

# MOPANI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY



## COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PAGES</b>
1.	Preamble	3
2.	Objective	3
3.	Scope of the policy	4
4.	Legal framework	4-5
5.	Policy statement	5-6
6.	Communication roles and responsibility	6
6.1.	Executive Mayor	6
6.2.	Municipal manager	6
6.3.	Heads of departments	7
6.4.	Deputy Manager Communication/Spokesperson	7-8
6.5.	Communications Unit	8
6.6.	District Communications forum	9
7.	Procedures and regulations	9
7.1.	Media relations	9-10
7.2.	Internal communications	10-11
7.3.	External communications	11
7.4.	Production of communication material	12
7.5.	Advertising	12
7.6	Corporate image, branding and promotional material	12-13
7.7.	Procurement of communications material	14
7.8	Website	14
7.9.	Language and translation	15
7.10	Copyright	15
7.11	Events and exhibitions	16
7.12	Training and development	16
7.13	Communication in a crisis	16-17
7.14	Social media	17-19
9.	Default	20

10.	Adoption by council and inception date	20
11.	Review of policy	20
10.	Appendixes	

## 1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to provide clear principles and guidelines for communication in the Municipality. The different roles and responsibilities within the Municipality's communication are made clear, what is communicated, and by whom. This policy will ensure that communication takes place in a coordinated and uniform manner.
- 1.2. Mopani District Municipality is committed to openness and transparency, and the value of engaging stakeholders in meaningful conversations regarding the Municipality's programmes, services and policies. Therefore, the Mopani District Municipality is committed to two-way communication, building relationships with its internal and external stakeholders and to form partnerships with the public and private sectors.

## 1 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

- 1.1. The Communication Policy seeks to ensure that the Mopani District Municipality acknowledges the importance of communications as a strategic management function and as an integral part of its daily functioning.
- 1.2. It demonstrates that the Municipality is committed to a transparent and effect relationship with its internal and external stakeholders and will do so by a process of consultation and information dissemination.

- 1.3. The Municipality acknowledges that it has a responsibility to inform its internal and external stakeholders of identified issues, progress made and results in achieving its mandate.
- 1.4. The Communications Unit has the responsibility to ensure that all communication activities are done in accordance with these policies and procedures. This requires all communication and communication related activities to be coordinated and recommended by the Communications Unit.

## **2. SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY**

- 2.1. This policy shall apply to all councillors and employees of the Mopani District Municipality.

## **3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

- 3.1. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No.108 of 1996);
- 3.2. Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000;
- 3.3. Local Government Municipal Systems Act, no. 32 of 2000, Chapter 4: Community Participation;
- 3.4. The Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013;
- 3.5. Electronic Communications and Transactions Act 25 of 2002;
- 3.6. Section 21(a), 21 (b) and Section 75 of the Municipal Financial Management Act 56 of 2003;
- 3.7. National Communication Strategic Framework;
- 3.8. The Code of Conduct for Municipal Employees;
- 3.9. The Code of Conduct for Councillors;

## **4. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 4.1.** It is the policy of Mopani District Municipality to provide information to its internal and external stakeholders about Municipality programmes and services. This has to be done in an accurate, timeous, relevant and understandable manner;
- 4.2.** Ensure that it reports its plans and achievements with regards to its mandate;
- 4.3.** Ensure that it is visible, accessible and answerable to the public it serves;
- 4.4.** All communications must reflect Council's communication programmes, as well as the communication priorities of the government.

## **5. COMMUNICATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In order to ensure effective communication and compliance to Municipality Communication policy, the following roles and responsibilities are adopted:

### **6.1 Executive Mayor**

- 6.1.1** The Executive Mayor is the Chief Communicator for the Municipality. He /She can delegate these responsibilities to the Members Mayoral Committee or Municipal Manager whenever required.
- 6.1.2** The Executive Mayor together with the Municipal Manager and the Spokesperson of the institution will be responsible for defining the annual communication priorities, objectives and requirements.

### **6.2 Municipal Manager**

- 6.2.1** The Municipal Manager can also articulate the institution's position on strategic and operational matters.

### **6.3 Senior Managers (Heads of Directorates)**

**Senior Managers (Head of Directorates) are responsible for:**

- 6.3.1 Ensuring compliance with the Municipality's Communication Policy and Procedures;
- 6.3.2 Provide timeous and accurate information to the Communications Unit when required to do so.

### **6.4 Deputy Manager Communication/ Municipal Spokesperson**

- 6.4.1 The Deputy Manager: Communications/ Spokesperson serves as the Municipality's authority on communication related matters.
- 6.4.2 Shall ensure that the Communication Policy and Procedures are communicated to staff and adhered to.
- 6.4.3 Shall provide communication advice to the Executive Mayor and the Municipal Manager.
- 6.4.4 Shall serve as the Council's spokesperson.
- 6.4.5 Shall be responsible for coordinating and liaison with the media, arranging media conferences, the issuing of media statements and handling media queries.
- 6.4.6 Shall be responsible for writing the Executive Mayor and other Office Bearer's speeches.

### **6.5 Communications Unit**

- 6.5.1 The Communication's Unit is responsible for coordinating all communication activities in the Municipality. In this regard the Communications Unit shall support and coordinate all communication efforts with the main aim of enabling the Executive

Mayor as the chief communicator and the Municipal Manager to perform their function.

6.5.2 The unit shall provide strategic advice with regards to communication policy development, programme planning and implementation. Develop internal and external publications for information dissemination.

## **6.6 District Communicator's Forum**

6.6.1 The communications Unit shall convene quarterly District Communicators Forum meetings.

## **7 PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS**

The following Procedures and Regulations are the rules that govern the implementation of the Communication Policy. The following procedures have to be followed with regards to media liaison:

### **7.1 MEDIA RELATIONS**

7.1.1 The Communications Unit is the Municipality's first line of contact with the media and is responsible for coordinating all media relations.

7.1.2 All media queries must be referred to the Communications Unit which will then engage with the relevant line functionaries for an adequate response.

7.1.3 The Communications Unit shall coordinate interactions with the media, such as media conferences, media briefings, marketing and advertising.

7.1.4 The Communications Unit shall be responsible for media monitoring.

Items of importance emanating from media coverage will be circulated to those impacted upon, either for information sharing purposes or for drafting responses.

7.1.5 Media queries are to be dealt with within the stipulated deadline or otherwise within 24 hours.

7.1.6 Inquiries from the media should be in writing and be responded to in writing where possible.

7.1.7 Responses are to be supplied in writing except for radio and television interviews.

7.1.8 Media inquiries must be treated as top priority by all affected directorates.

7.1.9 No other person, except the Executive Mayor, the Municipal Manager or the Deputy Manager Communications may liaise with the media directly in the form of a verbal or written statements without approval of the Executive Mayor or Municipal Manager.

7.1.10 The Communications Unit shall consult with the relevant directorates when dealing with media queries.

## **7.2 Internal Communication**

7.2.1 The main purpose of internal communications is to facilitate and manage the flow of information within the District Municipality in order to create an informed workforce.



7.2.2 Internal communications involve information about Municipal programmes, relevant human resource information, and other useful information that staff may have interest in.

7.2.3 The following communication tools and mediums are used to communicate with members of staff: Newsletters, Posters, Notice Boards, E-mails, Workshops, Staff Meetings, SMS and Pay slips (Printing key messages on the back of payslips).

### **7.3 External Communication**

7.3.1 The main purpose of external communications is to inform external stakeholders of the services and programmes of the municipality.

7.3.2 Different communication tools and mediums are used to communicate with stakeholders: Newsletters, E-mails, Billboards, Radio, Television, Roadshows, Exhibitions, Conferences, Summits, Workshops, Notices, SMS, loud hailing, Internet, social media platforms and print media. All external communication campaigns must be approved by the Communications Unit.

### **7.4 PRODUCTION OF COMMUNICATION MATERIALS**

7.4.1 The Communications Unit shall be consulted on communications material to be produced on behalf of the municipality.

7.4.2 Decisions to outsource such activity or part thereof must be approved by Deputy Manager Communications.

## **7.5 ADVERTISING**

7.5.1 The Communications Unit is responsible for coordinating all advertising activities.

7.5.2 The Communications Unit shall approve all advertising or procurement of advertising services.

7.5.1 In all instances the correct procurement procedures should be followed.

## **7.6 CORPORATE IMAGE, BRANDING AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL**

7.6.1 The Communications Unit is responsible for the corporate image of the Municipality.

7.6.2 The responsibility includes the following: The look and feel of the Municipality's office buildings; the type of communication material to be used by the Municipality i.e. folders, letterheads, business cards etc.; the way communication material is used and produced i.e. the font, use of logo's, corporate identity, etc. The kingly crown, a shield, Mopani worm on top of a Mopani leaf, a yellow circle, two elephant's horns, two eagles on both sides to the shield and a yellow pedestal with the motto: Unity in diversity forms the Mopani District Municipality's logo.

7.6.3 Promotional material using the corporate identity of the Municipality may only be used for official purposes. The production of such material must be authorised by the Communications Unit.

7.6.4 Branded merchandise is an integral part of the Municipality's branding strategy and as such cannot be developed without consultation with the Communications Unit.

7.6.5 The use of the Municipality's logo on projects not initiated by the Municipality has to be approved by the Communications Unit. Strict adherence to the corporate identity is a given with the development of any branded material.

## **7.7 PROCUREMENT OF COMMUNICATION MATERIALS**

7.7.1 Communication materials include any type of publication, newsletter, magazine, brochure, audio-visual material, and any other material intended to convey information to the public.

7.7.2 The Communications Unit has the responsibility of ensuring that communication products and services, including that of consultants, or services are acquired in a fair and equitable manner.

7.7.3 The Communications Unit must be consulted on procurement processes for communication.

## **7.8 Website**

7.8.1 The Deputy Manager for Communications or a delegated official has the sole responsibility of placing and removing material from the Municipality's website. Information will be placed on the site only after the approval by the Communications Unit or a delegated official from the same unit. It is the responsibility of individual Units to provide information for updating on the website.

## **7.9 LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATION**

- 7.9.1 The Communications Policy is based on the Constitution and the Municipal Systems Act, in this regard; it takes into account the language usage and preferences of the residents when communicating.
- 7.9.2 English is the business language for the Municipality and all official notes and advertisements issued for general public information must be published in English.
- 7.9.3 The communications unit must work with the relevant stakeholders to cater for those with special needs i.e. sign language translation.

## **7.10 Copyright**

- 7.10.1 The Municipality owns all publicity material and information it has paid for or created. Consequently, the reproduction of any such material requires the approval of the Municipality.
- 7.10.2 Copyright to the Municipality allows the Municipality the freedom to allow others to use the material without paying fees to the original producer. It also gives the Municipality the authority to guard against abuse of the material by the producer or another individual.

## **7.11 EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS**

- 7.11.1.1 Communications Unit shall take full responsibility for media, publicity and branding during events.
- 7.11.1.2 The Communications Unit is responsible for Branding and Corporate Identity of the Municipality, thus, the Unit must be consulted when Units are taking part in fairs and exhibitions on behalf of the Municipality.

## **7.12 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

7.12.1.1 The Communications Unit shall assist in identifying communications-related training courses for councillors and employees.

## **7.13 COMMUNICATION IN A CRISIS SITUATION**

7.13.1 A crisis is every organisation's worst nightmare. However, it is important that a framework for such a situation exists. An organization's reputation can be damaged by criminal or unethical activities.

7.13.2 In the event of a crisis the following should be adhered to: The Deputy Manager for Communications must first inform the Municipal Manager. The Municipal Manager will communicate with the affected Senior Manager(s). The Spokesperson is to be copied the information.

7.13.3 A Crisis Committee will consist of the MM, affected Senior Manager(s), the Spokesperson, and any other relevant employees.

7.13.4 The Executive Mayor is to be informed immediately.

7.13.5 A plan of action is to be drafted; The Crisis Committee will manage the issues, communication thereof and release the necessary statements with the involvement of the Executive Mayor.

7.13.5 The Executive Mayor and Municipal Manager will be the spokespersons. No media statement or interview is allowed from

any other employee. Employees will be informed of the situation.

## **7.14 SOCIAL MEDIA**

7.14.1.1 Municipal councillors are guided by the code of conduct as contained in schedule 1 of the Municipal Systems Act of 2000, which prohibits them from disclosing any privileged or confidential information of the council or committee to any unauthorised person without the permission of the municipal council

7.14.1.2 Municipal employees, are guided by the Code of Conduct as contained in schedule 2 of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000.

7.14.1.3 The Act prohibits municipal employees from disclosing any privileged or confidential information obtained as an employee of the municipality to an unauthorised person.

7.14.1.4 Municipal employees must at all times keep their postings legal, ethical and respectful. Personal use of social media implies that the employees are using social media for personal interest, which have nothing to do with their duties for government and/or their departments. However, there are specific aspects that they must pay attention to when using social media in a personal capacity.

7.14.1.5 All municipal employees should always think before they post, and they should use their common sense. All employees should remember that even if they act or speak in their personal capacity, their position may be known to anyone who is a potential audience and may be misunderstood or misrepresented as an official position. When using

social media at personal capacity, employees should consider the following:

7.14.1.6 Keep municipal-confidential information confidential.

7.14.1.7 Employees may not use social media platforms to post any confidential or proprietary information of the municipality.

7.14.1.8 Employees must familiarise themselves with the content of any non-disclosure agreement available at the institution, and ensure that all personal social media activities are in alignment and compliance with.

this policy and all other applicable regulations, acts and policies.

7.14.1.9 Keep personal social media activities distinct from government communication.

7.14.1.10 District Municipal logo and other branding may not be used in personal

social media posts without explicit permission sought in writing from the designated authority.

7.14.1.11 Employees can be held legally responsible for all comments that they post on their personal social media platforms about the municipality.

## **8 PROCEDURES AND COMPLIANCE**

8.1.1 This policy is intended to ensure that the Municipality engages in a coordinated manner which upholds a positive image of the District Municipality.

**8.1.2** This communication policy and its procedures are applicable to every employee in the Municipality.

## **9. DEFAULT**

Non-compliance to any of the stipulations contained in this policy will be regarded as misconduct, which will be dealt with in terms of the Disciplinary Code.

## **10. COMMENCEMENT**

This policy shall come into effect on the date of adoption by Council.

## **11. REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

The policy shall be reviewed annually or as and when it becomes necessary to do so.


## **12. STAKEHOLDER'S CONSULTATION**

All Stakeholder's were consulted on the 22-25 April 2024

## **13. ADOPTION BY COUNCIL:**

<b>Resolution NO: SCD/16/2024</b>	<b>Approved Date: 16 May 2024</b>
<b>Effective Date: 01 July 2024</b>	<b>Review Date: ANNUALLY</b>

## **14. AUTHORITY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**MUNICIPAL MANAGER**  
**MR T.J MOGANO**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**COUNCIL SPEAKER**  
**CLLR N.M MASWANGANYI**



