

4.5.2 All external correspondence of the Municipality must be translated into the official language in which the original communication was received, provided that an English translation of the document is archived for municipal record purposes and possible legal proceedings. The Municipality must inform the client that the English text will be used in the legal proceedings.

4.5.3 All municipal documents that need to be archived must, for practical administrative reasons, be available in English as the language of record.

4.5.4 English must be used by the Municipality for international communication, but the Municipality must make translation services available for ad hoc communication in the preferred language of the country concerned.

#### 4.6 People with language disabilities

The Municipality must, on request and where practicable, provide for the needs of people with language disabilities.

### 5. POLICY REVIEW

5.1 The Municipality will conduct regular internal and external language preference and proficiency audits to determine the linguistic needs and linguistic capabilities of municipal officials and of Tshwane residents.

5.2 The Language Services Unit will use the results of these audits to revise and update the policy.

5.3 The Language Services Unit must regularly assess the implementation of the policy and effect the required changes.

**For more information on the Language policy, please contact:**

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## LANGUAGE POLICY OF THE CITY OF TSHWANE

*This book has been translated into practically all the languages of the world. I can go to any place on earth and my story can be found in that language. Here I exist only in English. I want to be part of all the languages of my country. One's language should never be a dead end. That is why I believe in translation; for us to be able to live together.*

Former President Nelson Mandela, when asked why he wanted *The Long Walk to Freedom* translated into all eleven official languages of South Africa, as quoted in Antjie Krog's *A change of tongue*.

*A multilingual policy is an integral part of the transformation of South Africa to full participatory democracy. People cannot be expected to comply with laws if they cannot understand them.*

Kristina Cunningham

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Tshwane adopted its Language Policy on 2 August 2007. The Policy is aimed at assisting the City to achieve optimal community participation by enabling the residents to communicate and access municipal services in the language that they understand best. It also provides guidelines on how the Municipality should implement multilingualism in its communication processes to ensure that all residents have access to information and municipal services.

## 2. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy is applicable to employees of the Municipality, residents of Tshwane, service providers and to any request to the Municipality about language use and language practices.

## 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY

The objectives of the Language Policy are to-

- ensure the promotion of the equitable use of the official languages of the Municipality;
- facilitate access to municipal services and information;
- protect of language diversity and the promotion of respect for multilingualism to and unity in diversity; and
- ensure the use of multilingualism for effective administrative and communication processes within the Municipality.

## 4. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made with regard to language usage in the Municipality:

### 4.1 Official languages of Tshwane

The City of Tshwane has adopted **six languages** as official, namely:

- Afrikaans
- English
- Sepedi
- Xitsonga;
- Setswana; and
- isiZulu

The Municipality also makes effort to use the other official languages of the Republic of South Africa, including South African Sign Language and Braille where practicable, on request.

### 4.2 Internal spoken communication

- 4.2.1 Any of the official languages of the Municipality may be used in spoken intradepartmental and interdepartmental communication, provided that all involved in the communication event understand the language(s) being spoken.

- 4.2.2 English is recommended as the working language in spoken intradepartmental and interdepartmental communication. Another official language of the Municipality may be used, provided it is understood by all parties involved in the communication event.

- 4.2.3 Interpreting services will be offered to facilitate communication at Council, City Planning meetings and disciplinary hearings, and any other meetings/workshops/conferences on request.

### 4.3 External spoken communication

The Municipality in its spoken communication should strive to serve all its clients in the language of their choice, where practicable.

### 4.4 Internal written communication

- 4.4.1 To promote operational efficiency, English is the working language of the Municipality, and translations in the other official languages of the Municipality may be made available on request.

- 4.4.2 Although no employee of the Municipality may be prevented from using an official language of his or her choice at any given time, all municipal documents that need to be archived must, for practical administrative reasons, be available in the original language and English as the language of record.

- 4.4.3 The use of plain language in internal municipal documents must be encouraged to facilitate understanding and improve communication.

### 4.5 External written communication

- 4.5.1 The Municipality must make every effort to promote multilingualism on its website and in its external publications by using all the official languages of the Municipality.