



UTHUKELA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY- UMKHANDLU WESIFUNDA

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY 2016-2021

UThukela District Municipality
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1. INTRODUCTION

Local government is the sphere of government closest to communities. This places a particular onus on municipalities in fulfilling a wide range of communication functions across the spectrum of communication, media liaison, marketing, advertising and branding, direct and intensive unmediated communication, to name but a few.

Municipalities as government, they have an obligation to provide the public with open access to information about policies, programmes, services and initiatives. Information for public use must be disseminated by and readily available in municipalities at all times.

For the municipality to meet the information needs of all citizens, it must consider the following:

- The constitutional right of the people to have access to information
- To have trained and knowledgeable staff for providing information to the people
- To ensure service is timely, courteous, fair, efficient, and offered with all due regard for the privacy, safety, convenience, comfort and needs of the public
- To ensure that published information is available on request in multiple formats to also accommodate special groups.

1.1 Local Government Communication in context

In South Africa, local government operates as an autonomous sphere of government and within a highly defined and indeed complex legal environment. As such, communication services at municipalities need to operate within a policy framework which is developed in accordance with prevailing local government legislation, but considering precedents set by prevailing norms and standards guiding the system of government communication generally.

Political leadership and oversight of the communication function locally is a critical success factor in ensuring healthy communication with communities. It is only when communication functions are properly reported on and accounted for, monitored and evaluated, that municipal communicators are able to effectively support the implementation of a municipality's programme of action as contained in the legislative framework and the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). As such, a municipality must have a dedicated communication capacity which puts in place in intentional and planned communication programme.

Institutional arrangements and intergovernmental systems also need to be in place to ensure co-ordination of an integrated and coherent system of government communication from the national to the provincial sphere, to ensure that communication messages and information reach all government spheres as well as effective interface of communicators from all spheres. Therefore, the municipal communication programme needs to be adequately co-ordinated and synergized with the provincial and national programmes.

1.2 Legislative framework

The constitution contains a number of sections which set the tone for local government communication. In the chapter on local government these include: Section 152(1) (e): In setting out the objects of local government, it states that municipalities must, "encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in matters of local government".

Section 160(7): "A municipal council must conduct its business in an open manner, and may close its sittings, or those of committees, only when it is reasonable to do so".

Section 162(3): "Municipal by-laws must be accessible to the public".

Other important sections of the Constitution include the founding provisions which make reference to the official languages. The Constitution stipulates, in Section 6(3) (b) that municipalities must take into account the languages usage and preferences of their residents when communicating with them.

Relevant sections of the Bill of Rights include the right of freedom of expression, which include the right to receive information and the right of access to information, which entitle citizens to access any information held by the State. There are many other local

government legislations guiding the sphere of local government, responsible for creating an enabling environment for a comprehensive communication environment i.e. The White Paper on Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000),etc.

Promotion of Access to information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000) – This Act operationalizes sections 8 and 32 of the Constitution. The Act aims to foster culture of transparency and accountability and promotes effective access to information to protect an individual's rights. The toolkit outlines the bare essentials of the Act. The Act applies to a record of a public body and private body, regardless of when the record came into existence.

2. STRATEGISING FOR COMMUNICATION

A thousand voices speaking without a common message and single purpose will in the end just make an indistinct noise that few will hear.

We communicate in a noisy world competing for attention with voices that have objectives that are different and often opposing. And we do so in a world made up of a vast array of interests and concerns, and a world in which everyday concerns weigh heavily on most people.

We must therefore speak with shared purpose and clarity of message. Our actions must be informed by an understanding of the environment we are working in, of who we are trying to reach, what they are thinking, how they are best reached.

In other words we must strategise for communication, translating our ideas into a concrete programme of action that promotes our objectives.

3. THE STRATEGISING PROCESS

There are many ways of approaching this challenge – what follows is a process that has emerged out of GCIS own experience in strategising for communication and serves us well. It is formulated in nine steps. But this is not a mechanical process that yields automatic results – it needs hard work and lots of thought.

These steps are the elements of developing strategy for communication and implementing it. Each step is of critical importance, and interlinked. But there is a logical order and we need early on to give critical attention to two things or our work will be undermined. Those two things are objective and message.

All strategising is about how to achieve objectives. Individuals and organisations are all able to strategise. But if we are unclear about our objective or get it wrong then all the rest will be of little or no value. And the same goes if we have not correctly defined what we want to say.

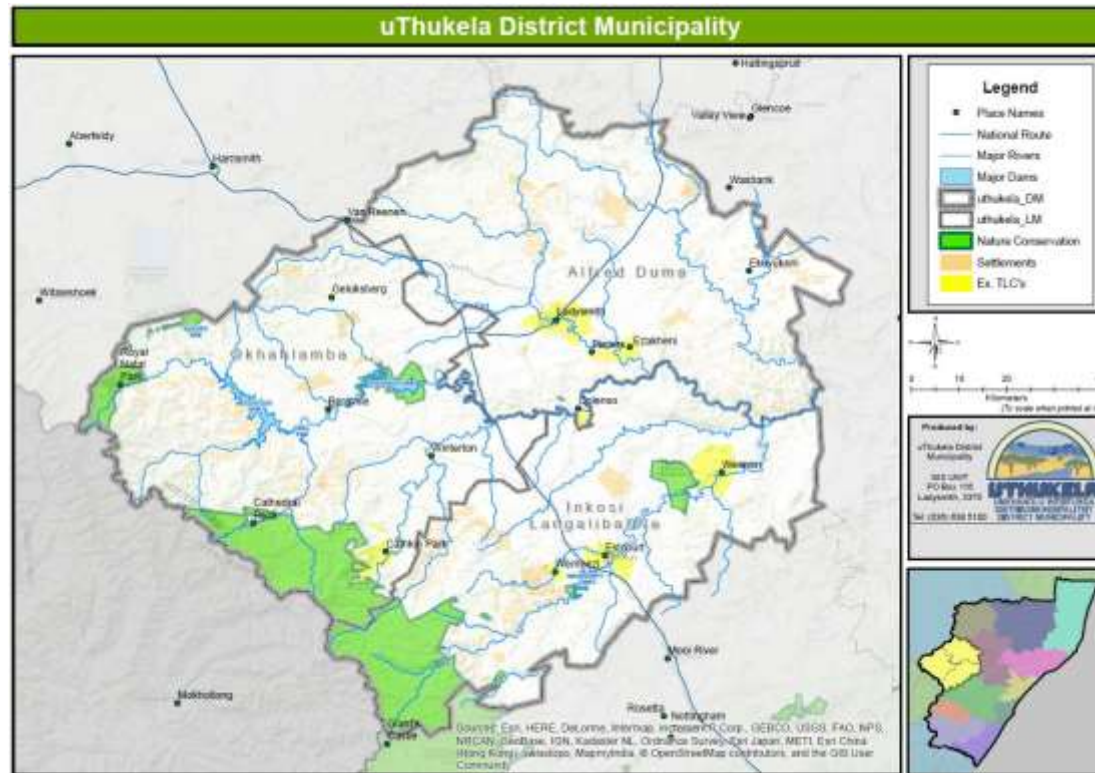
As we translate our broad objectives into achievable goals; as we interrogate our environment and sharpen our understanding of how different sectors of society relate to our objective and as we formulate our message, it is critical that we have at hand some form of research results about the issue. Research must inform communication strategy because it gives insight to the dynamism of the environment and the challenges it brings.

4. THEME: TOGETHER WE MOVE SOUTH AFRICA FORWARD

5. BACKGROUND

UThukela District Municipality (DC23) is one of ten district municipalities in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal. uThukela District Municipality derives its name from one of the major rivers in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, the uThukela River that rises from the Drakensberg Mountains and supplies water to a large portion of KZN and Gauteng as well. The district municipality has three district municipalities bordering onto it within the Province, namely; Amajuba, Umzinyathi and UMgungundlovu. The district consists of three local municipalities namely;

1. Alfred Duma (KZN 238)
2. Okhahlamba (KZN 235)
3. Inkosi Langalibalele (KZN 237)



The size of the district is approximately 11 326 km² and is located in the western boundary of Kwazulu-Natal. Alfred Duma is occupying 3 764km², Inkosi Langalibalele is on 3 399km², and Okhahlamba which is the largest occupies 3 971km². UThukela District Municipality is 75 % rural and mainly comprises of traditional areas. The main tourism hub is the Cathkin Park, which falls

within the Cathkin Park node, and another node located near the Royal Natal National Park, called Babangibone Development Node. The Ladysmith town is a significant historical tourism destination and offers a number of museums and historical sites while Bergville and Winterton towns are located within the vicinity of the Drakensberg and derive some benefits from the tourism industry. The district has a good climate and abundance of natural resources like water. The intrinsic beauty of the area enhances the tourism opportunities in the district.

Economic development is uneven across the district, with large disparities across local municipalities. Alfred Duma local municipality dominates, with smaller towns like Colenso and Van Reenen being underdeveloped. Outside the urban areas, are areas of rural poverty and some wealthier commercial farming areas especially in Okhahlamba. In terms of employment and Gross Value Added, Okhahlamba is predominantly agricultural. Bergville is a small town and is known as the gateway to the Northern Drakensberg. Community services consistently dominate in terms of employment in all local municipalities besides Alfred Duma where manufacturing is neck to neck with community services. Inkosi Langalibalele boasts well-established industrial, commercial and residential areas, as well as rich agricultural farmlands. Estcourt is the largest commercial centre in the Midlands region. Weenen is a small agricultural town that is starting to emerge as a tourist destination. The N3 National Road traverses the municipality.

6. DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

- Communication Strategy is reviewed and will come into effect once adopted by Council and be effective for a 5 year term of office ending in 2021.
- Nevertheless, Communication Plan contained in the Strategy is reviewed annually to be in line with current issues.
- We are now at the fourth phase of Local Government since its inception in 2000 and at the beginning of our first year of democratically elected bodies following the Local Government Elections held in August 2016.
- Printing of flyers and posters on an ad hoc basis based on the event.

7. CONTEXT

The communication strategy reviewal is within the Local Government electoral cycle of five (5) years ending in 2021. However, this communication strategy is reviewed annually in order for it to be relevant in dealing with the ever changing environment.

The communication strategy will be informed by SONA, SOPA, SODA, IDP, NDP and NCS for alignment purposes. The strategy embraces the overall approach of government's mandate which is the Nine Point Plan.

8. ENVIRONMENT

The Census 2011 population estimate for the uThukela is 706 588 people living in 139 639 households. It is noticeable that the population of uThukela has increased from 668 072 to 706 588 between 2011 and 2016. This can be attributed to many contributing factors like the influx of people from other places. The population of uThukela District Municipality is unevenly distributed. The largest population is in Alfred Duma local municipality and the least population is in Okhahlamba local municipality. The table below shows the number of wards in uThukela and how the population is distributed. It should, however, be noted that some of the former municipalities have merged to form one municipality, i.e Emnambithi/Ladysmith and Indaka Municipalities have become known as Alfred Duma Municipality and Umtshezi and Imbabazane Local Municipalities are now known as Inkosi Langalibalele Municipality following the merger post August 2016 Local Government Elections.

Municipality	Wards	Population	Households	Percentage of the district
Alfred Duma	35	356 274	85 326	50.4
Inkosi Langalibalele	23	215 182	46 953	30.5
Okhahlamba	15	135 132	29 510	19.1
Total population of uThukela	73	706 588	161 789	100

(StatsSA)

The majority of the people that lives in uThukela District Municipality are Africans and Coloureds are minority. The following table shows the population breakdown of the uThukela District Municipality. This breakdown is showing the Africans, Coloureds, Indians and Whites.

Group	2001 census	%	2007 survey	%	2011 census	%
African	620 733	94.48	681998	95.4	636 394	95.15
Coloured	4 055	0,62	2231	0.3	3 923	0.59
Indian	17 156	2.61	23200	3,2	16 023	2.40
White	15 042	2,29	7482	1,0	11,437	1.71
Total	656 986	100.00	714,909	100.00	668 848	100.00

uThukela District Municipality is 75 % rural and the local municipalities mainly comprise of traditional areas. Large number of settlement is dispersed. Some communities are located in remote areas which are inaccessible. In most areas Amakhosi and Izinduna still play a significant role. The district has a highest number of HIV infected people in the Province.

The district has a democratically elected leadership. In recent past there has been a spate of taxi related violence or killings. There are also concerns from the community on the backlog of service delivery, i.e. water and sanitation which is the core function of the district. The recent drought situation has made matters worse in terms of water provision. The communities are receptive as they participate in Public Participation Programmes of the district. The community is concerned about high levels of unemployment, inequality and poverty.

We have got community newspapers under the Caxton Group which are highly critical of government. The newly established community radio station and community newspaper are playing an important role in terms of disseminating information to the public at large.

9. STRATEGIC EMPHASES

OUR VISION

A stable, sustainable and prosperous District, with caring leaders who serve with excellence in governance, service delivery and economic development.

OUR MISSION

We promote a people – centred environment with emphasis on communication, integrity, economy, effectiveness and efficiency

- Water and sanitation remain the core functions of the district.
- Disaster Management
- Local Economic Development
- Tourism
- uThukela District Municipality is actively involved in Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS)
- We are guided by Batho Pele principles on services provision

10. COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

- To improve the image of uThukela DM both internally and externally
- To communicate progress and share insights into the impact of these programmes/ services on the lives of the communities
- Operation Clean Audit, Good Governance and responsive local government
- Create a platform for growth, empowerment and skills development

- Reaffirm those communities with backlogs that development is underway
- Encourage public participation and community ownership of programmes run by the municipality
- Alignment of the municipality programmes with other Departments and municipalities, including Sukuma Sakhe to eradicate poverty, inequality and underdevelopment
- To have a vibrant and active communications forum
- To have proper corporate identity that will include signage for the Municipality and staff name tags
- Formulation of communication policy

11.COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

- Financial constraints within the municipality, mainly due to persistent drought
- Lack of synergy within the family of local municipalities
- Insufficient tools of trade or resources
- Majority of municipal communication documents are in English
- Insufficient communication platforms for maximum reach
- Lack of Rapid Response System
- Silo mentality within the district
- Inability to access remote areas by motor vehicles
- Negative media publicity from the media tarnish the image of the municipality
- Lack of access to farm workers residing in farms

12.MESSAGE AND THEMES

- National government message “Together we move South Africa forward”
- Service delivery at its best
- Working together to bring back people’s dignity through proper sanitation
- Together eradicating infrastructure vandalism
- Working together to decrease the numbers of new HIV infection

13.MESSENGERS

Primary messengers

- Mayor
- Deputy Mayor
- Speaker
- Councillors
- Municipal Manager
- HOC

Secondary messengers

- HODs
- Municipal officials
- DCF

Third party endorsers

- Business people
- Intellectuals
- Traditional leaders
- Religious leaders

14.COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS

INTERNAL

- Notice Boards
- Internet
- Internal newsletters
- Meetings
- Briefings
- Intranet
- Plasma Screens
- CD roms and other promotional materials
- E-mails
- Social media
- Bulk SMS

EXTERNAL:

- Web-page on www.uthukela.gov.za
- Media: electronic and print
- Pamphlets
- Cadres
- Billboards
- Loud hailers
- Social media
- Bulk SMS
- Izimbizo

15. STAKEHOLDER SEGMENTATION

Internal:

- Public servants
- National departments
- Parastatals
- Municipalities
- Province

External:

- Private sector
- Civil society
- Organised labour
- Sectoral groups
- Faith-based organizations
- The media
- Farmers
- Consumers
- Academics
- Traditional leaders
- International audiences

16. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Purpose: To inform stakeholders/partners

Priority issue	Desired outcome	Target audience of communications strategy	Key message to be communicated	Tools
Water	Community to be informed about the progress and plans of water provision	Communities in rural areas with no running water	Government is committed on providing clean running water for all	Izimbizo, electronic media
	For communities to be informed that they now have to pay for the provision of services	Communities in urban areas	Changing the culture of non-payment of services for better service delivery	Consultation meetings, electronic media, billboards, pamphlets
	Create awareness if there is planned water shortages	Water consumers	Planned water cuts for maintenance purposes	Bulk SMS System, loudhailing, posters, flyers
Sanitation	Create awareness that eventually every household will have proper sanitation	Rural communities	Bringing back people's dignity through sanitation	Izimbizo, pamphlets, radios, flyers
An improved relationship with business people within the Municipality	Getting a buy on business people in support of the Municipality's initiatives	Business sector	Working together in changing the lives of our communities	Meetings, briefings
Increasing sustainability of agricultural practices by increasing crop diversity and moving away from intensive practices	Raised awareness about the importance of agricultural biodiversity on environmental and human health, leading to	Farming community	The value of changed cultivation practices for increased long term crop yields and thus increased outcome	Meetings

	changed behavior patterns			
	The district being flagged as one of the huge tourism harbor	Tourism sector	Proud home of the Ladysmith Black Mambazo, World Heritage Site	Meetings
Sustaining relationship with traditional leaders	Traditional leaders to be fully conscious of programs within the district	Traditional leadership	Traditional leaders taking responsibility in issues concerning their people	
Vibrant war rooms within the District	Improved pace of profiling the communities	OSS	Fighting poverty through government structures	Meetings, izimbizo
Changing the mood of rate payers	To change rate payers perception of the Government that don't respond to their needs	Rate Payers Association	Keeping you informed of our operations	SMS's, meetings
Create/increase awareness of disasters	Get our communities educated of the preventative measures of disasters	Both rural and urban communities	Umlilo ungawuvimba (<i>Fire can be prevented</i>) and other relevant messages	Bill boards, on statements of account,

17. COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

The Mayor is the Council Chief Communicator

- The Speaker reserves the delegated responsibility to pronounce Council resolutions
- The Municipal Chief Whip reserves the delegated responsibility to pronounce intervention strategies and tactics to advance the service delivery development agenda on any respective municipal ward
- EXCO members are faces of municipal departments and pronounce policy direction of their respective portfolio committees.

- The MPAC Chairperson reserves the delegated responsibility to pronounce intervention strategies to combat Fraud and Corruption
- Councillors have delegated responsibility to pronounce service delivery programmes/projects within their wards.
- The Municipal Manager reserves the responsibility to communicate both policy and administrative decisions on behalf of Council/Municipal Management
- The Communications Manager in liaison with Departmental Executive Managers coordinates and pronounces/publishes media responses and articles
- All other municipal officials must direct all media enquiries to the Municipal Communications Section and cannot pronounce on behalf of the municipality.

18.DISPLAY OF OFFICIAL PROTOCOL PHOTOGRAPHS

A. OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

- Official photographs are photographs of serving members of the executive i.e. President, Deputy President, Ministers, Deputy Ministers (where applicable) Premier, Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Speaker.
- GCIS is the custodian of official photographs. State Protocol is responsible for ensuring the correct hanging and Protocol order of official photographs.

B. GENERAL REMARKS

- Official photographs should be displayed in the Municipal offices of Managers and upwards as well as at the entrances/reception areas and public areas such as conference rooms and libraries.
- It is obligatory to display the photo of the Deputy President.
- Only the latest official photographs from the GCIS may be used.
- It is not obligatory to display photographs of deputy ministers.
- Photographs of Managers should not be displayed (they are administrative heads of departments and not part of the Executive).
- On a provincial level replace the Minister with the Premier and on local level replace the Minister with the Mayor.

- The above rules apply to the hanging of official photographs on walls and not to publications, websites, etc. In other words this is a ceremonial display of photos.
- The order of displaying official photos on websites, for e.g. would be to show the Mayor at the top, then the Deputy Mayor, then the Speaker.

C. DISPLAY OF OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

- Only photographs as approved by the GCIS may be used.
- Official photographs that are displayed together must be the same size.
- The framing and matting of the photographs should be identical.
- Photographs should be evenly spaced.
- Photographs should be arranged in order of precedence.
- The person with the highest order of precedence occupies the centre position (when there are an uneven number of photographs).
- When two photographs are displayed the person with the highest order of precedence should be on the viewer's left.
- Photographs should be displayed at the point of greatest visibility i.e. opposite the door through which a room is entered.
- Photographs should be displayed at eye level.
- The official photographs is an indicator of the level of government the specific office is reporting to.
- If space does not allow all photographs to be displayed on the same wall then the photograph of the President and Deputy President may be displayed on one wall – the most prominent wall - and those of the Minister and Deputy Minister on a separate wall.
- Do not place a plaque on the photo frame indicating the principal's name as this should be a known fact.

(i) PRESIDENT AND DEPUTY PRESIDENT

Option 1: Two photos: the most senior to the left of the viewer and the next senior to the right.



PRESIDENT



DEPUTY PRESIDENT

Two Principals

(ii) NATIONAL GOVERNMENT: PRESIDENT, DEPUTY PRESIDENT AND MINISTER

Option 2: Three photos: the most senior in middle; the second to the left of the viewer; the third to the right of the viewer.



DEPUTY PRESIDENT



PRESIDENT



MINISTER

Three Principals

(iii) NATIONAL GOVERNMENT: PRESIDENT, DEPUTY PRESIDENT, MINISTER AND DEPUTY MINISTER

Option 3: Four photos: the most senior in middle; the second to the left of the viewer; third to the right of the viewer and fourth to the far left of the viewer.



DEPUTY MINISTER



DEPUTY PRESIDENT



PRESIDENT



MINISTER

Four Principals

(iv) NATIONAL GOVERNMENT: PRESIDENT, DEPUTY PRESIDENT, MINISTER AND TWO DEPUTY MINISTERS

Option 4: Five principals, when all the deputy ministers are also included: the most senior in middle; the second to the left of the viewer; the third to the right of the viewer; the fourth to the left of the viewer and the fifth to the right of the viewer.



DEPUTY MINISTER



DEPUTY PRESIDENT



PRESIDENT



MINISTER



DEPUTY MINISTER

Five Principals

(v) PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT: PRESIDENT, DEPUTY PRESIDENT AND PREMIER

Option 5: Three photos: the most senior in middle; the second to the left of the viewer; the third to the right of the viewer.



DEPUTY PRESIDENT



PRESIDENT



PREMIER

Three Principals

(vi) LOCAL GOVERNMENT: MAYOR, DEPUTY MAYOR AND SPEAKER

Option 6: Three photos: the most senior in middle; the second to the left of the viewer; the third to the right of the viewer.



DEPUTY MAYOR



MAYOR



SPEAKER

Three Principals

19.COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME AND MILESTONES

Strengthening the capacity of government to influence the public agenda:

- Having a fully-fledged Communications Unit
- Having an effective bulk SMS system
- Ensure our effectiveness to deliver messages
- Strengthening good working relationships with the media
- Having a functional and effective communication forum
- Having Plasma Screens in all the entry points of the municipal offices
- Having proper signage in the municipal buildings
- Having communications policy

PROGRAMME

The communications programme will be the guide for all future action, the standard against which the success or failure of communication is measured, the most critical means for keeping the campaign on track.

There are two parts here – communicators can decide to do a programme in phases or just broad and general without phases – this will depend on the type of activity or why the strategy is being put together.

EXAMPLE:

PROGRAMME	TARGETED MILESTONE	COMMUNICATIONS APPROACH	BUDGET	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
Progress made in positioning uThukela as tourism harbour	Creating a sustainable slogan for tourism attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using tourism Department• Media briefings	R200 000	HoC	

20. ACTION PLAN

This serve as an instrument of strategic management and co-ordination to make sure the OBJECTIVES are met

To put into practice the ideas resulting from strategising requires an ACTION PLAN that spells out in detail what is to be done for each event in the programme; who is to do it? What its specific targets and objectives are? How much is the Budget?

EVENT/OPPORTUNITY	ACTIVITY	ACTION	CHANNELS	BUDGET	TIME FRAMES
To improve the image of uThukela both internal and external	Handing over of projects	Convey messages that will highlight successes of the municipality	Radio, pamphlets, Izimbizo	R300 000	On-going
To communicate municipal progress on the programmes	Radio slots	Live broadcast interviews	UKhozi FM,	R600 000	Every third Thursday of the month
			Nqubeko Community Radio	R80 000	Every second and fourth Thursday of the month
IDP Budget Roadshows	Consultation and feedback sessions	Reaffirm and reassure the public of the municipal programmes	Izimbizo	R200 000	Annually
Skills development and training	Stakeholder engagement	Partner with relevant stakeholders in empowering target audience	Workshops	R200 000	On-going
Alignment of municipal programmes with other stakeholders	Stakeholder engagement	Holistic programme of action through OSS and DCF structures	DCF, OSS	R50 000	On-going

To improve the corporate identity of the municipality	Installation of signage and name tags. Procurement of banners, promos , adverts	Hiring service provider for signage	Procurement process	R400 000	On-going
To promote tourism within the District	Tourism Department engagement	Convey messages that will promote World Heritage Sites etc.	Meetings, Radio, pamphlets etc.	R200 000	On-going

21. MEDIA ENGAGEMENT PLAN

ACTIVITY	MEDIA	TIMEFRAMES	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS/REMARKS
Media liaison and engagement	All media	On-going	HOC	
Media briefings by the Executive	All media	Quarterly	HOC	
Feature articles, media statements, guest editorials and opinion pieces	Print media	On-going	HOC	

22. STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

- Recommendation by HOD
- Recommendation by MANCO
- Recommendation by the Portfolio Committee
- Recommendation by EXCO
- Approval by the full council

23. M&E PROCESS

How will you know if you have succeeded? When thinking about initial objectives and activities, it is worth building in some simple performance indicators and evaluation measures at the start.

These could include:

- Evaluation of participation in and feedback from events and other activities of government (Izimbizo, etc)
- Tracking media coverage including volume and nature of coverage
- Tracking expenditure and also assist in sharing costs where the need arises with other departments.
- Help to deal with all unforeseen issues
- Monitoring website usage

Building the discipline of evaluation into your strategy from the start allows you to use the information to review and refine your strategy and keep it as a living, flexible document that supports the implementation of the programme of action.

24. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Based on the lessons learnt - it is important to note that developing a communication strategy does not, on its own, lead to more effective and integrated communication. What is more critical is the capacity to ensure concrete implementation. Failure to implement the strategy is equal to mismanagement of resources.