

MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

# Communications strategy and Action Plan

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2023-2026



***"Our Turn Around- Going Back to Basics- A Season of Hope"***

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## **1. Introduction.**

Communications has existed with humanity since time immemorial and what have essentially improved with time was in-deed the methods, channels, tools and strategies of communications, with of course language at the center of this development.

The elaborate provisions of both the Matjhabeng Language Policy as well as the Matjhabeng Communications Policy as adopted by council in 2013, has certainly grafted a road map to a networked developmental communications, and ushered in a wealth of opportunities for an effective, coordinated, structured and coherent communications for our municipality.

Therefore, it is only conceivable that in achieving the goals and objects enunciated in the Matjhabeng communications policy a deliberate strategy and action plan should be developed.

Thus, such a strategy and plan should be purposed amongst other things at efficiently and effectively branding our municipality, protecting and promoting our image, fulfilling the municipal statutory obligations in informing the public, engaging and involving the public in the municipal programmes, influencing attitudes and behaviors in order to enable effective service delivery, raising public awareness about the municipality's plans and processes, providing feedback on our service delivery commitments and lastly, strengthening our municipal internal and external communications infrastructure.

Therefore, it remains important that this strategy as well as the action plan should and must resonate with our institutional political and administrative leadership, staff and our communities in order to achieve the goals of developmental local government as outlined in the white paper on local government and as emphasized in the going back to basics perspective.

## **1. Legal Scope and Framework.**

Section 95 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 dictates that Matjhabeng municipality's administration is governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the constitution, and these principles includes the following:

- People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making processes.
- Transparency must be fostered by providing public with timely, accessible and accurate information.
- Public administration must be accountable.

In addition, sections 6 (d) (e) and (f) of the Municipal Systems Act provides that the municipal administration is required to:

- Establish clear relationship, and facilitate co-operation and communication, between the municipality and the local municipality.
- Give the local community full and accurate information about the level and standard of municipal services they are entitled to receive, and
- Inform the community how the municipality is managed, the costs involved and the persons in charge.

Further, section 18 Of the Systems Act requires that the municipality must communicate to its community information concerning:

- Available mechanisms, processes and procedures to encourage and facilitate community participation.
- Matters with regard to which public participation is encouraged.
- Rights and duties of members of the local community, and-
- Municipal governance, management and development.

The Act further, provides that when communicating the above information, the following must be taken to account:

- The language preference and usage of the municipality, and the
- The special needs of people who cannot read nor write.

Again, the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1988, provides on section 19(20) that the municipality must annually review the following:

- The needs of the community.
- Its priorities to meet those needs.
- Its processes for involving the community.
- Its organizational and delivery mechanisms for meeting the needs of the community.
- It is further required to develop mechanisms to consult the community and community organizations in performing its functions and exercising its powers.

## **2. Vision and Mission.**

3.1. To be a benchmark developmental municipality in service delivery excellence.

3.2. To be a united, non- racial, transparent, responsive municipality which provides services in an economic, efficient, effective way and promoting a self-reliant community through entrepreneurship and creating a conducive environment for growth and development. Furthermore, in achieving our vision the promotion of co-operative governance, dynamic public participation and value adding partnerships remains important.

## **3. Objectives of the Strategy.**

- To ensure progressive and full implementation of the Matjhabeng communications policy recommendations, by translating the policy into a workable action plan.
- To enhance and maintain a good image of our municipality.
- To ensure that efficient internal controls are put in place and effectively communicated (ie dress codes, branded uniform, events coordination and management etc)
- To inform the public timely about the Matjhabeng municipal activities and functions.
- To improve the quality of information and its frequency to public, especially regarding current and planned programmes.
- To ensure that councilors and officials skills and techniques are improved for purposes of effective internal and external communications.
- To ensure the establishment of the permanent and ad-hoc communications structures including but not limited to Matjhabeng news editorial team, internal newsletter team, communications forum, media statement and briefing team, inquiry and spokesperson's policy compliance.

## **4. Environmental Analysis.**

Our municipality is a fairly functional municipality, its overall performance is average, and we are fairly consistent in the ability to provide basic services.

While the above is the case, it is imperative to indicate that our municipality continue to experience serious difficulties with regard to its debt collection, this is attributable not purely to our collection methods but mainly to the local economy and in particular to unemployment.

The negative role and reporting by some of our historically white only local newspapers remain not only detrimental to our development, but also to all endeavors of building a united and coherent local community.

Some of our internal environment may in summary include but not limited to low staff morale, inconsistencies and instability of the organizational structure, despondency attributable to budgetary shortcomings due to unresolved cash-flow challenges, lack of performance recognition and/or appraisals etc.

Some of our external challenges may be summed up to include our discredited municipal image, lack of public confidence, negative media reports, service delivery challenges, growing distance between the municipality and the communities, inability to comply with policies and laws, our inability to communicate and enforce our laws etc.

## **5. Institutional Communications Challenges.**

- Public perception.
- Language.
- Literacy.
- Media agenda.
- Disabilities.
- Staff morale.
- Public service delivery expectations.
- Structure of the Communications Unit (Organogram).

## 6. Recommended Strategic Approaches.

- Placing an immediate emphasis on direct community interaction methods including but not limited to MAYCO's community outreach programmes (Imbizo's), multi-media campaigns, distribution of publicity material on open days, road shows etc. The ultimate achievement and benefit will be to improve the two-way communications with our public and eradicating the growing social distance.
- Ensuring coordinated and integrated methods of communication which will include aligning the strategic objectives of the IDP, the day-to-day services provided to the public and future plans into one comprehensive message. This will ensure that everyone in the organization speaks in one voice.
- Building sustainable relations with different media houses both progressive and hostile by setting a pace of what issues should be in the public discourse. This could be achieved by regularly holding media briefings by the Executive Mayor preferably on quarterly basis. This will assist in inculcating a culture of proactive communications, rather than a crisis communication for which the press usually alleges against our municipality.
- We need to ensure we build a strong media monitoring capacity, response and rebutting strategies.
- We need to devise methods on how to increase the public appearance of our leaders, in particular the Executive Mayor and the MAYCO. This effort must be seen as a profiling mechanism for our municipal leadership's commitment to service delivery and not as a popularity exercise that seeks to defend and propagate mediocrity.
- We urgently need a workshop (Done in consultation with Speaker's office) for all communicators, including but not limited to councilors, CDW's and CLO's on our municipal policies, by-laws and relevant legislation. This will capacitate our communicators not only to be reactionary and defensive while lacking substance and correctness of our basic legal and policy foundation, but of being proponents of our institutional policy stance.
- In order to enable our municipal officials who by themselves are the ambassadors of hope, transformation and development to communicate a positive message about

the institution they should as the first line of defense be inducted on the **Batho-Pele** principles and the envisaged **“I LOVE MATJHABENG CAMPAIGN”** .

- The immediate coordination and management of the municipal events, use of single letterheads for the entire institution, development of a consolidated Matjhabeng calendar must be given priority.
- Ensuring the urgent and world-class reconfiguration of our website must receive high preference both as a marketing tool and a legislative requirement.
- We must urgently introduce a quick response mechanism on complaints such as water leakages, sewer spillages leakages and potholes and our mechanism must also encompass feedback to complainants.

**6.1. Strategic Plan for Internal Communications should involve:**

<b>Internal Newsletter</b>	<p>Internal Newsletter transmits messages in a synchronized manner with the use of intranet. This is to ensure that all staff members get relevant and updated messages and information. The monthly distribution of the Internal Newsletter promoting the corporate image, culture and information needs of employees.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Production of an Internal Newsletter. Sourcing of information from various departments, planning ahead to give all contributors sufficient time to prepare newsletter contributions.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>Municipal Officials</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Staff related messages and information</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>Monthly</p>
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	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Excellent information tool for officials</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To feed the staff newsletter with more information.</li> <li>• Determine the information needs of the staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Lack of cooperation from departments within the municipality to provide information regarding their respective activities.</p> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify an official in every department to provide information regarding departmental activities.</li> <li>• Set cut-off dates for such departmental contributions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Intranet</b></p>	<p>The Intranet transmits messages in a synchronized manner for purposes of resourcing internal newsletter and the municipal website. This is to ensure that all staff members receives updated and relevant messages as well as information. Thus the use of intranet promotes the corporate image, culture and information needs of the employees.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Build effective Intranet system.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>Municipal Officials</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Staff related messages and information</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>Daily</p>

	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Excellent information tool for officials</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <p>To feed the Intranet with more information.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Lack of cooperation from departments within the municipality to provide information regarding their respective activities.</p> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify an official in every department to provide information regarding departmental activities.</li> <li>• Set cut-off dates for receipt of information from such departments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Notices printed on payslips</b></p>	<p>Notices are printed on payslips as a form of communicating with the staff, especially regarding confidential information.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Printing of notices on payslips.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>Municipal Officials</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Staff related and confidential messages and information</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>Monthly</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Excellent information tool for officials</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p>

	<p>To communicate more information on the payslips.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Lack of cooperation from HR department to provide information regarding important information.</p> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify an official in every department to provide information regarding departmental activities.</li> <li>• Set cut-off dates for such departmental contributions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Notice Boards</b></p>	<p>Notices on municipal Notice boards are placed to inform the staff regarding staff related information and events.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Placing notices on municipal notice boards.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>Municipal Officials</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Staff related messages and information</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>Weekly or as the needs arises.</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Excellent information tool for officials</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <p>To communicate more information on Notice Boards.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Lack of cooperation from departments within the municipality to provide information regarding their respective activities.</p>

	<p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify an official in every department to provide information regarding departmental activities.</li> <li>• Set cut-off dates for such departmental contributions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication Messages via e-mail</b></p>	<p>Communication messages are sent via e-mails to inform staff regarding staff related information and events.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Sending messages via e-mails.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>Municipal Officials</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Staff related messages and information</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>Daily</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Excellent information tool for officials</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <p>To communicate more information via e-mail.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Lack of cooperation from departments within the municipality to provide information regarding their respective activities.</p> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify an official in every department to provide information regarding departmental activities.</li> <li>• Set cut-off dates for such departmental contributions.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Municipal Communications Forum</b></p>	<p>The Municipal Communication Forum, represented by each directorate within the municipality, meets monthly. This ensures the coordination of communication activities and development of the municipality’s communication capacity. Through this forum all municipal activities are brought under the attention of the Communications Unit.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>The facilitation and coordinating of the Municipal Communications Forum.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>External and Internal Stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Service delivery and administrative messages and information.</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>Monthly</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Excellent information tool to gather information regarding municipal activities and service delivery.</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <p>To meet more regularly.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Lack of cooperation from departments within the municipality and stakeholders.</p> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify an official in every department to provide information regarding departmental activities.</li> <li>• Set cut-off dates for such departmental contributions.</li> </ul>
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## 6.2. Strategic Plan for External Communications should involve:

<b>Municipal Website</b>	<p>The Municipal Website is a tool to keep the public informed of all municipal activities, opportunities, news, notices and legally mandated information. It is a real time communication tool making it possible to communicate information immediately. The website ensures that the local, national and international communities, business and visitors, stakeholders and all other spheres of government are informed on all services provided by the municipality to its clients.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuous monitoring and updating of the information on the website, ensuring all information is current and correct.</li><li>• Publishing direct and indirect forms of communication on the website.</li><li>• Making sure all legislative requirements as stated in the MFMA are met.</li></ul> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>External and Internal stakeholders and clients of the municipality.</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Service delivery and administrative messages and information, external direct communication.</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p>
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	<p>Daily/Immediately.</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent promotion and marketing tool</li> <li>• Cost effective</li> <li>• Massive audience reach including across the globe.</li> </ul> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <p>Make sure information is updated regularly, new information is added regularly, create interactive platform with regular monitoring.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited access: Not all people have regular access to computers or devices with internet access.</li> <li>• Lack of capacity and skills to update the website daily.</li> <li>• Challenges of maintaining the website with updated information.</li> </ul> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase the capacity and skills to update the website daily.</li> <li>• Train all communication staff to assist and monitor website information and communication.</li> <li>• Identify set person in each directorate to regularly feed information for website update.</li> <li>• Create set templates for directorates</li> </ul>
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	<p>to make provision of information easy and uploading it more efficient.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain information from public to ensure website is user friendly for all intended audiences.</li> </ul>
<p><b>External Newsletter</b></p>	<p>The monthly distribution of the External Newsletter ensures that the communities and taxpayers of Matjhabeng Local Municipality are informed regarding service delivery issues within the Municipality. It should be distributed together with the municipal accounts.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Assembling of external newsletter. Providing and promoting news items relevant to taxpayers and community as a whole.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>External and Internal Stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Service delivery and administrative messages and information, external direct communication.</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>Monthly</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Excellent information and educational tool for communities and ratepayers.</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <p>To source relevant contributions every</p>



	<p>month.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of cooperation from departments within the municipality to provide information regarding their respective activities.</li> <li>• Lack of capacity to write pieces that are grammatically correct and neatly edited.</li> </ul> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify an official in every department to provide information regarding departmental activities.</li> <li>• To enhance the capacity of Communications Unit by attracting appropriate skilled staff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>IDP Roadshows and Ward Meetings</b></p>	<p>The IDP Roadshows and Ward Meetings takes place as scheduled throughout all wards of Matjhabeng Local Municipality. This provides an opportunity for the community and the Municipality to directly interact with one another, to discuss challenges and solutions and have an active input in projects and budget appropriation for each financial year.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Proactively and reactively communicate directly to stakeholders in organized meetings where all stakeholders are invited to attend. Meetings are conducted by ways of information sessions followed by questions and answers where the community can raise concerns, provide</p>

	<p>feedback and give input on planned projects. The municipality uses this opportunity to address concerns raised by the public, provide information on plans and council decisions and directly converse with members of the public. Ward committees also allow for elected community representatives to partake in a dialogue between council and the public, facilitating a communication channel and governed by rules and regulations determined by council as well as the Municipal Structures Act.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>Internal and External Stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>As scheduled</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishes face to face, direct communication between the public and the municipality.</li><li>• Allows public to give direct feedback and input into how the budget is spent and the type of projects they have interest in.</li><li>• It is an opportunity for the municipality to communicate directly with the community, giving feedback on concerns raised and informing the public on projects and municipal procedures, raising the level of public participation.</li><li>• Creates a platform for the community to raise matters on</li></ul>
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	<p>concern or community service delivery challenges and successes.</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all stakeholders attend the meetings.</li> <li>• Ensure relevant and easily accessible information is available for the public regarding the various participation processes and how they can make valued contribution.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>The communities often times raise issues that do not fall within the mandate of the Municipality. Meetings are always not attended.</p> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More awareness must be created through advertising using various mediums and flyer drops.</li> <li>• Officials must utilize meetings for advising the public on how to properly liaise with other spheres of government as the need arises.</li> </ul>
<b>Media</b>	<p>Proactively and reactively issuing statements to the media. This is done via Press releases and media responses. Proactive communication refers to planning and issuing statements to the media. Proactive communication focuses on breaking new stories, with a special focus on the success and accomplishment of the Municipality. Proactive communication also refer to breaking challenging issues to the media and</p>

	<p>through accurate and quick response staying in control of the story.</p> <p>Reactive communication refers to responding to enquiries from journalists, providing accurate and relevant information as well as communication action plans for the problem areas.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Proactive Communication: Researching statements, reporting on council matters, drawing a time-table/schedule for the new releases depending on council schedules, budgets and project dates.</p> <p>Reactive Communication: Respond to media enquiries according to SOP for media enquiries.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>External and Internal stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Service delivery and administrative messages and information, external direct communication.</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>Planned schedule, as the need arises, weekly.</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Excellent information tool to promote and inform the local, national and international communities, businesses, visitors to</p>
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	<p>Matjhabeng Local Municipality, stakeholders and all other spheres of government regarding service delivery within the municipality.</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a schedule for pre-planned press releases.</li> <li>• Set research projects for long term plans.</li> <li>• Ensure quicker turn over time for media enquiries.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of capacity to write press releases.</li> <li>• Slow response to requests for information.</li> <li>• Approval time for press releases might be too long, risking the dating of information.</li> </ul> <p>Information is dependent on other departments.</p> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase capacity to write press releases.</li> <li>• To appoint appropriately skilled staff.</li> <li>• Greater cooperation and faster response from all role players in providing relevant and accurate information.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring approvals and sign offs happen more quickly to get information to press timeously.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advertising</b></p>	<p>To buy advertising space in various publications and media mediums in English, Afrikaans, Sesotho, Tswana and Xhosa.</p> <p>To identify and utilize opportunities for free advertising.</p> <p>Advertising must be utilized to inform communities about service delivery and public participation opportunities. It should also be utilized to provide feedback from the municipality to the community.</p> <p>Advertising must adhere to the official language policy of government which mandates the use of all official languages.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Placing advertisements in various publications and media mediums as required by the goals of such advertisements.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>External and Internal Stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Service delivery and administrative messages and information, external direct communication.</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>As the need arises.</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Excellent tool to ensure that community</p>

	<p>members are informed in their mother tongue regarding Municipal service delivery news and invited to public participation events. Various mediums also ensures the broadest distribution of a message.</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To advertise more regularly.</li> <li>• Identify different strategic mediums used for advertising.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Lack of advertising funds and limited mediums used for advertising.</p> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To secure more funding for advertising.</li> <li>• Find more platforms for free advertising.</li> <li>• Find more mediums to use for advertising to maximise the impact thereof.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Branding</b></p>	<p>Ensure all municipal communication mediums, advertising and branding stock have the correct municipal branding, colours, vision and mission statement where applicable.</p> <p>Coordinate the media and communication aspects of all municipal events and make sure the correct, visible branding is used at municipal events.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p>

	<p>Coordinating the communications aspects at all municipal events to ensure the optimal usage of municipal branding, creating a source of pride in the visibility of the municipal brand, vision and mission.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>External and internal stakeholders</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Promotion of the corporate image of the municipality.</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>As the need arises.</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Excellent tool to ensure effective municipal branding.</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <p>To purchase more branding material.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Lack of funds.</p> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <p>To secure more funding for branding.</p>
<p><b>Radio</b></p>	<p>To use community and national radio stations to communicate and promote the image, vision and mission of the municipality. To utilize the main communicators of the municipality to promote the municipality by ways of free airtime or paid airtime.</p>



	<p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>To source free radio airtime and ensure optimum use thereof. To coordinate paid airtime and ensure participants are properly prepared.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>Internal and external Stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Service delivery and administrative messages and information, external direct communication.</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>Scheduled time-slots and as the opportunity arises.</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Excellent tool to engage live with the community.</p> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase the number of slots.</li> <li>• Scripted programmes to maximise the quality of information presented.</li> <li>• Pre-recorded programmes to make sure material for broadcasting is readily available.</li> <li>• Invite radio media to municipal events to gain free access to radio.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p>
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	<p>The closure of the local radio station ( The Rock), and lack of funding.</p> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To secure more funding for the radio slots.</li> <li>• To increase more radio slots in different time-frames.</li> <li>• Support all public initiatives for the formation of a new local radio station.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Media</b></p>	<p>Communicate directly with community and other stakeholders. Provide information and communication in real time.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Compose, post and tweet messages on social media pages. Relay messages received to appropriate officers.</p> <p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>External and Internal Stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased direct, real time communication with community and stakeholders.</li> <li>• Provide platform for interactive communication with strict controls.</li> <li>• It is Free.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all of the target audience has</li> </ul>

	<p>access to social media device.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs to be monitored throughout the day.</li> <li>• Most effective if provided with steady streams of information daily.</li> </ul> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify a dedicated person in media office to load and monitor information.</li> <li>• Source information from all departments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mobile Communication</b></p>	<p>The creation and implementation of an application or app for the use on mobile communication devices such as tablets and phones. This will serve to facilitate a more interactive communication with all stakeholders of the municipality.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Research and implement the use of an interactive application for communication with stakeholders. The application will serve as real time communication tool, making it possible to communicate information immediately. The application ensures that the local, national and international communities, business, visitors, stakeholders and all other spheres of government are informed on all services provided by the municipality to their clients. It will also enable communication with the municipality by means of linking it to Customer Care system to deal with issues raised as directed by the customer care SOP.</p>

	<p><b>Targeted Audience</b></p> <p>All stakeholders in the municipality.</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Once implemented, it will enable real time communication for the municipality as well as stakeholders.</li><li>• It is also the most accessible form of direct access to municipal information because it works on mobile devices.</li><li>• It will enable the municipality to offer a wide variety of services via a mobile internet connection.</li></ul> <p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that the application is continuously updated with relevant information.</li><li>• Determine clear parameters of what services and functions the app must be able to perform.</li></ul> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To use the app successfully, all mobile device users must have continuous access to the internet.</li><li>• Once the app is launched, not all stakeholders might be aware of it or load it onto their mobile devices.</li><li>• The range of service provided on the app is insufficient.</li></ul>
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	<p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing must be done to ensure as many stakeholders as possible download and utilize the application.</li> <li>• A possible survey should be done to gather information on what services the public would like an app to include.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Customer Care Section</b></p>	<p>The Customer Care section communicates and relays communication to relevant sections from the public to the relevant internal departments to be resolved as stipulated by its SOP. The section also relays relevant communicators where applicable.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>To communicate, assist and provide information to stakeholders who contact the municipality via emails, telephone, website or mobile application which links to the customer care service.</p> <p><b>Type of Messages</b></p> <p>Any message or communication regarding assistance or service delivery.</p> <p><b>Time Frames</b></p> <p>Daily and as required.</p> <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Provide direct line of communication to the municipality for external stakeholders. Provides quick response time for dealing with queries.</p>

	<p><b>How to build on strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure proper capacity available to deal with incoming communication.</li><li>• Ensure high level of service and professionalism of employees while dealing with customers.</li><li>• Ensure SOP's are implemented where necessary in dealing with complaints and providing feedback to customers.</li></ul> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of capacity.</li><li>• Might not meet all the needs of customers.</li><li>• Service levels not satisfactory for customers.</li><li>• Feedback from unit insufficient.</li></ul> <p><b>How to improve on weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct customer satisfaction survey to measure level of services.</li><li>• Ensure SOP's are in place where necessary.</li><li>• Staff training on how to conduct a professional service which adheres to Batho Pele Principles.</li></ul>
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## **7. Messengers, Audience and Channels.**

**(A)** The importance of the contents of the message to the target audience does not only depend on the nature and substance of the message but also to the credibility of the person who is delivering such a message.

Our organization is made-up of both the political authority and pure public administration authority structures, and depending on the nature of the message a clear distinction should then be made between those messages that may be communicated from political office and those communicated from administrative office.

As set out in our communications policy, the following offices are regarded as key messengers:

1. The office of Executive Mayor.
2. The office of the Speaker.
3. The office of the MM.
4. The head of communications.
5. The municipal spokesperson.

It is important to bear in mind that the use of some public figures or celebrities may be important for communicating certain messages, of course depending on the nature of the project.

**(B)** Our target audience can be categorized as follows:

1. The community.
2. The ratepayers.
3. The media.
4. The business community, investors and tourists.
5. Municipal employees.

**(C)** (i) Internal communications channels:

1. Staff meetings.
2. Intranet.
3. Workshops.
4. E-mail.

5. Notice board.
6. Matjhabeng communicators forum which must be established as a matter of urgency.

(ii) External communications channels:

1. Matjhabeng news.
2. Local newspapers.
3. Local radio station.
4. Inter- governmental platforms and national broadcasting.
5. Ward meetings, budget and IDP process meetings.
6. Marketing and promotional events, brochures, posters, banners and pamphlets.
7. National and international days.
8. Billboards.

## **9. Corporate Identity.**

The identity of our municipality remains generally outstanding, and the most important milestone was our inaugural Coat of Arms, logo and theme” ***Mmoho Together Sisonke Tesame***”.

We therefore cannot simply compromise our indispensable identity by ignoring our communications tools and materials(such as our letterheads, nametags, business cards etc).

Thus, the head of communications must whilst maintaining our institutional identity ensure the following:

- i. That there is a proper and professional look of the municipal buildings.
- ii. That there is a correct use of the municipal logo, letterheads, nametags, photography.
- iii. That the use of the coat of arms is procedural and according to protocols.
- iv. That the production and/or procurement of communications material such as memos, notices, folders, official diary/ calendar etc are centralized to the communications unit in order to bear uniformity.



- v. Arranging press, radio and television interviews for the spokesperson, politicians and the management.
- vi. Coordinate and handle PR related sponsorships.
- vii. Maintain, control and edit media information services.
- viii. Advise the municipality on the type of decorations, house styling and using of colors in a way consistent with our identity.

## **10. Branding.**

The adoption and launching of our corporate identity automatically invoked challenges of building our brand, promoting our brand and succeeding in our brand management.

It is imperative that specific activities are rolled out to develop our brand and this activities which must be driven by the head communications would be enunciated in detail in our action plan.

## **11. Events Management.**

The communications unit must be involved together with relevant department from the advanced stages of the planning and implementation of major events, in order to ensure that all events comply not only with the corporate identity and branding but also with protocols as well.

The communications unit shall provide direct implementation, advice and guidance in planning events, such as:

1. Advertising.
2. Press statements.
3. Media briefing.
4. Invitations.
5. Speeches.
6. Promotions.
7. Special national and international days.
8. Public announcements.
9. Loud hailing.

## **12. Publications.**

The Matjhabeng news should be published monthly and must be positioned not to convey reactionary propaganda but be poised to attract developmental ideas from our clients and enhance its envisaged status of being a reliable and consistent source of our municipal information.

We must urgently implement our envisaged internal newsletter which should serve as a morale booster, performance improver and information sharing tool within the institution, which will assist in promoting dialogue amongst the staff, councilors and other spheres of government.

## **13. Structures and Process.**

- Matjhabeng Communications Unit (*per organizational structure*).
- Matjhabeng Council, Council Committees, Media Relations, Inquiries and Monitoring Team (*to be established*).
- Advertisements and Public Announcements Team (*to be established*).
- Matjhabeng production and publications team (to be established)
- Matjhabeng communications forum (*per policy*).
- Provincial communicators forum (*inter-governmental relations*).
- GCIS (*inter-governmental relations*).

## **14. Important Community-Based Events.**

There are various events which are important in enhancing our relations with specific community stakeholders and the general community.

These events may be divided into different categories depending on the nature of the event, these may include:

### **14.1. National Events.**

- Human Rights Day.

- Freedom Day.
- Workers Day.
- Africa Day
- Youth Day.
- Women's Day
- Heritage Day.
- World AIDS Day.

#### 14.2. Legislative Events Such as:

- IDP consultative meetings
- Budget consultative meetings.
- Ward meetings.

#### 14.3. Marketing and Tourism Events.

#### 14.4. Local Events Such as:

- Candle-Light.
- Matjhabeng Cultural, Arts, Tourism and Recreation Festival (Signature event) etc