

BERGRIVIER MUNICIPALITY

ΤΟΡΙC:	Communication Policy
DIRECTORATE:	Office of the Municipal Manager
DATE APPROVED:	11 June 2020
DATE EFFECTIVE:	11 June 2020
EXECUTIVE MAYORAL COMMITTEE ITEM:	BKN019/06/2020
FILE REF:	(2/B)

Version	Date Created	Status	Author	Amendments
1.0	18 April 2019	Draft	M Sheldon	New Document
1.1	13 June 2019	Approved	M Sheldon	Executive Mayoral Committee
1.2	13 June 2020	Draft	M Sheldon	Amendments to Policy
1.3	11 June 2020	Approved	M Sheldon	Executive Mayoral Committee



NOTULE VAN DIE UITVOERENDE BURGEMEESTERSKOMITEE SE VIRTUELE VERGADERING GEHOU OP DONDERDAG 11 JUNIE 2020 OM 10:00 VANAF PIKETBERG. <u>TEENWOORDIG:</u>

LEDE VAN DIE UITVOERENDE BURGEMEESTERSKOMITEE

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UITVOERENDE BURGEMEESTERSKOMITEEVERGADERING: BESLUIT GENEEM OP DONDERDAG 11 JUNIE 2020

BKN019/06/2020

AMENDMENT OF THE COMMUNICATION POLICY AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY 2/B

The Chairperson, Alderman Van Rooy gave a brief introduction to the item under discussion.

RESOLUTIONS

- 1. That the Executive Mayoral Committee adopts the Amended Communication Policy and Amended Social Media Policy as tabled in terms of the legal framework;
- 2. That the Amended Communication Policy and Amended Social Media Policy be implemented with immediate effect;
- 3. That the Amended Communication Policy and Amended Social Media Policy be placed on the municipal website (www.bergmun.org.za) and that it be sent to all employees with access to computers via e-mail; and
- 4. That a notification be placed on the Bergrivier Municipality Facebook Page with a link to the Amended Communication Policy and Amended Social

HEAD: COMMUNICATION Media Policy and that the documents be sent to the ICA and via WhatsApp to each member of the Bergrivier Youth Forum.

GESERTIFISEER AS 'N WARE UITTREKSEL VAN DIE NOTULE

Ande ADV. H LINDE MUNISIPALE BESTUURDER

24 JUNIE 2020

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1. **DEFINITIONS**:

In this document:

Communication: Refers to any written communication regarding Bergrivier Municipality with the purpose of sharing information with the public, the press, the Council, employees, interested and affected parties and all other stakeholders, through the various communication methods as stipulated by this document.

Constitution: The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

IDP: Integrated Development Plan as approved by Bergrivier Municipality from time to time.

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

MM: Municipal Manager

HOC: Head of Communications

ICT: Information Communication Technology

Youth: According to the National Youth Commission Act (Act 1996), any person aged between 14 and 35 falls into the youth category.

ICA: Initiative for Community Advancement

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

APPS: An application, especially as downloaded by a user to a mobile device

In this policy, unless the context indic have the following meaning:	ates otherwise, the terms listed below will be understood to
Advertising	Means any message conveyed by the municipality that is
	broadcasted by way of mediums such as newspapers,
	television, radio, websites and/or the internet.
Crisis	Means an abnormal situation where prompt action, beyond
	normal procedures, is required in order to limit damage to
	persons, property or the environment.
External Communication	Means communication that originates from within
	Bergrivier Municipality where such communication/messages
	are intended for external public.
Internal Communication	Means communication that originates within Bergrivier
	Municipality's departments where such
	communication/messages are solely intended for officials
	within said department or, as the case may be, for officials
	functioning within Bergrivier Municipality as a whole.
Spokesperson	Means a delegated person who speaks on behalf of
	Bergrivier Municipality.

2. INTRODUCTION:

Bergrivier Municipality is a well-managed, value-driven local government with very good relationships with all its stakeholders. The municipality is known for good innovative partnerships. This requires good communication with all.

Good communication forms the building blocks of any relationship. The relationship between a municipality and its stakeholders are no different than that of a relationship between two friends or partners. It lays the foundation from which a strong partnership can be built on and good communication will lead to the creation of trust, certainty and a sense of pride for all who live, work, learn and play in Bergrivier Municipality.

Bergrivier Municipality is therefore committed to regular two-way communication, by building lasting relationships with its internal and external stakeholders and to form partnerships with the public and private sector.

The Communication Policy seeks to ensure that Bergrivier Municipality acknowledges the importance of communication as a strategic leadership function and an integral part of its daily functioning. The municipality also acknowledges that it has a responsibility to inform its internal and external stakeholders of challenges identified, progress made and results achieved in addressing its mandate and vision. This policy will ensure that communication takes place in a coordinated and uniform manner and with the highest impact.

This policy further ensures that all the towns within the jurisdiction of the municipality is communicated to on an equitable basis.

The central message throughout all its communication efforts must reflect the vision and values of Bergrivier Municipality, namely: **"Bergrivier: A prosperous community where all want to live, work, learn and play in a dignified manner".** And the nine (9) core values are:

- 1. We are all part of Bergrivier Municipality
- 2. We strive to render good service to ensure that all people can live in a dignified manner.
- 3. We are unashamedly pro-poor.
- 4. We believe in good relationships.
- 5. We care about our work and our colleagues.
- 6. We serve with pride.
- 7. We are disciplined.
- 8. We believe in social and economic development of the area.
- 9. We believe in close innovative partnerships.

This policy provides a platform which enables joint responsibility, which is dependent on Bergrivier Municipality, its citizens and businesses, working together in seamless partnerships as envisaged by our philosophy of the three circles: A municipality consists of three equal partners who must work together in sustainable partnerships.



The policy aims to positively build and protect the image of Bergrivier Municipality. It aims to assist the municipality in communicating the strategic direction and development of the municipality in terms of its Integrated Development Plan.

3. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK:

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, section 152 (1)(e), in setting out the objectives of local government and states that municipalities must "encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government". Section 160 (7) of the Constitution says that "a municipal council must conduct its business in an open manner, and may close its sittings, or its committees, only when it is reasonable to do so".

The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), section 4, encourages the involvement of communities in the affairs of their municipalities. The following sections of the Municipal Systems Act also informs this Communication Policy:

Section 5	- Rights and duties of members of the local community
Section 6	- Duties of municipal administrations
Section 18	- Communication and information concerning
	community participation
Section 21	- Communication to local community
Section 21B	- Official website
Section 51	- Organisation and administration
Section 80	- Provision of services through service delivery
	agreements with external mechanisms

Section 75 of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003) requires that municipalities place key documents and information on their websites, including their Integrated Development Plan (IDP), annual budget, adjustment budgets, budget-related documents and policies, and other documents required by legislation.

Regulation 30 of the Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003) and the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations published in Government Gazette 32141, General Notice, on 17 April 2009, also informs this Communication Policy.

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996; Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998); Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000); Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000); Media Development and Diversity Agency Act, 2002 (Act 14 of 2002); Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 (Act 13 of 2005).

4. COMMUNICATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

4.1 Executive Mayor

The Executive Mayor is the main strategic spokesperson for the municipality. He or she is responsible for communicating all aspects of Council policies and is also the main communicator for all public participation unless it is delegated otherwise. The Executive Mayor must communicate the annual priorities, objectives and requirements contained in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP).

All media enquiries must be treated as top priority and attended to within three (3) working days. Both media enquiries and responses must be in writing, except for radio and television interviews.

4.2 Municipal Manager (MM)

The Municipal Manager (MM) is the key spokesperson for all strategic and operational issues. The MM ensures the integration of the communication function with the municipality's decision-making processes. The MM is also responsible for communicating matters of an administrative nature. He or she must also ensure that the municipality's priorities are reflected in its communication objectives, and is in line with the Integrated Development Plan.

All media enquiries must be treated as top priority and attended to within three (3) working days. Both media enquiries and responses must be in writing, except for radio and television interviews.

4.3 Directors:

The Directors' responsibilities are as follows:

Ensure compliance with the municipality's Communication Policy.

Attend to media enquiries through the Head of Communication.

Ensure, in consultation with the Head of Communication, that their programmes have communication action plans in place as part of their strategies.

To ensure that the Head of Communication is kept abreast with activities within their department, which needs to be communicated either internally or externally. To contribute towards the compilation of the Quarterly External Newsletter by providing the Head of Communication with relevant information.

4.4 Head of Communication (HOC):

The Head of Communications (HOC) must coordinate all generic communication activities, including the procurement of communication products and services. The HOC must also ensure that the Communication Policy is communicated to staff and is adhered to.

The HOC is responsible for building media relations through regular visitations, arranging of media conferences, issuing of media statements and handling media enquiries. The HOC will act on the instruction of the Municipal Manager. All queries from the media, which is of a political nature, will be directed to the Municipal Manager or Executive Mayor.

The Communication Section must coordinate all communication activities in the municipality. It must provide strategic advice and counsel on communication policy development. And it must development and implement communication plans as well as produce publications for disseminating information.

This section is also responsible for identifying communication issues, developing communication strategies, implementing and managing communication actions (such as campaigns, events, advertising, the design and printing of communication materials, audiovisual communication, marketing and communication research).

4.5 Client Services:

The Client Services Unit communicates and relays service-delivery orientated messages to the public as stipulated by its Client Services Charter. This Unit focusses on service-delivery related challenges which occur within the Bergrivier Municipal Area and processes complaints received by the public such as: Damaged side-walks, broken street lights, pipe bursts, faulty meters, stray animals, vandalism, flooding and potholes.

The process works as follows:

- The client approaches (walk-ins, via e-mail or telephonically) the municipality with a complaint, which needs to be resolved;
- The client services officer collects all the relevant details from the client and a job card is created (on an internal system);
- The job card is forwarded to the relevant department for processing;
- The client will receive a reference number to keep track of his/her logged complaint; Once the complaint is resolved, the client service officer notifies the client.

The Unit is focused on enhancing the municipality's service delivery efforts and client experience. This service functions with dedicated communication channels by means of e-mail, telephone and the website. Survey's should be conducted at specified intervals to determine the level of customer service and whether it (Client Services) provides to the needs of our customers.

5. PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS:

The following procedures and regulations govern the implementation of Bergrivier Municipality's Communication Policy:

5.1 Media Relations

The Communication Section is the Municipality's first line of contact with the media and must coordinate all media relations. The following procedures apply to media liaison:

The Communication Section must be consulted before the municipality responds to media enquiries. Where this is impossible, the response must be signed off by the Municipal Manager and copied to the Communication Section.

All media enquiries must be referred to the Communication Section, which then must engage with the relevant line functionaries for an adequate response.

The Communication Section ideally coordinates interactions with the media, such as media conferences, briefings, letters to the media and advertising, at all times.

The Communication Section is responsible for media evaluation and monitoring. Items of importance must be circulated to those who are affected, either for information purposes or for a draft response.

Media enquiries must be dealt with within three (3) working days.

Enquiries received after hours will be dealt with only during office hours, unless there is obvious urgency or instructions to deal with them after hours.

Both media enquiries and responses must be in writing, except for radio and television interviews.

Media enquiries must be treated as top priority.

5.2 Internal Communication

The main purpose of internal communication is to facilitate and manage the flow of information within the municipality, in order to create an informed workforce. Internal communication involves information about municipal programmes, relevant information regarding human resources and other useful information that staff may have an interest in.

The following communication tools and mediums can be used to communicate with staff members:



5.3 External Communication

The main purpose of external communication is to inform and engage stakeholders of the municipality's services and programmes. The External Newsletter (Bergrivier Bulletin) must be produced, published and distributed in the municipal area on a quarterly basis. Each department should contribute towards the compilation of the External Newsletter.

The following communication tools and mediums can be used to communicate with stakeholders:



Social Media

All external communication campaigns must be approved by the Communication Section.

5.3.1 Code of Communications

Where municipal employees and/or councillors use any communication platforms and wish to provide personal comments on these platforms, they could contravene the Code of Conduct and bring the municipal service into disrepute or be misinterpreted as being an official representative of Bergrivier Municipality. All employees and/or councillors must at all times adhere to the Codes of Conduct as pertained in the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000).

5.4 Production of Communication Material

The Communication Section must be consulted on communication material that is produced on behalf of the municipality. Decisions to outsource such activity or part thereof must be approved by the Head of Communication. And if required, final approval to be granted by the Municipal Manager.

5.5 Branding and Corporate Image

The Communication Section must manage the municipality's corporate identity, as it directly influences its image. This includes responsibility for the following:

The look at feel of the municipality's office buildings.

The type of communication material used by the municipality e.g. folders, letterheads, publications, photos, videos, newsletters, brochures, business cards, banners.

The way in which communication and promotional material is used and produced e.g. the official font type and size (Calibri 12pt), the use of logos, corporate clothing and corporate identity.

5.6 Promotional Material

Promotional material using the municipality's corporate identity may be used for official purposes only. The production of such material must be authorised by the Communication Section (e.g. T-Shirts, Track Suits, Pens, Caps, Newsletters, Brochures). And if required, final approval to be granted by the Municipal Manager.

The use of the municipal logo for projects not initiated by the municipality, must be approved by the Communication Section.

5.7 Procurement of Communication Material

Communication material includes any type of publication, newsletter, magazine, brochure, audiovisual material and any other material intended to convey information to the public.

The Communication Section must ensure that communication products and services, including those of consultants, are acquired in a fair and equitable manner, and must therefore be consulted on the procurement processes for communication.

It is advisable to make use of the Communication Section's in-house service, depending on the type of project, time frames, available capacity and budgets.

5.8 Exhibitions

The Communication Section must manage the municipality's corporate identity. Therefore, this section must be consulted when other departments participate in roadshows, fairs or exhibitions on behalf of the municipality.

5.9 Website

The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000) states that each state institution or semi-government body must have a fully-functional website. The management (including updating of information) of Bergrivier Municipality's website resides within the ICT Department, which falls under the Corporate Services Directorate.

5.10 Advertising

The Administration Services Department is responsible for the placement of advertisements (e.g. tenders, vacancies, etc.) for Bergrivier Municipality, once approval from the relevant Manager and/or Head of Department is granted.

5.11 Social Media

Manage a social media platform (e.g. Facebook, Twitter or Instagram) as part of keeping the municipality up to date with technological innovation. Social media platforms are increasingly being used as vital tools in local government, to better connect with communities.

Utilising a social media platform to communicate municipal activities and progress on service delivery efforts, will contribute to building the vision of Bergrivier Municipality. Various social media platforms should be explored. It is an effective tool for direct and free communication.

Careful management thereof must be implemented with a dedicated employee, monitoring it as often as possible, as capacity within the Communication Section allows.

The management of any social media platform created by Bergrivier Municipality, will be guided by the Social Media Policy.

5.12 Mobile Communication

The development and acquisition of an application should be researched. The incredible growth of mobile communication necessitates the formulation of an application that can capitalize on this. Applications or apps are becoming standard practice for public and private businesses as a means of interactive communication with their stakeholders.

An app can dramatically increase the amount of persons directly accessing information provided by the municipality. It can accommodate two-way communication by means of sending notifications and messages, and allows the public to communicate and respond accordingly. The possibilities of what can be achieved with an application is very broad and a set of parameters should be drafted, to make sure it complies with our needs as well as that of our stakeholders.

5.13 IDP Meetings and Ward Committee Meetings

The IDP consultative meetings and Ward Committee meetings takes place as per the Annual Schedule of Key Deadlines throughout the municipal area. This provides an opportunity for the community and the municipality to directly interact with one another, to discuss challenges and come up with solutions together. It's also an opportunity for the community to have an active input in projects and budget appropriation for each financial year.

In September of each year, the municipality goes on a roadshow across the Bergrivier Municipal Area seeking inputs from communities to incorporate into the IDP. This is done by means of roundtable discussions. This platform creates an opportunity for the community to give input on planned projects and provide feedback. Whilst in April of the same financial year, the municipality provides the community with feedback on the IDP and Budget (for the next three years) by conducting information sessions followed by a question and answer session. This platforms creates an opportunity for the community to raise concerns.

Communication takes place proactively and reactively directly to and from stakeholders in structured meetings, where all stakeholders are invited to attend. The entire IDP consultative process, affords the municipality an opportunity to address concerns raised by the public. It also allows the municipality to provide the community with information on plans and council decisions.

Ward Committees also allow for elected community representatives to partake in a dialogue between council and the public. This communication channel is governed by rules and regulations determined by Council as well as section 74 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998).

6. YOUTH COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:

It has become increasingly prevalent during the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) processes that the voices of young people are not expressed during inter alia the public participation processes. In recent time, Bergrivier Municipality has begun to proactively engage with the youth of Bergrivier through the Bergrivier Youth Forum, to discuss the various challenges facing the youth, and how they can get involved in municipal structures and activities. This process has proved to be meaningful and would go a long way to creating a more inclusive society. In previous years, issues that made its way at ward levels are mostly priorities of persons over the age of 35, and did not necessarily capture the ideas, suggestions or recommendations from the youth 14 - 35 years old). Now, with youth members holding positions in our Ward Committee Structures, improved communication and dialogue between the Municipality and the youth has brought about meaningful progress towards bridging the gap.

6.1 Objectives of the Youth Communication Strategy

- To raise greater awareness amongst young people about their important role in government in a way that encourages children and youth to participate.
- To encourage the youth to get involved in matters of Bergrivier Municipality by keeping them informed about community development projects, bursaries, local events, virtual platforms and all relevant meetings.
- To tailor communication material to suit the needs of the youth and distribute it to them using the most appropriate/popular channels.
- To simplify complex information as far as possible when communicating with the youth be it at public meetings, youth forums or when designing communication material or sharing information via social media.
- To increase the number of youth attending public meetings by inviting representatives from the Bergrivier Youth Forum (BYF).
- To have dedicated meeting platforms organized by the Bergrivier Youth Forum and enabled by Bergrivier Municipality whereby the youth can formally submit their inputs on the IDP and other community development opportunities available at the municipality. This will make it easier for the youth to actively participate.
- Ensure that the youth portfolio of each Ward Committee is filled by a member of the Bergrivier Youth Forum or another young person as elected by the youth constituency in the said ward.

6.2 Core Communication Focus Areas

- Municipal news (e.g. Free WI-FI spots, Public Participation Processes)
- Role of Ward Committees
- Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation Information
- Sporting events
- Entrepreneurial Training/Workshops
- Bursaries/Internships/Vacancies

NB: Bergrivier Municipality's Communication Section to partner with the Initiative for Community Advancement (ICA) and the duly elected Bergrivier Youth Forum operating as a Program of ICA, who will act as the link between the Municipality and the youth. Relevant information would be sent to the ICA, who will then distribute it via its established youth platforms and structures.

6.3 Language Preference

Although the Bergrivier Municipal Area consists of a largely Afrikaans population, there are smaller populations that prefer English as their primary language of communication. Bergrivier Municipality believes in an inclusive living environment and thus, all official communication should, where time and budget considerations allow, be disseminated in both English and Afrikaans. Depending on where Public Meetings are held in the Bergrivier Municipal Area, language preference should always be taken into consideration to accommodate all people.

6.4 Communication Platforms

The Communication Section will distribute relevant information for the youth to the ICA, to then distribute on their dedicated Youth social media platforms. ICA to act as the central point of reference between the youth and Bergrivier Municipality:

- WhatsApp Sharing information, pictures, videos and voice notes;
- Facebook Sharing, information, pictures and videos; and
- Bergrivier Youth Forum Sharing Information, Pictures, Videos, Communication Material and Presentations.

6.5 Youth Inputs/Commentary

Bergrivier Municipality values all inputs from the public relating to the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), which gives an overall framework for development of the area. This document is designed to improve the quality of life for all the people living in the area. Therefore, it is important that the voices of the youth are included in this process.

Bergrivier Municipality in partnership with ICA should create a dedicated meeting platform whereby the youth can submit their inputs on the IDP to the Department: Strategic Services for further processing.

6.6 Advertising for the Youth

Compliance requires that Bergrivier Municipality advertises all public meetings that are to be held in the various towns we serve. It is, however, important that we seriously consider the way in which we advertise to ensure its effectiveness.

Bergrivier Municipality should advertise in a way that attracts all people, especially the youth, to get involved in public meetings. Youth friendly colors; simple and direct messages, coupled with images is a sure way to attract people's attention to a specific cause.

7. COMMUNICATION IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

In the event of a crisis, the following process must be adhered to:

The Manager whose area of responsibility is involved, informs his or her Director and copies the Head of Communications.

A Crisis Committee, consisting of the Municipal Manager or relevant Director, Executive Mayor, Head of Communication and relevant officials, is formed.

The Executive Mayor is informed immediately.

The Crisis Committee drafts a plan of action, manages the issue and communication about the issue, and releases the necessary statements in consultation with the Principal Spokespersons. The Executive Mayor and Municipal Manager act as official spokespersons unless stipulated otherwise. No media statement from or interview with any other officials is permitted without prior approval from the Municipal Manager and/or Executive Mayor.

Staff members are kept informed about the developing situation.

8. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

Bergrivier Municipality's Communication Policy is intended to ensure that the municipality functions in an organized and coordinated manner, with regards to the flow of communication within the organisation.

The intention of this policy is also to ensure that the organisation communicates in a standardized manner with unified messages. Adherence to this policy, will result in a coherent image for the municipality. The policy and its procedures are applicable to every staff member of the municipality. It falls within the scope of internal communication and must be communicated accordingly.

Throughout the communication process a united message must be communicated with the vision of a "Bergrivier: A prosperous community where all want to live, work, learn and play in a dignified manner" at its core.