



INGQUZA HILL LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

**Draft Communications Policy
(To be adopted and reviewed annually)**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Ingquza Hill Local Municipality is committed to a two-way communication, building relationships with its internal and external stakeholders and to further form partnerships with the public and private sector. The main purpose of this policy is to provide assert principles and guidelines for the communication of the municipality. The different roles and responsibilities within the municipality's communication are made clear as to what is communicated and by whom. This policy will ensure that communication takes place in a coordinated, uniform and responsible manner.

2. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THIS POLICY

The Communication Policy is intended to ensure that the Ingquza Hill Local Municipality recognises the significance of communication as a strategic management function and as an integral part municipality's daily functioning. The policy demonstrates that the municipality is committed and enthusiastic to a transparent and effective relationship with both internal and external stakeholders. The municipality will do so by a process of accountability, consultation and responsiveness and through dissemination information.

The municipality acknowledges that it has a responsibility to inform its stakeholders of identified issues, progress made and results achieved in addressing its mandate.

The Communication Unit has a responsibility to ensure that all communications activities which include procurement of services are done in accordance with these policies and procedures. This requires all communications and communication-related activities to be co-coordinated and recommended by the Unit.

3. THE POLICY STATEMENT

This policy seeks to provide information to all stakeholders about municipality programmes and delivering of goods and services. The dissemination of information to stakeholders will be done in an accurate, clear, effective, timeous, reasonable, responsible, relevant and comprehensible manner. This seeks to; -

- ensure that municipality reports and achievements with regard to scope of mandate are communicated effectively; and
- ensure that municipality's information is accessible and answerable to the public it services;
- Ensure that municipality account for all its programmes and activities.

All communication must reflect overall municipality programmes and the communication priorities of government.

4. THE COMMUNICATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

4.1 The Mayor

The Mayor (as the head of the municipality) is the Chief Communicator Spokesperson of the municipality. He/she (the Mayor) can delegate these roles and responsibilities to the Municipal Manager whenever is required. The Mayor together with the Municipal Manager and Head of Communication Unit will be responsible for defining the annual communication priorities such as achievement, objectives and requirements. This is done in consultation with the Management Team.

4.2 The Municipal Manager

The Municipal Manager (MM) is the Spokesperson for the municipality on strategic and operational issues. He (the MM) ensures that the annual communications strategy is in line with municipality communication objectives and reflects the municipality's priorities. The MM will be responsible the integration of the communications function within the municipality's decision-making processes and the integration of strategic communication planning in the overall planning of the municipality. The Municipal Manager may delegate the role and responsibility of a Spokesperson to any person who have ability and capacity to perform.

4.3 Heads of Units (HoU)

Heads of Units are responsible for; -

- Ensuring compliance with the Municipality's Communication Policy and Procedures;
- Attend to media inquiries through Communication Unit;
- Ensure that key communication issues and priorities are identified annually in line with the municipality communication strategy and
- That their programmes have a communication action plans but through consultation with the Communication Unit.

4.4 Head of Communication

The Head of Communication Unit serves as the municipality authority on communication issues. He/she is responsible for co-coordination of all communications activities including the procurement of communication materials and services. This includes the appointment of communication service providers, consultants and communication activities by through Supply Chain or Procurement Office of the Municipality. All these activities must be either approved or recommended by him/her. The Head of Communication must assist the Municipal Manager in ensuring that the Communication Policy and its procedures are communicated to staff and adhered to. He/she is responsible to provide communication advice and counsel to the Mayor and Municipal Manager.

4.5 Municipal Spokesperson

The Municipal Spokesperson serves as the Municipality Spokesperson. He/She is responsible for co-ordinating liaison with the media, updating social media networks, websites, arranging media briefings and breakfast, conferences, the issuing of media statements and handling media queries. He/she is responsible for both Mayor and Municipal Manager's media liaison. He / She is responsible for writing Mayor and other Office Bearer's speeches.

4.6 Communications Unit

Communications Unit is responsible for co-coordinating all communications activities in the municipality. In this regard, the Communications Unit shall support and co-ordinate all communication efforts with the main aim of enabling the Mayor and Municipal Manager to perform their function as Chief Communicators. It shall provide strategic advice and counsel with regard to communication policy development, programme planning and programme implementation. Communication Unit is further responsible for development and implementation of communication plans and production publications for information dissemination.

The Communication Officer exists for and is responsible for all the communication requirements of the Municipality that deal with these functional areas which includes identifying communication issues, developing communication strategies, implementing and managing communication actions such as: campaigns, events, advertising, design and printing of communication materials (depending on the availability of necessary expertise), audio-visual and still communication, marketing and communication research.

4.7 Communicator's Forums

Internal and Local Communicator's Forums for all Communicator's stakeholders having been prepared by Communication staff exists and meetings are held quarterly. These Forums are serving as strategic platforms for information sharing and coordination.

5. PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

The following Procedures and Regulations are the rules that govern the implementation of the Communication Policy.

5.1 Media Relations

The Communications Unit is the municipality's first line of contact with the media and is responsible for co-coordinating all media relations. The following procedures have to be followed with regards to media liaison; -

- It is advisable that before responding to media queries, Communications Unit be consulted. In a situation where this is not possible, the response must be signed off by the relevant Head of Unit and copied to Head Communications.
- All media queries must be referred to the Communications Unit who will then engage with the relevant line functionaries for an adequate response. The Communication Unit should ideally at all times coordinate interactions with the media, such as media conferences, briefings, engagements, letters to the media and advertising.
- The Communications Unit is responsible for media evaluation and monitoring. A media monitoring service is available from the Communications Unit. Items of importance will be circulated to those impacted upon, either for information purposes or for a draft response.
- Media queries are to be dealt with within the stipulated deadline or otherwise within 24 hours with exclusive of weekend which will be within 72 hours. Inquiries received after hours will only be dealt with during office hours unless there is obvious urgency or instruction to do so.
- Inquiries from the media should be in writing. Responses are to be supplied in writing except for radio and television interviews. Media queries must be treated as top priority.

5.2 Internal Communicator's Forum

The main purpose of internal communicator's forum is to facilitate and manage the flow of information within the municipality in order to create an informed workforce. Internal communications involves information about municipality programmes, relevant human resource information and other useful information that staff may have an interest in from all municipal internal departments.

The following communication tools and mediums are used to communicate with staff members; -

Internal memo, Posters, Notice Boards, Intranet (Emails), Workshops, Staff meetings, Toilet notice boards, SMS and Pay slips.

5.3 Local Communicator's Forum

The main purpose of local (external) communicator's forum is to inform stakeholders of services and programmes of the municipality, both provincial and national government departments, State Own Enterprises (SOEs) and Non-governmental Organisations. Different communication tools and mediums are used to communicate with stakeholders; -

Billboards, Letters, Notice Boards, Radios, Television, Roadshow Exhibitions, Conferences, Summits, Workshops, Internet and Newspapers.

All external communication campaigns carried out by internal municipal departments must be approved by the Communication Unit.

5.4 Production of Communication Materials

The Communication Unit must be consulted on communications material that is produced on behalf of the municipality. Decisions to outsource such activity or part thereof must carry the approval of the Head of Communication.

5.5 Advertising

Communication Unit is responsible for advertising and further co-ordinate all advertising activities. The Communication Unit must approve all advertising or procurement of advertising services.

No contract or payment can be signed without the approval of the Head of Communications or his/her representative. In all instances the correct procurement procedures should be followed. Heads of Units must compliment the budget.

5.6 Corporate Image

Communication Unit is responsible for the corporate image of the municipality. This 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 official Municipal Logo with the name of the municipality must appear in full all Official Municipal documents. There must be Corporate Identity Manual which must specify clearly how the Logo shall be used.

5.7 Branding and Promotional Material

The 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 Communication Unit. Branded merchandise is an integral part of the municipality branding strategy and as such cannot be developed without the approval of the Communication Unit.

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

5.8 Procurement of communication materials

The Communication materials include any type of publication, newsletter, magazine, brochure, audio visual material and any other material intended to convey to the public information. Communication 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. The Communications Unit must be consulted on procurement processes for communication. It is advisable to make use of the Communication Unit's in-house service, depending on the type of project, the time frames, capacity available and budgets.

5.9 Website

The municipality's Internet site serves as its window to the public and as such the Communications Unit has the following responsibility;-

- The Head of Communication Unit or a delegated official has the sole responsibility of placing and removing material from the Municipality website.
- Information will be placed on the site only after the approval of a Unit Head or a delegated official not lower than the rank of Manager.
- It is the responsibility of individual Units to provide information for their web pages.
- The creation of links on the Municipality website and or acceptance of a link of the Municipality website to another website will only be done after the approval of the Head of Communication Unit.

An E-Communications Forum made up of IT and Communications officials is responsible for approving all IT related projects.

5.10 Language and Translations

The Ingquza Hill Local Municipality usage of languages is based on the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) and the Local Government Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000). In this regard, it takes into account the language preferred by residents when communicating. IsiXhosa and English are languages used by the municipality in all official notes and advertisements issued for general public information must be published in isiXhosa and English.

5.11 Copyright

The municipality owns all publicity material and information it has paid for or created. Accordingly, the reproduction of any such material requires the approval of the municipality. 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 prevent misuse of the material by the producer or anyone else.

5.12 Exhibitions

The Communications Unit is responsible for Branding and Corporate Identity of the municipality as stated in (5.7 which deals with Branding and Promotional material). The Unit must be consulted when departments are taking part in fairs and exhibitions on behalf of the municipality.

5.13 The Events

The events shall be organised as prescribed in the Municipality's or Council's Events and Communication Unit shall take full responsibility for media, publicity and branding.

5.14 The Training and Development

The Communication Unit shall identify communication-training courses (assisted by Skills Development Office) for Municipal Officials and Councillors who interact with

Signed

His worship the Mayor
J. P Mdingi

Date: 01.08.2007