



COMMUNICATION POLICY

MARCH 2017

*Approved by Council
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ABBREVIATIONS

EMT:	Executive Management Team
ICC:	Internal Communication Committee
IDP:	Integrated Development Plan
JOC:	Joint Operations Committee
MM:	Municipal Manager

DEFINITIONS

In this policy, unless the context indicates otherwise, the terms listed below will be understood to have the following meaning:	
Advertising	Means any message conveyed by and paid for by the municipality that is broadcasted by way of mediums such as newspapers, television, radio, websites and/or the Internet
Branding	Means lending a brand name to a specific event where such a name will enhance the marketability of the event and ensure that the event can readily be associated with a specific sponsor
Crisis	Means an abnormal situation where prompt action, beyond normal procedures, is required in order to limit damage to persons, property or the environment
Department	Means the Department of Communication
External communication	Means communication that originates from within Overstrand Municipality where such communication/messages are intended for external publics
Internal communication	Means communication that originates within Overstrand 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 Overstrand Municipality as a whole
Joint Operation Committee	Means a committee established by Overstrand Municipality to ensure that all events held in Overstrand are safe and that event organisers comply with all bye-laws and regulations as laid down by Council
Language Policy	Means the policy adopted by Council that sets guidelines and procedures for language usage by all Overstrand municipal officials
Spokesperson	Means a delegated person who speaks on behalf of Overstrand Municipality

1. PURPOSE

Overstrand Municipality is committed to two-way communication, building relationships with its internal and external stakeholders and forming partnerships with the public and private sector.

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear principles and guidelines for communication within the municipality and to ensure that communications across Overstrand Municipality are well coordinated, effectively managed and responsive to the diverse information needs of the municipality's residents. In short, this policy will ensure that communication happens in a coordinated and uniform manner.

2 PRINCIPLES

This Communication Policy seeks to ensure that Overstrand Municipality acknowledges the importance of communication as a strategic management function and as an integral part of its daily functioning. As such, the municipality acknowledges that it has a responsibility to inform its internal and external stakeholders of identified issues, progress made and results achieved in addressing its mandate.

3. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

In setting out the objectives of local government, Section 152(1) (e) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) states that municipalities must "encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government" and goes on to state in Section 160(7) that "a municipal council must conduct its business in an open manner".

Section 4 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (No. 32 of 2000) reiterates the principles outlined above. Moreover, the aforementioned Act deals with several issues that have a bearing on the legislative framework of this 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 – Communications directed at local communities
- Section 21B – Official websites
- Section 51 – Organisation and administration
- Section 80 – Provision of services by entering into service delivery agreements with external mechanisms

Adding to the above, Section 75 of the Local Government: Municipal Financial Management Act (No. 56 of 2003) requires municipalities to put key documents and information at the disposal of their publics with the inclusion of IDPs, annual budgets, adjusted budgets, annual reports and the likes as well as details regarding those policies and details that inform the former.

As a matter of fact, in terms of Regulation 30 – published in respect of the aforementioned Act in Government Gazette No. 32141 on 17 April 2009 – all municipalities are now obliged to be open and forthcoming in as far as municipal budgeting and reporting are concerned.

In addition to the legislative and regulatory prescripts highlighted above, this policy is also informed by Overstrand Municipality's Policy on Corporate Identity and Branding and Language Policy.

4. COMMUNICATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to ensure effective communication and compliance with Overstrand Municipality's communication policy, the following roles and responsibilities are adopted:

4.1 Executive Mayor

The Executive Mayor is the Chief Communicator (spokesperson) for the municipality. He/she can delegate these responsibilities to the Deputy Executive Mayor, Member of The Mayoral Committee or the Municipal Manager whenever required. The Executive Mayor will be responsible for communicating the annual communication priorities, objectives and requirements as contained in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The Executive Mayor is also responsible for communicating on matters of a political nature.

In as far as communicating on matters of a political nature is concerned, the Chief Communicator (i.e. Executive Mayor) will be assisted by the Public Relations Officer appointed to his / her office.

4.2 Municipal Manager (MM)

The Municipal Manager (MM) and / or his delegate ensures that the annual communication strategy is in line with municipal communication objectives and reflects the municipality's priorities.

Furthermore, the MM ensures the integration of the communications function within the municipality's decision-making processes as well as the integration of strategic communication planning (IDP) in the overall planning of the municipality. The MM is also responsible for communicating on matters of an administrative nature.

4.3 Directors

Directors are responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with the municipality's Communication Policy;
- Ensuring that their directorates' strategies include communication action plans, which must be drafted in consultation with the Department of Communication.

4.4 Manager: Communication

The Manager: Communication is responsible for:

- Rolling out the Communication Policy and ensuring that it is adhered to;
- Coordinating all generic communication activities, including the procurement of communication products and services;
- Ensuring that the right person serves as Council spokesperson when dealing with the media;
- Managing media liaison in terms of arranging media conferences, issuing media statements and responding to media queries with regard to corporate affairs but not on a political level; and
- Liaising with the Public Relations Officer in the Office of the Executive Mayor on project launches and coordinating communication between the administration and the Mayor's office.

4.5 Department of Communication

The Department of Communication is responsible for coordinating all communication activities within the municipality. This department shall provide strategic advice and counsel with regard to communication policy development, programme planning and programme implementation; develop and implement communication plans; and produce publications for information dissemination.

Dedicated Communication Officers can be requested to assist directorates and departments with communication issues, the development of communication strategies and the implementation and management of communication actions such as campaigns, events, advertising, the design and printing of communication materials, the compilation of audio-visual communication material, marketing and the execution of communication research.

4.6 Strategic Platforms for Information Sharing and Coordination

4.6.1 Executive Management Team (EMT)

The Executive Management Team serves as the strategic platform for information sharing and the coordination of external communication programmes and projects. This team comprises the Executive Mayor and the Mayoral Committee and top management and meets on a monthly basis. Councillors and officials must be accessible and accountable. Furthermore, to aid communication, Council, as well as its employees, should be visible and recognisable wherever they are present. Clear identification allows the public to see the Council at work, to gain access to its programmes and services, and to assess its activities.

4.6.2 *Internal Communication Committee (ICC)*

An Internal Communication Committee, consisting of representatives from each directorate, meets on a quarterly basis. This committee is a strategic platform for information sharing and the coordination of internal communication projects. New Internal Communication Committee members (ICC) should be provided with a copy of the Terms and Conditions of the ICC.

5. PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

The following procedures and regulations are the rules that govern the implementation of the Communication Policy:

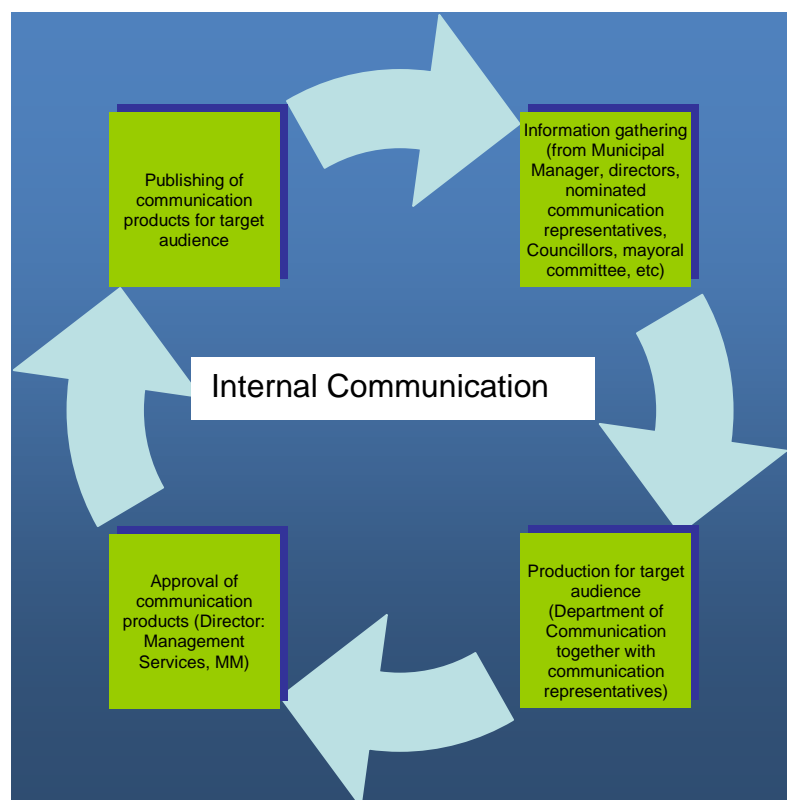
5.1 *Media Relations*

- The Department of Communication is the municipality's first line of contact with the media and is responsible for coordinating all media relations. The following procedures have to be followed with regard to media liaison:
 - It is advisable that before responding to media queries, an official responsible for media in the Department of Communication be consulted.
 - All media queries must be referred to the Department of Communication who will then engage with the relevant line functionaries for an adequate response. The administration will provide information to media queries of an administrative nature whereas the Public Relations Officer in the Office of the Executive Mayor will respond to media queries of a political nature.

- The Department of Communication and the PR Officer in the Office of the Executive Mayor should, at all times, coordinate interactions with the media, such as media conferences, briefings, letters to the media and advertising.
- The Manager: Communication is responsible for media evaluation and monitoring, and a media monitoring service will be available via the Department of Communication. 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 timeline or otherwise within 24 hours. Inquiries received after hours will only be dealt with during office hours, unless there is obvious urgency or instruction to do so immediately.
- Inquiries from the media should be in writing. Responses are to be supplied in writing, except in the case of radio and television interviews.
- Media queries 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 with a view to creating an informed workforce. Internal communication involves information about municipal programmes, relevant human resource information and other useful information that staff may have an interest in.



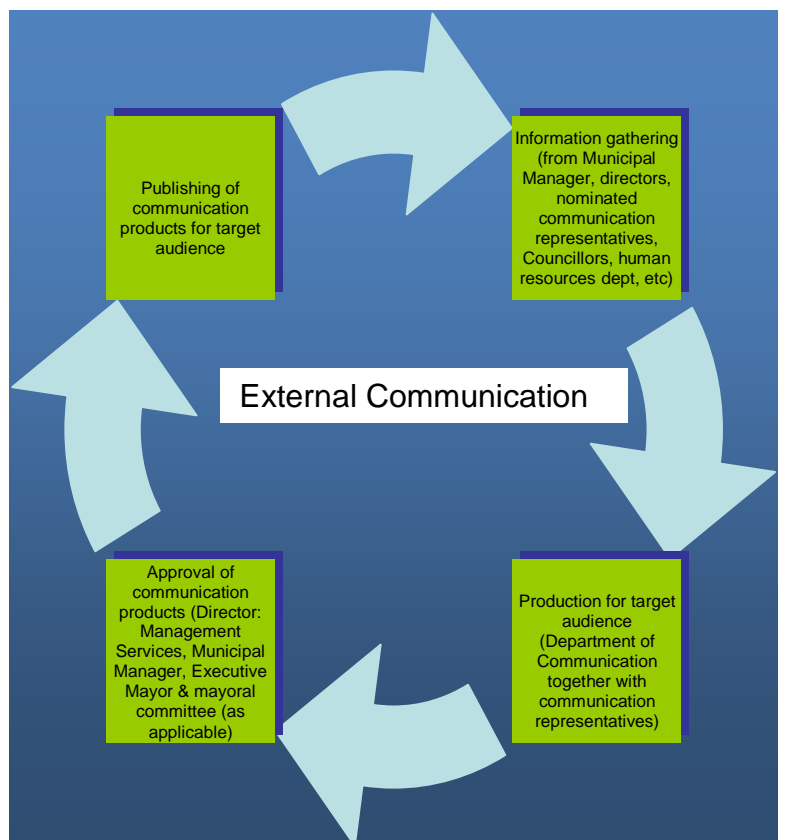
The following communication tools and mediums are used to communicate with staff members:

- Newsletters
- Posters
- Notice boards
- Intranet
- Workshops
- Staff meetings
- Text messages
- Pay slips
- E-mail
- Weekly schedules

5.3 External Communication

The main purpose of external communications is to inform stakeholders of services and programmes offered by the municipality. In addition to ward committees, various communication tools and mediums are used to communicate with stakeholders:

- Newsletters
- Pamphlets



- Corporate and strategic documents
- Brochures
- Billboards
- Radio
- Short Message Service (SMS)
- Television
- Roadshows
- Exhibitions/Municipal Showcase
- Conferences
- Summits
- Workshops
- Internet
- External website
- Newspapers
- Loud hailing
- Notices in community halls
- Notices in taxis

All external communication campaigns must be approved by the Department of Communication.

5.4 Public Participation

The municipality acknowledges that it is committed to the development of a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government by way of a system of participatory governance. Furthermore, in terms of Chapter 4 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (No. 32 of 2000), the municipality has an obligation

to establish appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures to enable the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality.

In the case of Overstrand Municipality, two distinct forums have been established through which formalised public engagement with its communities takes place, namely ward committees and the Overstrand Municipal Advisory Forum (OMAF).

Irrespective of the forum, though, the public must always be allowed ample time and opportunity for input, i.e. to ask questions and to receive feedback to their satisfaction.

In short, participation must be real and must carry weight.

5.5 Production of Communication Materials

The Department of Communication must be consulted on communication material that is produced on behalf of the municipality. Decisions to outsource such activity or part thereof must carry the approval of the Manager: Communication.

5.6 Advertising

The Department of Communication is responsible for coordinating all advertising activities and, as such, must approve all advertising or procurement of advertising services. No contract may be entered into and no payment will be authorised without prior approval by the Manager: Communication or his/her representative. In all instances, the correct procurement procedures must be followed. Where appropriate, directors will be required to supplement the advertising budget.

5.7 Corporate Image

The Department of Communication is responsible for the corporate image of the municipality. This responsibility encompasses the following:

- The ambiance created by the municipality's office buildings, in other words, the way they look and feel, which has a direct bearing on how front-desk personnel meet and greet the public, the manner in which telephonic enquiries are responded to and the way municipal officials dress;
- The type of communication material to be used by the municipality, i.e. folders, letterheads, business cards, promotional material, et cetera; and
- The way the communication material referred to above is produced, implying that the municipality's corporate identity must be applied consistently at all times as prescribed in the Corporate Identity Manual and the accompanying booklet.

To ensure the municipality's corporate image is maintained at all times, municipal officials working directly with the public – in particular those officials assigned to pay halls, traffic and licensing departments, and the likes – must undergo specialised training and be sensitised to their obligation to portray an image that mirrors Overstrand Municipality's vision and mission at all times.

5.8 Branding and Promotional Material

Promotional material that makes use of the municipality's corporate identity may only be used for official purposes. The production of such material must be authorised by the Manager: Communication and should be in keeping with the Corporate Identity and Branding Policy. Branded merchandise is an integral part of the municipality's branding strategy and, as such, cannot be developed without the approval of the Manager: Communication.

Requests to use the municipality's logo for projects that have not been initiated by the municipality should be submitted to the Manager: Communication. In all instances, strict

adherence to the corporate identity will be enforced, irrespective of the material that needs to be developed. Above must be read in conjunction with the Corporate Identify and Branding Policy.

5.9 Procurement of Communication Material

Communication material encompasses any type of publication – be it in a printed, audio-visual or electronic format – that conveys information about Overstrand Municipality to its publics, whether internal or external. The Department of Communication has the responsibility to ensure that all communication products and services, including that of consultants, are procured in a fair and equitable manner and said department must, therefore, be consulted in all instances prior to procuring communication material of whatever nature. Mostly, it would be advisable to make use of the Department of Communication's in-house service to produce such material, unless the timeframe, available capacity, nature of the project and budget dictate otherwise.

5.10 Website

Overstrand Municipality's official website serves as its window to the world, and it is the Department of Communication's responsibility to ensure that information published via the Internet regarding the municipality's policies, programme, services and initiatives are accurate and updated on a regular basis.

In this regard, it ought to be noted that:

- The Director: Management Services and/or his/her delegate will review the content and design of the municipal website on a regular basis and will offer advice as and when necessary.

- It is the responsibility of individual directorates to provide accurate information for inclusion on their web pages.
- Directorates should consult with staff assigned to the Department of Communication on editorial and visual content, including design and presentation, to ensure web pages comply with the municipality's publishing and communication standards.
- Website maintenance and development will, at all times, be executed in consultation with the approved, appointed service provider.
- In this regard, representatives from the Department of Communication will collaborate with information technology specialists to ensure Overstrand Municipality's electronic information services are planned and managed effectively. Likewise, those responsible for the operational and technical aspects of Overstrand Municipality's web-based system will work in consultation with representatives from the Department of Communication in as far as strategic guidance on content and the use of technology for communication purposes is concerned.

Against this background, the following arrangements will be observed at all times:

- Only the Manager: Communication or his / her delegated official has the authority to publish material on or to remove material from the municipality's website.
- All content intended for publication on the municipality's official website must first be approved by a director or a delegated official with a rank not lower than that of the manager.
- Links to and from the municipality's website may only be created with the explicit approval of the Manager: Communication.

Overstrand 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. Likewise, given its copyright, the municipality has the freedom to allow others to use communication material free of charge and the authority to prevent anyone, including the producer, from misusing the material.

5.12 Usage of the Overstrand Logo

In light of the copyright outlined above, the following rules will apply when using Overstrand Municipality's official logo:

- The logo may only be used for marketing and/or publicity purposes with the explicit consent of the Manager: Communication.
- The logo should never be used in such a way as to create the suggestion and/or impression that Overstrand Municipality is affiliated with or endorses a particular sponsor, individual, organisation or service, unless such a relationship with said sponsor, individual, organisation or service clearly exists and can be substantiated.
- The logo may never be used to misrepresent the relationship between Overstrand Municipality and an individual, organisation or service.
- Vendors and/or organisations are not allowed to use Overstrand Municipality's logo on their promotional material – be it in print, in audio-visual format or electronically – without prior written consent from the Department of Communication.

Notwithstanding permissions granted in terms of the provisions outlined above, it ought to be noted that Overstrand Municipality's logo is a distinctive, graphic artwork that has

been designed for a specific purpose. For this reason, usage of the logo will be subject to observing the following rules:

- Do not modify or alter the logo
- Do not change the scale, skew or rotate the logo
- Do not change the design of the logo
- Do not change or vary the colours of the logo, with the exception that the logo may be all blue or can be reversed out in white on black
- Do not use a screen of less than 100%
- Do not shrink the logo to less than 22 mm in height

5.13 Exhibitions

The Department of Communication is responsible for Overstrand Municipality's branding and corporate identity. Consequently, this department must be consulted whenever the municipality is to be represented at a fair or exhibition.

Of importance here is that Overstrand Municipality should adopt a coherent and coordinated approach when participating in exhibitions. In instances where multiple departments partake in the same even, they should display a unified presence that promotes common themes and a coherent message.

For this reason, departments must consult with the Department of Communication before finalising their exhibition plans, with the understanding that the latter will have to be approved by said department.

Do note, too, that intellectual property rights with regard to exhibition material rest with Overstrand Municipality, and this stipulation must be included in all contractual agreements entered into with service providers.

5.14 Events

Events shall be organised as prescribed, and the Department of Communication and/or the PR Officer in the Office of the Mayor shall take full responsibility for media coverage, publicity and branding.

In instances where the Executive Mayor is to attend an event, the Department of Communication will coordinate with the PR Officer assigned to the Office of the Mayor. Likewise, Councillors' support staff will be consulted whenever a member of the Mayoral Committee's presence at an event is required.

Although the Department of Communication will be required to ensure that Overstrand Municipality is appropriately identified and represented at events and announcements, including those involving other participants, it will neither participate in nor lend support to partisan events organised for political purposes.

5.15 Training and Development

The Department of Communication shall identify suitable training opportunities in the art of communication for Council officials who interact with the media and the public on a regular basis. Likewise, communications consultants engaged by Council will be required to interact closely with officials so as to ensure a transfer of skills.

5.16 Communication in Crisis Situations

In the event of a crisis, the following arrangements should be adhered to:

- The affected directors, manager and/or his/her delegate will inform the Municipal Manager.
- At this point, all relevant information must be copied to the Manager: Communication.
- The Municipal Manager, in conjunction the director concerned and the Director: Management Services will take a decision on how the situation should be handled.
- If deemed a disaster, the Disaster Management Plan will be activated.
- In other serious situations, a Joint Operation Committee will be formed which will be comprised of the MM, the relevant director, the Director: Management Services and all relevant officials, as the case may be.
- In all instances, the Executive Mayor must be informed of any impending crisis/disaster immediately.

In the event of a crisis situation, it is the responsibility of the Joint Operation Committee to draft an action plan and to manage the situation, including releasing information and statements to the public with the involvement of the Executive Mayor.

In instances such as these, the Executive Mayor and the Municipal Manager will act as spokespersons. No other official, unless specifically delegated to do so, will be allowed to make a statement or to interview the media.

Staff members must be kept abreast of the situation at all times, and ward councillors must be briefed/notified as soon as possible in case they have to field queries and/or questions from the public.

The Department of Communication's role in case of a crisis or disaster situation will be to help ensure that appropriate information is shared with the public under the guidance of the Municipal Manager.

6. PROCEDURES AND COMPLIANCE

This policy is intended to ensure that the municipality engages in a transparent and coordinated manner with its publics and communicates a unified message in a coherent and standardised manner.

This Communication Policy and its procedures are applicable to all Councillors and all in the employ of Overstrand Municipality and will, accordingly, be communicated internally.

Policy Section	Communication
Current update	N/A
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