

# UBUNTU LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

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### 1. Purpose of the Strategy

This strategy spells out how the Ubuntu municipality will ensure that it becomes a more efficient, effective municipality by addressing, developing and improving communication systems, tools, processes and mechanisms. It further seeks to realise the principles of developmental local government as spelt out in the white paper on local government and fulfilling the provisions of Chapter 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa which states that "a municipality must create favourable conditions for community participation. "It finally seeks to create synergy within the municipality by bridging the gap between the different units and departments within the municipality to ensure maximum efficiency within the municipality.

### 2. Principles of this strategy

The effectiveness of this strategy depends on the following principles:

- Openness
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Reliability
- High work ethic
- Discipline
- Constructive self criticism
- Democracy
- Fairness

### 3. Introduction

This communication strategy seeks to close the gap between the different stakeholders of the municipality (i.e. the administration of the municipality, the council, and community and sector departments). This further seeks to improve internal communication by making sure

that the internal communication problem is addressed between the different departments within the municipality.

#### **4. Internal Communication**

This part of the strategy explores communications internally within the municipality. It looks at systems, mechanisms and processes.

##### **4.1. Internal Communication Systems, mechanisms and processes**

There are a number of internal communication systems that should be used to ensure that the municipality is more efficient and effective.

###### **a) Senior Management Team (SMT) Meetings**

This is the meeting of the Municipal Manager and head of departments within the municipality. This structure should be chaired by the Municipal Manager or a person delegated by the Municipal Manager. The frequency of these is twice a month specifically on the second and last weeks of the month respectively. Some of the issues that will be discussed will focus on problems and issues within the departments (Provided that they can't be solved within the departments). Other issues to be discussed are issues that affect the whole workforce, such as resolutions from SALGA, Bargaining Council, and Council etc. This forum should also discuss issues to be presented to council and in the process prepare items for council. It has the power to make administrative decisions on the basis of the delegated powers to the Municipal Manager according to the law. These meetings shall be coordinated from the Municipal Manager's office and notice and agenda for such meetings should be given within reasonable time as determinable by members of this forum.

###### **b) Management Meetings**

This is the meeting of the Municipal Manager, the 3 Head of Departments, the 2 Senior Admin Officers, the 3 Workforce men and the Head of Administration. This meeting will be chaired by the Municipal Manager or by a person delegated by the Municipal Manager. The frequency of meeting should be twice a month in the first week of the month and in the third week of the month and this forum will focus on monitoring and evaluation of service delivery and weekly planning. These meetings have the same decision making powers as the structure above. These meetings shall be coordinated from the Municipal Manager's office and notice and agenda for such meetings should be given within reasonable time as determinable by members of this forum.

### **c) Unit and or Departmental Meetings**

This meeting compared to the Management Meetings are of a lower magnitude it is used as forum to gather information and implement resolutions and decisions of senior management and council. It has decision making powers but very limited. Its powers to make decisions are limited to the specific department provided it does not have negative implications for the municipality. The frequency of this structure should at least be once a month, specifically in the second week due to its size. These meetings will be chaired by the departmental heads or such a delegated person by the head of department. This forum should have monthly minutes from these meetings and these should be submitted to the Municipal Manager and the minutes can form a basis for the Management Meeting agenda when necessary. These meetings will be coordinated from the head of department's office and reasonable notice and agenda should be given to members of this forum as determinable by the members themselves.

### **d) Local Labour Forum or related structure**

This is a forum for the workers and the council to meet and discuss labour related matters. This structure is made up of councillors, union representatives from unions, HOD Infrastructure and the Municipal Manager or a delegated representative of the Municipal Manager. A quorum should be constituted by a 50% delegation from labour and 50% from the councillors. They should meet at least once a quarter or as and when required. This structure has the power to make decisions but it should also be used as a forum to gather data, seek agreement on key labour related issues and. No voting is allowed on this structure all decisions should be reached through consensus. These meetings shall be coordinated from the Municipal Manager's office and notice for such meetings should be given within reasonable time as determinable by members of this forum. This structure shall have the powers to invite sector specialists to sit on this structure and offer advice on any issue as might be required by the structure. The chairpersonship shall rotate on annual but alternating basis between labour and the councillors. Minutes of the LLF should form part of the committees of council and in turn these structures should prepare agenda items for the LLF.

### **d) Council Meetings**

These are normal, portfolio committee and special council meetings. These meetings are meant for council to make decisions on relevant issues within the political environment of the municipality. Ward committees minutes and the service delivery questionnaire developed by the municipality will be main sources of information. It further focuses on portfolio committees who meet to discuss sector specific issues. The portfolio committee does not have the final decision making

powers and as a result requires council to make final ratification of their decisions. Council should meet at least 4 times a year; the Finance Committee of Council will meet at least once a month and the other committees as and when necessary but specifically before council meetings. These committees have their chairpersons as selected by council and the Mayor has the right to sit in on all committee meetings. The overall coordination of this structure is based under the control of the Municipal Manager and such meetings should be given within reasonable time as determinable by members of this forum.

#### **e) Ward committees**

These are critical in the information gathering process. The guidelines on ward committees as adopted by the municipality state that the ward committees shall:

- Stimulate community interest in processes of the municipality in the community
- Act as liaison between the community, ward councillor and the municipality
- Review, evaluate and present recommendations to the council
- Act as advisors to the ward councillor on various issues related to their work in the sectors or the community

This shall be done through the meetings that they will hold with the Mayor (speaker) and council as per the guidelines adopted by council and through the "council meets the people" meetings.

#### **4.2 Tools to be used in the implementation of the communication strategy**

- Item Form to prepare items for the Council or Committees of the Council. (Appendix "A1(a)")
- Proposed agenda for the Council or Committees of the Council.
- Proposed Minutes for the Council or Committees of the Council.
- Resolution Register with cross references to relating resolutions. (Appendix "A1")
- Report format for reports by officials, office bearers and committees, these reports make provision for reporting on delegated and non delegated powers. (Appendix "A2")
- Service Delivery Questionnaires available at all municipal offices in the municipality
- Memos for the offices of the speaker/mayor and Municipal Manager and the different departments and functional offices as listed below:

- ✓ Office of the Mayor
- ✓ Office of the Municipal Manager

- ✓ Office of the Corporate Services Manager
- ✓ Office of the Chief Financial Officer
- ✓ Office of the Infrastructure Development Manager
- ✓ Loxton Office
- ✓ Richmond Office
- ✓ Assignment Book ( To be used in duplicate) (Appendix “A3”)

## **5 Procedure for the Filing System**

- All filing systems of the towns must be closed and moved to the head office of Ubuntu in Victoria West.
- A new system must be started, using the new Victoria West index and current files

### **5.1 Incoming Correspondence**

- Incoming correspondence into a post book
- Two officials to open letters (One must be a senior official)
- Letters to the Filing Office
- Letters must be issued with a Control Sheet
- Letters with a Control Sheet to be distributed
- Only letters to be distributed
- Time must be allocated for each letter to the official that must execute the action
- The filing office must at all times keep track of the letters.
- No letters can move around between officials without being signed in and out by the Filing Office
- The Filing Office must remind officials if the letters are staying more than 5 working days at one official
- Letters must be returned after 5 working days, if an official needs a letter longer the letter can be issued to him again or can be kept over until he/she needs it again.

- Letters must be returned as quickly as possible to the Filing Office
- Questionnaires from the other municipal offices shall be sealed and brought to Victoria West and shall be opened by the municipal manager in the presence of the mayor and one other municipal official

## **5.2 Outgoing Correspondence**

- A copy of any outgoing letter (Colour other than white) must be filed on the subject file and signed off, if the letter refers to any other letter in the file "refer to" column.
- The original letter must also be loose in the file, the original will be despatched by the filing office, either by fax or by post.
- All letters will be typed by Administration Department and signed by the Municipal Manager or his designate.
- All outgoing correspondence must be recorded into an outgoing correspondence register.
- Outgoing letters delivered by hand be signed off in a delivery register
- All internal memos shall be kept into such a file at the municipality

### **(E-mails and faxes must be treated as incoming post)**

Additional to the filing of the original letters in the subject files a copy of each received correspondence (letters, faxes and e-mails) must be placed on a daily file, this file must on a daily basis be studied by the Municipal Manager and departmental heads to ensure that they will have an overview of the municipality's daily activities. This is also an early warning system to ensure quick problem solving

The following Documents will be needed for the filing system:

1. Incoming Post Register ( Appendix "B1")
2. Control Sheet for filing (Appendix "B2")

## **5.3 Phases of an Internal Communication System**

### **5.3.1 Written Communication**

- All formal instruction to employees is given by memo.

- All report back on formal instructions is done per memo.
- All items taken to Council or Committees be done on the prescribed Item Form and that all sections of the Item Form be completed by the relevant parties e.g. Financial Implications by the Financial Department, Legal Implications by the Administration Department and That the Municipal Manager gives comments on each item.
- Reports to the Council and Committees of the Council be done on the prescribed Report Form, in the 2 sections of delegated and non delegated powers.
- The Agendas for the Council and Committees of the Council be prepared in the prescribed format, taking the system of delegated powers and report back on them into account.
- Minutes are prepared in the prescribed format on and that each resolution taken by Council, Committee of Council, Office Bearer or Employee, delegated to them given a resolution number and those resolutions are documented in a Resolution Register, of which an example is included.

### **5.3.2 Meetings**

- That all meetings of the Council, Committees of the Council, Management and Departmental meetings be given agendas which is prepared in advance with the necessary information to ensure a fruitful meeting.
- That all resolutions taken on these meetings be documented and that resolutions taken in terms of delegated powers be documented in the Resolution Register

### **5.3.3 Verbal Communication**

- That all verbal instructions be followed up by written instructions.
- That all verbal reports be followed up by written reports.

## **6. External Communication**

External Communication refers to the communication between the municipality and or council as referred to in section 4.2. and the community, community representative structures and sector departments.

### **Communication with the community and community representative structures**

- This communication will take place by means of ward meetings where the ward councillor will inform the ward by relating the resolutions taken by council that will have an impact on that ward.
- The Mayor will in collaboration with the Municipal Manager or their delegated representatives will hold community meetings to inform the community of the activities of the Municipality from time-to-time
- The IDP Representative forum will be used to address the development activities of the community and convey all the developmental issues of the municipality to the Community. This forum will rely on the management meetings for its agenda and support guidance in terms of expertise.
- The Municipal Council will introduce a "Council Meets the People" where the municipal council will rotate monthly between the towns/wards in the municipality to listen to the communities. They are also expected to meet interest group as and when required.
- Only the Mayor and the Municipal Manager are allowed to make press releases and media statements.