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PROPOSED COMMUNICATION POLICY FOR THE TUBATSE MUNICIPALITY

1. Background and Overview

Communication is responsible for supporting line functions across the municipality on the one side whilst taking care of the overall corporate image, ensuring that the organization is positively viewed at all times.

The communication function needs to be an efficient, effective and trusted vehicle through which the messages in the municipality are communicated.

The communication function should be enhanced through optimizing engagement with internal and external stakeholders, effective management of resources and visionary leadership.

1.1 Vision:

To be an efficient, effective and trusted vehicle for communicating Tubatse Municipality's value proposition to all our internal and external stakeholders.

1.2 Mission:

To provide strategic communication support to the Municipality's strategy, and to strengthen dialogue with all relevant stakeholders.

1.3 Values:

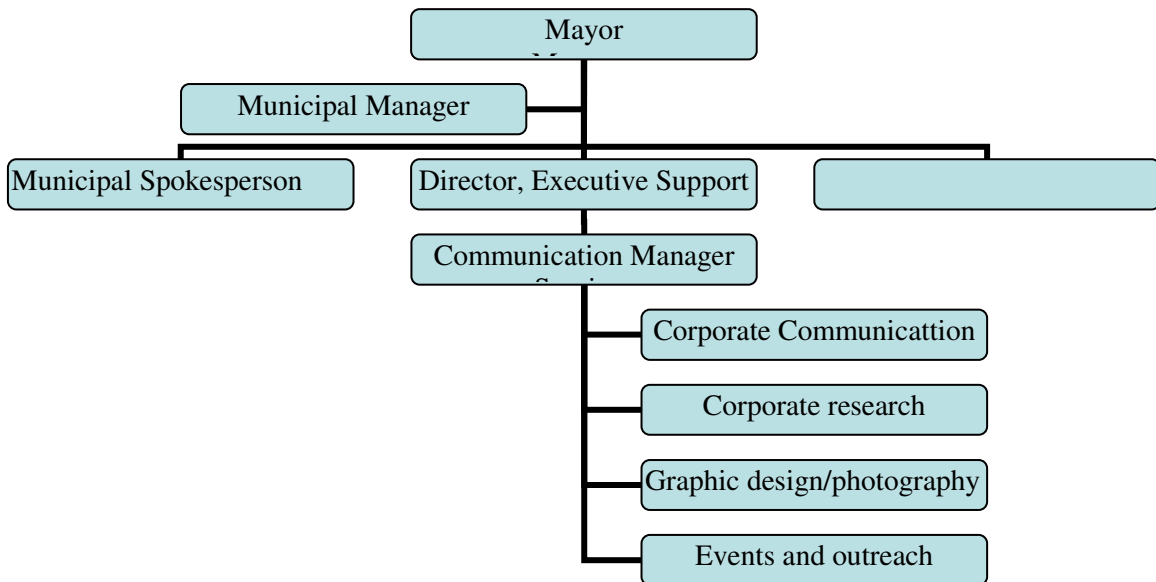
- Service excellence
- Transparency
- Customer-focus
- Diversity
- honesty
- Innovation
- Learning

1.4 Critical Dependencies

In order to deliver on the mandate of Corporate Communication, the following critical dependencies have been identified:

- Required authority that supports the allocated communication responsibility
- Adequate resources available, supported by the right skills
- Clearly understood roles and responsibilities within and outside communication
- Awareness and acceptance of the corporate identity.

1.5 COMMUNICATION ORGANOGRAM (Proposed)



2. Strategic Agenda

2.1 Communication Challenges

1. To highlight positive elements of the Municipality
2. To establish the municipality as a leading authority of growth and development in the District
3. To engage the media and highlight the positives within the municipality
4. To facilitate a capacity building effort to the internal members of the organization and to strengthen support internally and encourage loyalty

5. To engage in public awareness media campaigns that are aimed at building knowledge on the mandate of the municipality.
6. To develop a sense of “brand loyalty” in the municipality

2.2 Internal Communication:

Objectives...

- strategy and analyze recommendations based on internal survey results
- To position Communication as a strategic systematic and operational function within the municipality and the internal business units
- To render strategic communication services to LOB through the use of appropriate communication techniques.
- To position internal communication as the custodian of information dissemination within the municipality.
- Review internal communication
- To support and enhance the organizations strategic goals through timeous and relevant information dissemination.
- To ensure the dissemination of information in the internal environment for the promotion of employee commitment and buy-in of municipal values

Internal Communication Management

1. There must be an effective means of information sharing and managing of information e.g. create a shared folder for communication.

2. Management must be encouraged to have faith in the communications departments of the organization to execute its mandate.
3. Regular meetings should be encouraged. The contacts should be periodic, this periodic contact should be structured as follows:
 - a. Communication should set up weekly meetings
 - b. Conduct quarterly communication forums

Internal Liaison

Relation with internal staff

1. All media releases should be made accessible to the municipal staff, to ensure that there is no room for mischief makers to spin the content of the story.
2. There should be ongoing communication between the departments, this to encourage a regular flow of information.
3. Any emerging local story should be shared with the HOD, to be in a position to detect early warning signals and any potential communication crises.
4. The communication department should arrange periodic joint information sessions.
5. Staff should be encouraged to give regular feedback

Internal Functions (toward team building efforts)

It is important in any organization, large or small, to create team building opportunities as often as possible. The communication department needs to take the "A" for organizing these events.

Basic team building opportunities are: the “end of the year function, Heritage Day, Freedom Day” etc. These events should be used to create cohesion in the organization.

Resource Center

The municipality needs to develop a resource center that can be used by the broader public for their use, and further for the internal staff.

Relations with the Mayor’s office

1. All media releases are to be shared with the Mayor’s office.
2. The handling of issues of a political nature will be referred to the Mayor’s office in accordance the provisions of the communications protocol.

Corporate Image

There is a dire need for the municipality to develop a corporate brand and market it aggressively. This will call for the need to commission a “brand strategy” campaign and the communication team to drive the process. The end result of the exercise is to ensure that the whole organization ultimately take the responsibility for the brand.

Promotional material and gifts

All promotional material and gifts are to carry the official logo of the organization. To ensure that the logo is carried as widely as possible a number of different (functional) items which appeal to

a wide variety of people should be purchased and branded aggressively. Some examples: golf shirts, pens, bags, desk pads, business card holders, etc.

Corporate wear

It is suggested that the municipality subsidize a portion of staff uniform for frontline staff. It will be strongly advised that the branding of these items be done in accordance with the brand strategy.

Banners

Banners are a very good tool to use for branding any venue or area which has been cordoned off for the use of an organizational function for a limited period. The use of banners will be an extension of the branding exercise. The use of banners should also be used at workshops outside of the office. This will instill pride in the staff and members of the public who attend the workshops.

Corporate Exhibitions

As a means of reaching the public on a face to face basis it is quite essential for the municipality from time to time to participate in the available exhibition opportunities offered by different companies during different events. The experience ensures that the organization has an opportunity to engage with its client/customers directly and more importantly, the get on the level feedback on its products and service. Coupled with the above, the exercise will further drive the aggressive brand strategy, referred to above. The communication division should

purposefully seek out platforms for exhibitions that will have a tangible return on investment.

2.3 External Communication:

Objectives

- To ensure consistent messaging to our major stakeholders and the public in a way which promotes and protects the municipality's reputation
- Building positive, proactive relationships with key media as far as possible
- Shaping the news agenda with positive stories about the municipality, its goal and activities
- Driving some of the big picture vision and key policy planks in all media opportunities, backed by clear delivery milestones
- Exploiting the full range of media relations techniques to gain positive exposure
- Respond swiftly and effectively to criticism
- Develop and implement an external communication strategy
- To ensure effective media relations and media management, and
- To actively promote and enhance the image of the municipality

Media Liaison

Lobby the media

Be creative: identify sympathetic, loyal and problematic journalists and form a regular media list (to be the 1st to hear the news) - develop a personal relationship with the journalists.

- Make use of allocated entertainment budgets in order to have room to encourage closer relations with the media and stakeholders. Could be quite beneficial in terms of ironing out any differences with considered hostile individual journalists.
- Create a professional working relationship that is based on mutual trust and benefit. This could be achieved by examining the trend of reporting of individual identified journalists and seeking to arrange exclusive interviews that are guaranteed to interest the particular journalist whilst providing the municipality an opportunity to control and lead the debate.

Be proactive: Identify possible news worthy stories within the municipality and create an interest in the media for such stories. The focus should be that a sizeable percentage of stories that make it into the media have been initiated by the municipality and will serve the interest of the municipality. Inform journalists of all issues of interest to them, instead of stonewalling them as this makes them suspicious and uncooperative.

Be clear: Communication to the media should be informed and precise.

Media Monitoring:

- Tubatse Municipality needs to consider the idea of having the services of a media monitoring services, with a quantified analysis of media coverage.

- The analysis should be done periodically and reporting to the HOD's.
- Amongst the issues that need to be covered, are reports on the municipality's development partners. The reason being that the municipality will be in a position to trace any emerging trends in the reports and be in a position to devise counter strategies in time and respond appropriately.
- The municipality should also have access to most if not all the speeches of the MEC of Local Government and Housing.

Tools for Media liaison

1. Media Releases:

- a. All media releases should be shared with the Head: Communications before going out to the media.
- b. Everybody must have a shared media contact list.

2. Interviews:

- a. Subject to the communication protocol
- b. All interviews must be managed by the communication division or its representative

3. Media Briefings:

- a. Subject to the communication protocol
- b. Subject to the importance and news worthiness of the issue under discussion
- c. All media briefings must be managed by the communication division or its representatives

4. One on one discussions

- a. Discussions are not for reporting purposes

- b. Will be deemed necessary especially with problematic media journalists.
- c. All discussions must be arranged with the full knowledge of the communication division or its representatives.

5. Media capacity building workshops

- a. Subject to the importance and news worthiness of the issues under discussion
- b. All workshops must be managed and arranged by the communication division or its representatives
- c. Workshops are to be deemed when a lack of correct or proper knowledge is identified.

3. Community participation

- To ensure effective community participation in the business of the municipality
- To inculcate a sense of ownership over the operations of the municipality
- To ensure wide consultation on matters that affects the counselors and their constituents.

4. Events and Marketing

- Develop, implement and manage 12 month rolling corporate calendar for the municipality

- To assist staff to understand the value of their contributions towards making a success.
- To enable staff to realize and understand that their personal success is inseparable from the municipality's success.
- To enhance a core value proposition.
- To build and sustain client relationship management

5. Crisis Communication:

Because of the nature of the business, (SERVICE DELIVERY ISSUES) the municipality could be classified as a high risk organization, and it is important for it to have a Crisis Communication Strategy which is expected to automatically kick in during time of crisis. Tubatse Municipality has a number of issues that render itself vulnerable to mischief. The crisis communication strategy of the organization is to be subject to the provisions of the organization's Crisis Management Strategy and the Communication Protocol.

Important issues to be considered:

1. Have a clear communication structure
2. High risk organization (should not open up to abuse)
3. Communication should be trusted with information. (even if we are not to disseminate it personally)
4. Reference manual on organizations stand on certain issues (stick to one message)
5. Consistency in the spokes-persons
6. Should make it a practice to share information with the Mayor's Office

Avoiding a crisis (Action plan- in brief)

1. Determine the agenda and lead the debate on issues pertaining to the municipality
2. Apply pro-active information dissemination to media in order to limit the chances of media trying to dig up dirt on the municipality
3. Identify strong personalities within the municipality and expose them to the public through other forms, except traditional media appointments (e.g. address business groups, etc.)
4. Utilize the available strong human resources i.e. The Municipal Manager

6. OUR AUDIENCE

Internal

- Municipal employees
- All staff members
- Lines of Business
- Buildings
- Cleaners, gardeners, kitchen staff
- Municipal Management
- Counselors
- Municipal Manager
- Unions

External

- Media
- Radio
- Press
- Magazines

- Online Municipal Publications
- Public
- Youth
- Customers
- The community
- National departments
- Parliament
- Provincial departments
- Local municipalities
- Statutory bodies

7. KEY MESSAGES

The following are some of the key messages that will be communicated to all stakeholders mentioned above. Note that themes will be used for each message.

- Strategic municipal projects
- Success stories
- Research & Development
- Lines of business success stories
- Policies & Procedures
- Annual Report
- Employee Report
- Corporate Social Investment
- Annual Events Calendar
- Profiling & recognizing top performers
- Sharing of experiences

8. COMMUNICATION TOOLS

To disseminate the above key messages to different audience, the following communication tools will be used:

- E-mail
- Intranet
- Internet
- SMS
- Suggestion boxes
- Notice Boards
- Regular staff meetings
- Orientation / induction program
- Internal newsletter
- Breakfast sessions
- Industrial Theatre
- Press
- Posters
- External newsletter
- Radio
- Events
- Consultation Forums
- Women's Forum
- Tender Briefings
- Press Conference

9. CONCLUSION

The Communication policy is responding to the Tubatse Local Municipality's wide strategic document. It is designed and

intends to strengthen the municipality's profile both internally and externally. It will be implemented throughout the organization and start at departmental level. While the strategic goals and objectives have been outlined in the above policy, a generic operational plan will have to be developed in order to achieve these goals and produce measurable results.