law may be passed by Council unless *the proposed by-law has been published for public comment*. Section 162 also states that municipal by-laws must be published. The following three provisions are made in Section 162:

- A municipal by-law may be enforced only after it has been published in the official gazette of the relevant province;
- = A provincial official gazette must publish a municipal by-law upon request by the municipality;
- Municipal by-laws must be accessible to the public.

The sections on by-laws in the Constitution are supported by the Systems Act which reads that no by-law may be passed by a municipal council unless the proposed by-law has been published for public comment in a manner that allows the public an opportunity to make representations with regard to the proposed by-law. Section 13 of the Systems Act adds that apart from the Provincial Gazette as stated in section 162(1) of the Constitution, the by-law must also, when feasible, be published in a local newspaper or in any other practical way to bring the contents of the by-law to the attention of the local community.

Local Economic Development Strategy

According to Bergrivier Municipality's Local Economic Development (LED) Strategy the purpose of LED at Bergrivier Municipality *is to enhance economic growth in the area to ensure an improvement in the quality of life for all its residents firstly and secondly to enhance the revenue of the municipality.*²³

Bergrivier's LED Strategy was compiled through various public participation initiatives. The Strategy *must be a product of public participation and owned by all local economic stakeholders within the municipal area.* This approach was taken in drafting the LED Strategy.²⁴ For Local Economic Development to be successful, partnerships need to be built with the private sector, through for example matching the needs of Bergrivier Municipality with the development aims of companies' corporate social investment (CSI) strategies.²⁵

Youth Strategy

One of Bergrivier Municipality's Youth Development Strategy pillars is Awareness and Participation, which addresses the need to involve the youth, which constitutes a substantial percentage (58%) of Bergrivier Municipality's population, in decision-making.

The White Paper on Local Government also states that *investing in youth as a key resource for the future, and building on their creativity and motivation through involvement in civic and development programmes,* is important to democratize development as part of developmental local government.

5. Values/Principles of Public Participation in Bergrivier

5.1. Bergrivier Approved Values

Bergrivier Municipality has the following core values (Bergrivier Municipality Integrated Development Plan, 2015/2016):

- > We are all part of Bergrivier Municipality;
- We strive to render good service so that all people in our community can live together happily and harmoniously;
- We believe in good relationships;
- We believe in good partnerships;
- We believe in social and economic development of the area;
- We are disciplined;
- We render good service;
- We care about our work and our colleagues;
- > We carve with nride

All public participation activities must be aligned with these nine principles, as well as with the eight Batho Pele Principles.

5.2. Batho Pele Principles

The Batho Pele ("People First") Principles, as stipulated in the *White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery* are aligned with the Constitution and consists of Consultation, Service Standards, Access, Courtesy, Information, Openness and Transparency, Redress and Value for Money. The principles of Consultation, Information and Openness and Transparency are all very directly related to public participation:

Consultation

Consultation is a critical part of public participation as it relates to the gathering of public input about public needs. This leads to more suitable interventions. The feedback on various public participation forums should guide service delivery and project implementation.

ii. Information

The information principle states that *citizens should* be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.²⁶

III. Openness and Transparency

In order for the public to give informed feedback, information needs to be publically accessible. The latest by-laws, policies, strategic plans and annual report must be made available to the public.

6 Areas for Participation

Section 16(1) of the Municipal Systems Act states that participation for municipalities includes the following:

- The preparation, implementation and review of its IDP;
- The establishment, implementation and review of its performance management system;
- The monitoring and review of its performance, including the outcomes and impact of such performance;
- The preparation of its budget;
- Strategic decisions relating to the provision of municipal services.²⁷
- The community should also be involved in:
- The development of by-laws and regulations; and
- Implementation of projects and initiatives²⁸

6.1. Integrated Development Planning

Public participation must play a central role in the yearly Integrated Development Plan (IDP) revision process which must contain provisions about public participation. Prior to adopting the public participation process, the local community has to be consulted, after which notice must be given to the community of the specifics of the process that will be followed. The process must include details of the planning, drafting, adoption and review of the IDP. Consultation needs to take place in accordance with Chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act.²⁹. With Chapter 4 of the Systems Act as foundation for

public participation, the local community needs to be consulted on its *development needs and priorities*, and must participate in the drafting of the IDP.³⁰

The following public participation forums must take place in accordance with the time schedule of key deadlines:

- > Ward Committee meetings
- Town based public meetings
- > IDP Representative Forum meetings with sectoral leaders

In September of each year, public meetings take place and comprise of 7 ward committee meetings and eight (8) town based meetings which are convened in every town in the municipal area of jurisdiction. The purpose of these meetings is to explain the IDP revision/budget process, discuss the needs and priorities and provide opportunities for input into the IDP revision.

In April the following year after the September meetings, feedback must be given on the draft IDP and budget to the above forums, after the departmental strategic sessions and the strategic session with Council.

Notice that the IDP has been adopted end-May of each financial year must be accessible for the public within 14 days of adoption. The plan as well as a summary of it must be made available for public inspection.³¹

6.2. Oversight Role

According to Section 42 of the Systems Act a municipality, through appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures established in terms of Chapter 4, must involve the local community in the development, implementation and review of the municipality's performance management system. And, in particular, allow the community to participate in the setting of appropriate key performance indicators and performance targets for the municipality.

According to Section 44 a municipality, in a manner determined by its council, must make known, both internally and to the general public, the key performance indicators and performance targets set by it for purposes of its performance management system.

Bergrivier Municipality's Performance Management Plan gives effect to Section 42 and 44 of the Systems Act. According to the Performance Management Plan, the Representative Forums and ward committees *provide a platform for the public to inform and communicate with Council and* have an oversight role to play through:

Informing the identification of community priorities

Draft Public Participation Policy – Bergrivier Municipality Involvement in the service delivery of the municipality³²

Over and above the above processes, an Oversight Committee is appointed on a 5-year term to consider inputs from the Council, Portfolio Committees and Public on the Municipality's Annual Report. This committee comprises out of councilors from all parties represented and members from the public. There main task is to consider inputs from the Municipality's Audit Committee and Performance Committees as well as the Auditor General on the Municipality's Annual Report.

The Annual Report also plays an important role in providing the means for the public to provide oversight. The meeting where the Municipality's Annual Report is tabled or discussed, must be duly advertised in the media in order to inform the public of the meeting.³³ Within 14 days after the Annual Report has been adopted, the municipality must make copies of the report accessible.³⁴ The Strategic Services Department is responsible for overseeing the performance management of the Municipality.

6.3 Budget and other financial matters

According to Bergrivier Municipality's IDP, the IDP and budget processes are two distinct but integrally linked processes which must be coordinated to ensure that they consistently align with one another.³⁵ According to the MFMA, the local community is also allowed to make recommendations in the following instances:

- The accounting officer must immediately after the tabling of the annual budget in the municipal council, *invite the local community to submit representations in connection with the budget.*³⁶ The council must consider the representations of the local community.³⁷
- The municipal manager must invite the local community at least 60 days before the meeting of Council, to submit comments and representations when a contract that imposes financial obligations on the municipalities for a period that exceeds three years.³⁸ The council must take the comments and representations into account.³⁹
- The municipal manager must invite the local community at least 90 before the meeting of Council, to submit comments and representations when the municipality considers the establishment, or participation in, a municipal entity.⁴⁰ The Council must take the comments and representations of the local community into account.⁴¹
- The local community must be given reasonable notice of the intention to amend a contract and be invited to submit representations to the Municipality or municipal entity in cases where a contract or agreement procured through the supply chain management policy of the municipality or municipality may be amended by the parties.⁴²

The accounting officer must invite the local community at least 60 days before meeting of Council, to submit comments and representations after the feasibility study of a public-private-partnership (PPP).⁴³

6.4. Client services survey

Each year the Client Services Department undertakes a Client Services Evaluation where the services rendered to the public by the various Directorates and communication methods with the public are evaluated. The target audience of the report is a sample of volunteers in the municipal area that is randomly chosen. Respondents are also given the opportunity to give commentary or suggestions regarding municipal services and personnel. The Client Services Evaluation, along with formal public participation structures such as the ward committees, give effect to Section 77(f) of the Systems Act that states that *the municipality must review and decide on the appropriate mechanism to provide a municipal service when requested by the local community through mechanisms, processes and procedures established in terms of Chapter 4 (Chapter on community participation). Section 55(1)(o) states that the municipal manager is responsible for <i>developing and maintaining a system whereby community satisfaction with municipal services is assessed.* The Client Services Evaluation report, which follows the study, should be considered to inform future municipal service delivery.

6.5. Local Economic Development

Public participation is a central component of Bergrivier Municipality's Local Economic Development (LED) Strategy. Stakeholder engagement and the fostering of relationships with different constituencies in Bergrivier, forms a central part the Strategy. Stakeholder partnerships need to be cultivated in order to build strong public-private-partnerships aligned with business corporate social responsibility initiatives (CSI). Local Economic Development is overseen by the Strategic Services Department.

6.6. Joint Planning Initiative44

The Joint Planning Initiative (JPI) was a project undertaken by the Provincial Government, in coilaboration with municipalities that resulted in a set of priorities aligned with the National Development Plan and Provincial Strategic Plan. The priorities must be implemented over the next 5 to 15 years.

Bergrivier Municipality's JPI *Game Changers* were identified through the support of a public participation process and are as follow (in order of importance):

- Education
- Economic Development

- Social Development
- Infrastructure Sustainable Development
- 7. Methods for Public Participation

7 1 Ward committees

The only public participation institution that is required by law to be established in all Category A and some types of Category B municipalities, is the ward committee, governed by Sections 72-78 of the Municipal Structures Act. Bergrivier Municipality is a Section 9(d) Municipality which is a Category B municipality *with a mayoral executive system combined with a ward participatory system.*⁴⁵

Bergrivier Municipality has a separate Ward Committee Policy, adopted in September 2011. Attached as Annexure A.

i. Introduction

Ward committees serve as a platform for grassroots participation in local government affairs.⁴⁶ The ward committee consists of the ward councillor and 10 representatives from the ward. The ideal composition of representatives includes a fair representation of the different sectors within the ward. Most stakeholders are represented in the following 14 sectors: Social Development, Health, Education and Training, Aged, Youth, Community Safety, Religion, Sport, Arts and Culture, Media, Agriculture, Business and Fisheries, Tourism, Environment.⁴⁷Below in figure 9 are the sectors of Bergrivier Municipality.



Figure 3: Sectors within Bergrivier Municipality

Ward committees play an integral part in the drafting and review of the Integrated Development Plan, and serve as a platform for public participation in projects and programmes related to local economic development (LED).

The role of the ward committee is:

- To act as a grassroots⁴⁸ advisory body⁴⁹ to inform Council decisions⁵⁰ on matters affecting communities in the ward;⁵¹
- To assist the ward councillor about issues in the ward and report back to Council and the community;⁵²
- > To assist the municipality to identify projects as part of its LED Strategy;
- > To assist with prioritising community needs raised in public meetings and
- To monitor the performance of planning and implementation.⁵³
 For a comprehensive list of ward committee functions, see section 14 of the Ward Committee Policy.

ii. Election of ward committee members

The term of ward committee members is in accordance with the term of the Council and must be re-elected after the municipal elections every five years.

Political affiliation may not play a role in the election of ward committee members and elected members may not serve the interests or act as a communication channel for any political party.⁵⁴ See section 7 - 12 of the Ward Committee Policy for the ward committee election criteria, nomination of candidates, election of ward committee members, term of ward committees and ward committee vacancies.

III. Notification of meeting

Notices of the ward committee must be distributed to the ward committee members 10 working days in advance and must include the following:

- Date and time of meeting
- > Meeting venue
- Goal of the meeting
- Contact details of the Strategic Manager
- > Agenda

iv. Structure of meeting

The Chairperson of the meeting is the ward councillor. The ward councillor must in his or her absence nominate someone else to chair the meeting.

v. Frequency of meetings

At least four quarterly must be held and special meetings or any additional meetings may be called. Municipal representatives must be in attendance at all these meetings. The ward councilor may arrange additional meetings without the municipality's presence.

7 2Town-based public meetings

i. Introduction

Town-based public meetings are held bi-annually, and provide an opportunity for all the residents of the towns to give their input into municipal affairs. The aims of the September meetings are to:

- Provide feedback to the Community on progress made with the addressing of previously identified needs;
- > Explain the IDP Revision / Budget process;
- Present and confirm the ward needs review and re-prioritisation done by the Ward Committees;
- > Provide an opportunity for additional input into the 2015/16 Revision; and
- > Prioritise the needs of the community⁵⁵

The aim of the April meeting is to provide the community with the opportunity to comment on the Draft IDP Revision, Budget and SDBIP.⁵⁶

Notification of meeting

Notices may be distributed at least 7 working days before the meeting through:

- the Municipal website
- municipal notice boards
- the Press
- SMS's
- = flyers in post boxes, delivered to houses and in municipal accounts

- individual notices to stakeholders
- encouraging people unable to read and write to visit the municipality's offices for the necessary assistance.⁵⁷

iii. Structure of meeting

In order to encourage equal participation and inclusivity, discussions must be held in determining the needs of the ward. The Language Policy must be considered at public meetings.⁵⁸ The public can use either Afrikaans, English or isiXhosa.⁵⁹

Iv. Frequency of meetings

Meetings must be held twice a year in accordance with the time schedule of key deadlines.

7.3. IDP Representative Forum

i Introduction

The IDP Representative Forum is established in terms of Section 15 of the Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations.⁶⁰ It serves as an important platform to involve a wide range of key stakeholders in municipal decision-making and planning. Two IDP Representative Forums must be held in Piketberg and Velddrif respectively each year. The theme for each forum meeting is identified related to community development.

Notice to stakeholders must be distributed at least 7 working days before the meeting.

- The following stakeholders must be invited to the IDP Representative Forum:
 - Two Ward Committee members of each Ward
 - One Representative from the West Coast District Municipality
 - The Executive Mayor, Speaker, Portfolio Chairpersons, one Mayoral Committee Member and two additional Councillors from the other parties represented on Council
 - Three officials namely; the Municipal Manager, Strategic Manager, Head: Strategic Services and LED
 - Three nominees from key sectors within Municipal Area. The sectors identified can be viewed in the IDP.
- ill. Structure of meeting

The IDP Representative Forum is a platform where the municipality must give feedback about past performance, and to give key stakeholders the chance to provide strategic input about the

Draft Public Participation Policy – Bergrivier Municipality needs of the municipal area. As the forum is a meeting of the leaders of the various sectors, high level strategic matters are discussed at the forum meetings.

Frequency of meetings

Four IDP Representative Forum meetings must take place each year – meetings in Piketberg and Velddrif bi-annually respectively.

7.4. Council meetings

Council meetings provide an important platform where citizens can keep Council and the municipality accountable. Notice must be given by the municipal manager to the public about the time, date and venue of every ordinary, special or urgent council meeting, except in the case of time constraints.⁶¹ These dates are published in an annual calender, approved by the Council and published on the website.

For rules of admission of the public to Council meetings, see Section 20 of the Systems Act.

7.5. Petitions

According to Section 17 of the Constitution everyone has the right, peacefully and unarmed, to assemble, to demonstrate to picket and to present petitions.

The Regulations of Gatherings Act, 1993 (Act 205 of 1993) regulates the handing over of a petition within the municipal jurisdiction. The Act stipulates that the municipality must be given at least seven days before the gathering commences. Liaising between the convenor of the petition or authorized member and the municipality must take place to discuss the content of the petition and expected conduct of attendees of the demonstration. The arrangement must include who will receive the petition on behalf of the municipality.⁶²

7.6. Ad hoc initiatives

Despite the above formal public participation structures, the municipality may, as deem necessary and aligned with the various laws and regulations guiding municipal administration, involve the public in decision-making processes such as in project specific processes.⁶³

Draft Public Participation Policy – Bergrivier Municipality 8. Institutional Roles and Responsibilities

8.1. Role of the municipality

- According to Section 55(a)(iii) the municipal manager is responsible and accountable for the formation of an administration which is responsive to the needs of the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality. The municipal manager is also responsible for facilitating participation by the local community in the affairs of the municipality;
- Cross-cutting implementation
- Awareness of the need to work in alignment with Provincial and National Government in the spirit of co-operative government as set out in Section 41 of the Constitution;⁶⁴
- Distribute agenda and minutes of Council meetings to ward committee members;
- Provide administrative, secretarial, financial⁶⁵ and logistical support before and during ward committee meetings;
- Ensure that community input are reported to the relevant directorates and feedback provided to the public through the various public participation forums;
- Communicate the public participation policy to the community;⁶⁶
- Ensure that all residents in the municipal area have input in municipal affairs, including women, senior citizens, the youth, people with disabilities and people who cannot read and write.⁶⁷
- Section 6 of the Systems Act (d-f) states further that the municipality must:
 - Establish clear relationships, and facilitate co-operation and communication between it and the local community;
 - Give members of the local community full and accurate information about the level and standard of municipal services they are entitled to receive; and
 - Inform the local community how the municipality is managed, of the costs involved and the persons in charge.

8.2 Role of the ward councillor

- The ward councillor is responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the ward committee⁶⁸ and must ensure that issues raised in ward committee meetings are communicated to Council;
- Solicit input from ward committee members prior to ward committee meetings where deemed appropriate;
- Despite liaising with its ward committees, ward councillors must also liaise with general members of the public and other stakeholders.⁶⁹

8.3. Role of Council

The role of Council is to:

- Encourage the involvement of the local community;⁷⁰
- Consult the local community about:
- The level, quality, range and impact of municipal services provided by the municipality, either directly or through another service provider; and
- > The available options for service delivery.

According to Section 5(e)(i) of the Systems Act the proceedings of the Municipal Council and those of its committees must be open to the public, subject to section 20, which governs the rules of admission of public to council meetings.

8.4. Implementation of policy

Although the Strategic Services Department is responsible for the implementation of the policy, in order to create a culture of participation, all Directorates need to play a role to ensure their staff members are aware of the importance of public participation.

8.5. Creation of enabling environment for Public Participation71

- According to the National Development Plan (NDP) active citizenship requires inspirational leadership at all levels of society.⁷²
- Section 16(1)(b) of the Municipal Systems Act reads that the municipality must contribute to building the capacity of the local community to enable it to participate in the affairs of the municipality; as well as councillors and staff to foster community participation. Resources must also be used and funds allocated in the budget as may be appropriate to build the aforementioned capacity.
- Ease of access to information through effective ongoing communication strategies will ensure informed participation.^{73 74}
- Access to council minutes and meetings.⁷⁵
- The capacity of the public to effectively participate must be strengthened^{76 77} e.g. through a ward committee members training programme.
- Have a functioning client services serving each of the municipal towns. The contact details of each client services officer, must be available to the public.
- Minutes of Council meetings should be made available on the website and distributed to ward committee members to ensure informed participation.⁷⁸
- According to Section 18(1) of the Systems Act, the municipality must communicate the following information to the community:

- The available mechanisms, processes and procedures to encourage and facilitate community participation;
- The matters with regard to which community participation is encouraged;
- The rights and duties of members of the local community; and
- Municipal governance, management and development.

8.6. Public Participation Engagements

i. Venue

The venue must be arranged by the Strategic Services Department and be easily accessible. When deemed necessary the Municipality can consider arranging transport for participants.

II. Agenda-setting

The agenda is set by the Municipality's Strategic Manager and Ward Councillor in consultation with each other. Members of the committee must be invited to add items to the agenda before and just before the meeting commences.

iii.Minutes79

- Writing: minutes must be written by a municipal employee designated by the Strategic Services Manager or Head: Strategic Services;
- Distribution: minutes must be distributed by a municipal representative to the ward committee at the next ward committee meeting where the municipality is present;
- Approval: ward committee minutes must be sent to Council for approval;
- Minutes must be available on request.

iv.Attendance register

The employee designated by the Strategic Services Manager or Head: Strategic Services must ensure that an attendance register is filled in by all ward committee members, guests, and representatives from Council and the municipality.

Processing of community input

Clear internal mechanisms need to be set up to ensure that problems the public conveys to the municipality are speedily and effectively addressed; and reported back to the public.⁸⁰

8.7. Representation on external bodies

The Municipality is represented on the Western Cape Public Participation and Communication Forum and the SALGA Working Group on Governance and Intergovernmental Relations.

Draft Public Participation Policy – Bergrivier Municipality 9. Rights and Responsibilities of the Public

91 Rights

Members of the local community have according to Section 5(1) of the Systems Act or other applicable legislation the right:

- To contribute to the decision-making processes of the municipality;
- To submit written or oral recommendations, representations and complaints and prompt responses to and from the municipal council, another political structure, political office bearer or the administration of the municipality; and
- To regular disclosure of the state of affairs of the municipality, including its finances.⁸¹

Communities can become involved in the decision-making processes of the municipality in the following ways:

- Information-sharing
- Consultation
- Decision-making
- Initiating Action⁸²

9.2. Responsibilities

According to Section 5(2) of the Municipal Systems Act, members of the local community have the duty when exercising their rights, to observe the mechanisms, processes and procedures of the municipality.

The following must also be taken into account:

- Ward Committee must represent the interests of the citizens in the ward;
- According to Chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act a municipal council may take reasonable steps to regulate public access to, and public conduct at meetings of the council and its committees;
- No ward committee member may be allowed to use the ward committee as a platform for political gain;⁸³ and
- Ward Committee members are accountable to the people that voted them into power, not a specific political party.⁸⁴

10.Reporting

Feedback about the performance of ward committees must be submitted to Council after each round of ward committee meetings. Quarterly reports need to be submitted to the Western Cape Provincial Government each quarter or as requested.

A section on Public participation must be included in the Annual Report.

11.Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular reports must be drawn up to monitor attendance of ward committee members and through comparing attendance with previous financial years. The progress of ward committees in terms of level of strategic input, is also an M&E mechanism figure to take into consideration. As deemed appropriate, surveys may be used after public participation engagements as a means by which ward committee members, stakeholders and members of the general public can evaluate the perceived success of the engagement and suggest possible improvements.⁸⁵

12 Conclusion

Public participation forms an integral part of municipality planning, implementation and evaluation at Bergrivier Municipality. The Municipality places a high value on the participation of the community and undertakes to carefully consider community input. Taking the input of the community into consideration, Bergrivier Municipality conducted a policy which outline all possible participation factors in which it is explains the importance of participation of local communities with municipal officials.

Ward committees which serves as vehicles for public participation, are an effective tool that contributes in the development of the well-being of communities and in the same way promoting active public participation. Ward committee representatives form a constructive line of communication between citizens and the Council. It works directly with the community that it represents and at the same time identifies the needs of these communities who bring these needs to Council for possible implementation.

Cross-departmental collaboration is important to effectively implement the policy and to create a culture of public participation that is inclusive, empowering and responsive to the unique needs of the people in the municipal area. Bergrivier Municipality are proud to state that it does all in its ability at finding accurate ways in encouraging active participation of local citizens in its area of jurisdiction.

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14 Endnotes

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⁵⁴ Afesis-corplan: Lessons learnt from the Ward Key Performance Indicators Matrix

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