5. COMMUNICATIONS, MARKETING AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF CITY OF TSHWANE COMMUNICATION POLICY (From the Mayoral Committee: 18 June 2014)

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to request Council to approve the proposed Communication Policy which will be applicable to all City of Tshwane departments and political offices.

2. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Strategic Objective 4: Promoting good governance and active citizenry

Strategic Objective 6: Continued institutional development, transformation and innovation

3. BACKGROUND

The City of Tshwane is mandated to deliver municipal services, create job opportunities for the city’s residents, inform residents about development programmes and projects that are aimed at improving their quality of life, and also to encourage public participation in City initiatives.

In line with Centralisation model, the Department of Communication, Marketing and Events, as the custodian of the communication function in the City of Tshwane, has a responsibility to ensure that the city’s communication is streamlined, that the city communicates in a responsible manner and such communication is not detrimental to the image of the organisation and does not compromise it in any way.

4. DISCUSSION

The City of Tshwane has more than 20 000 staff in its employ making it susceptible to mishandling of information and haphazard communication. Corporate Communication in the institution is centralised within the Communication, Marketing and Events Department, with just a few political offices and departments being responsible for their own communication. Whilst those political offices and departments have communication personnel, CME is not absolved from rendering Communication support to them also.

The Corporate Communication structure of the municipality is not ideal for an institution as big as the City of Tshwane; not to mention its dynamics; presence of many media houses with inordinate interest in City of Tshwane affairs; and other organised bodies in the city that have particular interest in the organisation.
The communication prototype adopted by CoT does not assist Communicators to communicate effectively, timeously nor support City departments adequately. A serious shortcoming on the Corporate Communication micro structure is the absence or lack of professional communicators in departments. This puts tremendous pressure on CME to support departments and political offices, and deliver on other communication functions, with the little resources it has.

It is for reasons cited above that the city needs to have an approved Communication Policy in place that will regulate Council’s communication with all stakeholders and ensure that communication is well coordinated, effectively managed and responsive to the diverse information needs of personnel and the public in Tshwane.

Having such policy in place will empower CME to coordinate departments using platforms like Interdepartmental Communication Forum but will also ensure effective implementation of the CME structure. It will assist in minimising negative publicity the City encounters and ensure that all communication from the City, in printed form or otherwise, meets City standards.

It will also empower the city’s leadership to deal with any employee on the establishment who is found guilty of communicating without authority with the media.

The proposed communication policy was presented at top management and circulated to all top management members for inputs. The following departments/political offices submitted inputs and those were taken into consideration:

Office of the Speaker
Metro Police
Emergency Services
Economic Development

5. COMMENTS OF THE STAKEHOLDER DEPARTMENTS

5.1 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Cognisance is taken of the purpose, contents and recommendations to the report.

The Group Financial Services Department, in principles, support the objectives of the proposed Communication Policy as it will serve as a important building block towards shaping the City of Tshwane into an organisation that it aspires to become as articulated in its Vision 2055.

All financial implications emanating as a result of this report must be managed within the limitations of the approved 2013/14 Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework of the relevant departments.
5.2 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER: GROUP ICT

A corporate communication policy for an entity as large as the CoT, given the vast area within which it operates is critically important, and is a necessary tool to regulate the communication process and standards in the City. The principles in the report are this supported.

5.3 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency Services is in support of the contents and recommendations of the report. Emergency Services Department is specifically covered under point 8.5 of the policy.

5.4 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

The purpose of this report is to request the Mayoral Committee to approve the proposed Communication Policy which will be applicable to all City of Tshwane departments and political offices. The Tshwane Metro Police Department (TMPD) takes cognisance of the content of the Tshwane Communication Policy. The TMPD further supports the envisaged initiatives and objectives the Tshwane Communication Policy which aspires to achieve an institutionalised, uniformed, effective and efficient communication platform. It is anticipated that the approval and subsequent implementation of the Tshwane Communication Policy would plug all prevalent communication gaps and generalist tepid media overview currently apportioned to the CoT. The latter, when left to continue unabated would lead to detrimental, strained and severed relations. The convergence of this initiative would herald a new communication synergy which would culminate into an accountable, a responsible, corporatised, interactive, reliable, responsive, resonant, standardised, transparent and an unambiguous communication dimension embraced by all across the CoT.

5.5 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP LEGAL COUNSEL

This Policy aims to regulate Council’s communication with all stakeholders and ensure that communication is well coordinated and effectively managed which might exists or arise from activities performed by the municipality.

It must be noted that the initiating Department should ensure that the Policy complies with the Council Policy on the Review of Policies which was adopted on 18 January 2012. (See especially paragraphs 8 and 9 thereof i.e. PRINCIPLES FOR THE FORMULATION AND REVISION OF POLICIES and PROCESS FOR THE DRAFTING, APPROVAL, IMPLEMENTATION AND AMENDMENT OF POLICIES) In this instance we would like to mention that public participation would not be required as it does not directly impact on the community outside the corporate environment of the Municipality. It should be mentioned that ONLY Council can approve the policy. We would also like to draw attention to paragraph 9(h) of the said Resolution of 18 January 2012 which requires that policies must be translated into all official languages. Paragraph 9(o) of the Policy, 2012 requires that ALL employees must be made aware of the revised policy.
5.6 COMMENTS OF THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

The Office of the Speaker takes cognisance of the purpose, contents and recommendations to the report.

The Office of the Speaker supports the content of the report and with recommendations/inputs made on the actual draft policy in the following paragraphs:

On paragraph 4 line number 3 it be amended as follows:

Political Offices with communication personnel on their approved organizational structure are also authorised to handle communication matters pertaining to their respective Offices after consultation with Spokesperson in the Office of the Executive Mayor.

On paragraph 4 line number 4, it be amended as follows:

Where it can be determined that an activity to be executed by a political office has communication implications, the concerned political office should share information on that particular activity with the Spokesperson of the Executive Mayor for the latter together with CME ensure alignment of communication messages and ensure proper support for the said activity.

On paragraph 8.6 line number 2, it be amended as follows:

The announcement and launch of projects, events and services form part of the overall communication strategy and no Councillor should issue information regarding projects, events and services to the media without prior consent of the Speaker if that information is not factual and confirmed by the relevant Department through the Office of the Speaker.

5.7 COMMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: CORPORATE AND SHARED SERVICES

5.7.1 CORPORATE PROPERTY AND LOGISTICAL SERVICES

Supported.

5.8 COMMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC EXECUTIVE HEAD: OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR

The content of the report and its objective are noted accordingly. It is through well-defined and unambiguous policy guidelines that the city would be able to reach its intended policy objectives. Communication forms an integral part in a consultative and responsive local government sphere given its proximity to the people. The needs to residents change as a result of various factors. This therefore requires a communication strategy that is systematic and proactive to ensure that the city becomes the conveyor of its own messages to its residents.
It can only be through an ineffective communication strategy that communication platforms would be occupied and exploited against the city. It is further noted and supported in the report that access to municipal information does not automatically warrants or qualifies any employee to communicate on behalf of the city. This should go a long way in guarding the image and integrity of the City of Tshwane. The content of the report are therefore supported.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 HUMAN RESOURCES

None

6.2 FINANCES

There are no financial implications for implementing the policy.

6.3 CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FACTORS

None.

6.4 COMMUNICATION

CME will be responsible for communicating the policy to all employees through the mediums indicated in the policy.

6.5 PREVIOUS COUNCIL OR MAYORAL COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

None.

7. CONCLUSION

A communication policy is a much needed document in the City of Tshwane as it can serve as an important building block towards shaping the City of Tshwane into an organisation that it aspires to become as articulated in its Vision 2055 - an organisation that is viewed positively by internal and external stakeholders; that empowers its stakeholders with information that shapes their lives, that is perceived to be succeeding in how it communicates; and one that is organised and not confused.

The Mayoral Committee on 18 June 2014 resolved to recommend to Council as set out below:

During consideration of this item by Council on 31 July 2014 and after Cllr JT Makgatho addressed Council on this matter, it was resolved as set out below:

ANNEXURE:

A: Communication Policy.doc - communication policy
RESOLVED:

1. That the proposed Communication Policy be approved;

2. That Council support the policy, its implementation and adherence to it by all departments, regional offices and political offices once approved; and

3. That other official documents like approved policies, guidelines and directives mentioned in this policy, which are aimed at addressing the issue of adherence to certain aspects highlighted in this policy, also be enforced.

COUNCIL
RESOLUTION

2014-07-31

BESLUIT
RAAD
COMMUNICATION POLICY AND GUIDELINES

POLICY NUMBER: 01

EFFECTIVE DATE:

FULL NAME

Executive Mayor
Communication, Marketing and Events
City Manager
Deputy City Manager
City of Tshwane
Member of the Mayoral Committee

ACRONYM

EM
CME
CM
DCM
CoT
MMC

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1. BACKGROUND

South Africa, together with the rest of the world, has undergone a communication transfiguration over the past few decades and the evolution continues. The communication platforms at our disposal today have altered the way people live and relate to one another.

2. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Constitution of the Country (adopted in 1996) contains a number of sections which set the tone for local government communication. It envisages a complete transformation of the local government system.

In terms of the Constitution, local government is a sphere of government in its own right and no longer a function of national and provincial government. Local government has also been given a distinctive status and role in building democracy and promoting socio-economic development. It requires from local
government to involve communities and community interest groups in local government matters.

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

**The White Paper on Local Government** spells out the framework and programme in terms of which the existing local government system will be radically transformed. It establishes the basis for a system of "developmental local government" which is centrally concerned with working with local citizens and communities to find sustainable ways to meet their needs and improve the quality of their lives.

The definition of developmental local government as contained in Section B on page 17 of the White Paper on Local Government reads as follows:

"Developmental Local Government is local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives."

**The Municipal Systems Act** gives effect to the vision of "developmental local government" as envisaged in the White Paper on Local Government. This Act elaborates the core principles, mechanisms and processes that are necessary to enable municipalities to move progressively towards the social and economic upliftment of communities, and ensure universal access to quality services that are affordable to all.

The Act extends the definition of municipality to include residents and communities within the municipal area, working in partnership with the municipality’s political and administrative structures. This relationship is fundamental to sound and effective governance, and the long-term sustainability of local government. The Act establishes a simple and enabling framework for the core processes of planning, performance management, resource mobilisation and organisational change, which underpin the notion of developmental local government.

In seeking to maximise resident’s knowledge of municipal plans and targets, and giving both Council and residents tools with which to evaluate and compare municipal performance, the Act creates a bottom-up process of driving development, improving performance and facilitating change.

**Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA)** operationalises Sections 8 and 32 of the Constitution. It aims to foster a culture of transparency and accountability and to promote effective access to information to protect an individual’s rights.
From the aforementioned new local government legislation it is clear that there should be a shift from governing to governance. It requires the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality to consider its approach to communication and citizen involvement in local government matters and to develop strategies accordingly.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to regulate Council's communication with all stakeholders and ensure that communication is well co-ordinated, effectively managed and responsive to the diverse information needs of personnel and the public in Tshwane.

It also seeks to ensure that all municipal information to the public is communicated in a coordinated and coherent manner, caters for cultural diversity and preserves the image of the organisation.

In order to promote good relations with its stakeholders and for a better understanding of City of Tshwane (CoT) programmes, the CoT shall provide municipal information to its stakeholders as directed by the City's Language Policy.

4. CORPORATE COMMUNICATION GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Department: Communication, Marketing and Events (CME) has the overall responsibility for the City of Tshwane's communication with internal and external stakeholders.

However, the responsibility is shared with other departments in terms of specialist areas. Metro Police and Emergency Services Departments have their own communication personnel on their approved organisational structures and shall therefore interact with external stakeholders addressing line function issues; however, such communication should be shared with CME and be agreed upon.

Political offices with communication personnel on their approved organisational structures are also authorised to handle communication matters pertaining to their respective offices after consultation with the Mayoral Spokesperson.

Where it can be determined that an activity to be executed by a political office has communication implications, the concerned political office should share information on that particular activity with the Mayoral Spokesperson for the latter, together with CME, to ensure alignment of communication messages and ensure proper support for the activity.

For other city departments with no approved communication personnel on their organisational structures, CME as the custodian of the communication function within the city, shall become the only recognised mouth-piece for
those departments and shall provide all the necessary communication support to them.

5. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

The goals of internal communication are to support the CoT in achieving its overall goals as set out in its mandate, mission and strategy. It also seeks to strengthen the organisational culture and feeling of commitment among staff. Mutual information sharing is an important principle to ensure efficient internal communication.

A number of modern communication technologies are used within the organisation to convey corporate information to internal stakeholders in a timely manner. The CoT shall strive in its communication to be as transparent and open as possible.

Internal communication addresses those systems and procedures used to communicate information with personnel and Councillors. Research shows that if internal communication is ineffective, it does not enable the projection of a positive image; which is critical for successful communication.

An effective organisation depends on, amongst others, informed personnel. This means, therefore, that personnel is knowledgeable on the functions of the organisation and the areas where transformation is occurring.

An informed personnel has a positive mindset and better equipped to provide an improved service. Because of varying functions and responsibilities, communication needs of personnel will vary throughout the organisation and cognisance should be taken. In short, an informed personnel becomes the "brand ambassadors" of the City.

5.1 Internal Communication platforms

The City has well established internal communication platforms that are used to communicate corporate information to staff.

5.1.1 Intranet:

The intranet is the most important medium for CoT's internal communication. This medium makes it easy for employees to access information they need to perform their duties. Internal news updates are done in a timely manner.

The Department: Group Information and Communication Technology (Group ICT) is solely responsible for development and maintenance of the intranet system. CME on the other hand, (Strategic Communication Division in particular) is responsible for managing content on the dynamic pages.
Updating of departmental pages on the intranet is the responsibility of each department and the political office. CME is responsible for overall management and such management shall entail:

- liaising with departments once every quarter on intranet content,
- reviewing each department's intranet page to assess the state of the page,
- ensure that content uploaded is of acceptable standards, and
- monitor activity on departmental pages monthly and advise or provide feedback to departments where necessary.

Departmental pages shall be checked out to officials who have been nominated by their departments to serve on the Interdepartmental Communication Forum.

*Updating of departmental pages should be done at least once per month.*

CME is responsible for updating and managing activities on the landing page of the intranet. The intranet landing page shall be updated at least three (3) times per week.

a) All newsworthy information such as media releases and announcements that are made public shall be published on the intranet.

b) Service interruptions notices shall be communicated to CME (Strategic Communication Division) as soon as information becomes available for the purpose of communicating internally.

### 5.1.2 Communication Corporate Messages.

This refers to email communication used to communicate corporate information to staff, notifying them about developments in the organisation and updating them on current events and projects.

CME (Strategic Communication Division) shall be the only department that disseminates corporate information to all staff through this medium.

Departments shall prepare their communication on their departmental letterheads and send to Strategic Communication for dissemination. Guidelines on corporate messages have been developed and can be accessed on the intranet under *Departments/CME/Strategic Communication/Internal Communication*

*The requesting department shall submit their content to Language Service Section for editing before their communication can be distributed corporately.*
5.1.3 Newsletters

*Nextweek-in-Tshwane-* is an electronic internal newsletter used to update staff on any events or activities happening within the organisation. It is produced bi-weekly by CME to update staff on events and projects taking place.

*Ignite*- *bi-monthly electronic publication*—published bi-monthly and uploaded on the intranet. It is a communication tool used to update staff on issues that affect them.

5.1.4 Notice Boards

Notice boards are used to convey corporate information from management to employees, project information and any other information relevant to them. Updating of information on notice boards will be the responsibility of departments. They must be set up where they are easy to read. The boards should be kept neat, tidy, and attractive and should carry only municipal information.

6. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

External communication shall support the City of Tshwane in pursuing its overall objectives as outlined in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Growth and Development Strategy-Tshwane 2055.

The basic mission of the CoT is to provide good quality services to its residents. This creates a natural need to communicate service delivery initiatives to residents and other stakeholders.

The City has well established communication platforms that are used to communicate corporate information with its external stakeholders.

6.1 External Communication platforms

6.1.1 Social media and digital communication platforms

The CoT website shall remain the city’s primary and predominant internet presence. Information posted by the CoT on social media sites will supplement, and not replace, required notices and standard communication methods.

The Department: Group Information and Communication Technology (Group ICT) is solely responsible for development and maintenance of the website. CME is responsible for managing content on the landing page of the CoT website.
Updating of departmental pages on the website will be the responsibility of departments and political offices with CME playing an oversight role and setting guidelines for departments and political offices to ensure adherence to corporate identity, norms and standards.

CME shall ensure that important announcements such as media releases and speeches are published on the website with the online link.

CME, as the custodian of the communication function, and also charged with the responsibility of protecting and improving the image of the municipality, shall be solely responsible for overall management of the website content and such management shall entail:

- managing all content uploaded on the website,
- liaising with departments once every quarter on content updating,
- reviewing each department’s webpage to assess content at least once per quarter,
- ensure that content uploaded is factual and has been edited,
- monitor activity on departmental pages monthly and advise or provide feedback to departments where necessary.

Departmental pages shall be checked out to officials who have been nominated by their departments to serve on the Interdepartmental Communication Forum.

*Updating of departmental pages shall be done at least once per month.*

The website landing page shall be updated at least four (4) times per week with new information or whenever new information becomes available.

a) All newsworthy information such as media releases and announcements that are made public shall be published on the website, as soon as it’s practically possible (on the same day) after release of such information.

b) Service interruption notices shall be communicated to CME by relevant line function departments as soon as the department(s) becomes aware for the purpose of making such information immediately available on the website.

The City of Tshwane may utilize social media and social networking sites to further enhance communication with various stakeholders in support of the City’s goals and objectives.

CME shall be responsible for managing CoT social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter) and shall regulate activity on these social networks.

Key service delivery departments that generate a lot of media enquiries due to the services they provide can be allowed access by CME to communicate on these platforms through their departmental representatives.
Wherever possible, content posted on social media sites will also be available on the official website. Social media sites should contain links directing users back to the city's official website for more information, forms, or documents.

6.1.2 Printed Communication

The production and printing of departmental publications like newsletters, annual report, special projects booklets/brochures, IDP documents etc is not centralised in the municipality, therefore many departments produce their own information products.

This poses a problem for the City where information products produced either do not conform to the quality standards of the City, or branding is applied incorrectly.

6.1.2 (a) Brochures, flyers, booklets, posters

All information products produced by departments for external distribution like flyers, posters, information booklets etc, shall be shared with CME for content and language approval before printing can be done.

CME shall also advise departments on languages to be used for their information products, depending on areas of distribution and language(s) used in those areas.

Profiling of the municipality in external publications shall remain the responsibility of CME.

Departments shall direct requests for participating in external publications to CME and the latter shall advise on suitable content, approve content, look and feel and facilitate placing of such content with the publication.

6.1.2 (b) Tshwane Update- external newspaper

The City utilises this newspaper to reach external stakeholders, mainly residents, as an addition to other communication platforms which may not be within reach. The newspaper is distributed throughout the seven regions of the municipality and at service points like clinics and customer care centres.

Tshwane Update shall remain the only recognised newspaper for the municipality and will be produced by CME.

6.1.2 (c) Municipal accounts

CME shall determine communication messages to be placed on the back of the municipal accounts on a monthly basis. The messages shall be aligned to developments within the municipality.
All departments shall therefore send their requests, accompanied by the message, to CME for consideration. This is to ensure that messages sent out through this powerful medium support the business of the municipality, and the content is factual and aligned with similar communication on other communication platforms.

6.2 Interdepartmental Communication

City departments need to recognise the important role played by CME of sharing organisational information with external stakeholders. Departments shall endeavour to foster a culture of transparency and accountability and promote effective access to information.

The department/division from which information has been requested shall respond to such request for information within 8 working hours if the requested information is readily available or within 16 working hours if the requested information necessitates research.

Heads of Departments shall ensure that information requests by CME are responded to within the stipulated time and that information submitted has been signed-off by themselves or any designated official in the respective department.

Heads of Departments shall ensure that at least one official from their respective departments:

a) shall be recommended by themselves to serve on the Interdepartmental Communication Forum,
b) that the recommended official attends monthly meetings,
c) that they implement resolutions of the Forum,
d) that they carry out the duties and responsibilities of Forum members as directed by CME,
e) that departmental information is shared with all Forum members through the departmental representatives, and
f) ensure that Communication Forum members attend their respective departmental meeting to be privy to developments to enable them to communicate developments to CME.

7. AUDIO-VISUAL COMMUNICATION- PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The city has a studio which is mainly utilised to produce audio-visual material aimed at enhancing communication with all its stakeholders. Audio-visual communication enhances the communication experience and offers alternative communication means to residents who can’t read as they can listen to voices in a video recording or relate to images.

Once fully upgraded the studio can offer residents a whole new experience in how they receive city information.
CME also provides photographic services to all city departments and political offices whenever the service is requested.

Departments shall submit their requests for photography or videography in writing at least three days before their event date.

CME shall always prioritise strategic events and engagements but availability of the service will be dependent on timely submission of requests.

Events that reach CME on a very short notice shall not be considered, unless they fall within the category “strategic events and engagements” like Executive Mayor’s meetings, etc, events where EM and MMC’s are present. Furthermore, late requests that shall be entertained are those that departments themselves would have received late and are deemed too “important and strategic” to ignore.

8. MEDIA RELATIONS

8.1 Dealing with media enquiries

A media communicator may deal with media enquiries by email or telephone. However, it is most preferred that e-mail containing the enquiry should be requested from the media by the media communicator when:

(a) numerous and/or complicated enquiries are being made which require the conducting of research for purposes of eventually responding to the questions posed;
(b) the enquiries involve more than one department or sections and need to be transmitted to the relevant departments for purposes of eventually responding to the enquiries; or

(c) the specific news medium has a history of not correctly quoting a media communicator in context or has a history of inaccurate, unbalanced, distorted or misleading reporting. Even if such a history doesn’t, it is safer for the City communicator to insist on written responses to avoid being ‘misquoted”. However, cognisance must be taken of instances where verbal responses are necessary, such as follows-up to media statements or media releases.

8.2 Powers and functions of the Executive Mayor, City Manager, CME and designated spokespersons

The Executive Mayor (EM) is, as the Executing Authority of the CoT, the Communicator-in-Chief of the CoT. The EM may, subject to the provisions of this policy and any other legislation applicable to the release of official information by the municipality, officially communicate with the media on any matter relating to or affecting the CoT, including, but not limited to, the holding of media conferences, releasing of media statements/releases in respect of information relating to –
matters of national application or interest to the CoT, such as management issues, CoT policies, and financial (budgetary) matters;

any matter relating to the CoT or any matter of a political nature;

All Members of the Mayoral Committee (MMC's) may respond to media enquiries relating to their departments, participate in interviews and address the media.

In order to assist the EM to exercise his/her powers he/she will have a media communicator located in the Executive Mayor's office, referred to as the Mayoral Spokesperson or Media Liaison Officer. In the CoT's context, he is referred to as the Executive Head of Public Affairs.

8.3 The general duties and functions of the mayoral spokesperson

Provide communication support to the EM;

be the official spokesperson for the EM;

coop-ordinate and control on a systematic and coherent manner communication of the EM;

ensure that he/she is at any time contactable by the media, either personally, per cellular telephone, telephone or by e-mail;

ensure that the media is made aware of the fact that he/she is the official mayoral spokesperson;

promptly or as soon as possible respond to or otherwise deal with any media enquiry directed to the EM;

arrange media conferences and networking sessions with the media for the Executive Mayor; and

promptly and effectively liaise, consult and co-operate with designated spokespersons assigned by the EM.

The mayoral spokesperson must regularly, but at least once a week, or when requested by the Executive Mayor, directly report to and inform the EM about all media communications that occurred during the relevant reporting period.

The mayoral spokesperson may, with prior approval of the EM and subject to any condition or conditions that the EM may impose, refer the communication (or any aspect thereof) with the media in a particular matter to a designated
spokesperson who in his/her opinion is the most appropriate or best equipped official to handle such communication or aspect thereof.

The mayoral spokesperson is responsible for communicating matters pertaining to the EM that are political in nature. However, he may communicate on administrative matters only in instances where the EM intervenes in the failure of administration to provide certain basic services.

8.4 Functions and duties of the Communication, Marketing and Events Department:

a) deal with all media enquiries relating to administrative matters on behalf of the CoT as a whole;

b) be the CoT contact point for the media;

The Strategic Executive Director, or delegated official must, in particular,

a) ensure that he/she is at any time contactable by the media, personally, per cellular telephone, telephone or by e-mail;

b) ensure that the media is as far as possible made aware of the fact that he/she is the contact point for media enquiries;

c) ensure that the media is made aware of who are the official media liaison officers for the CoT;

d) promptly or as soon as possible respond to or otherwise deal with any media enquiry directed to the CoT except those political in nature;

e) ensure that where a written response is given to a media enquiry, proper record is kept of such a written response;

f) ensure that all responses are reasonably verified for accuracy;

g) arrange media conferences to be held on a particular matter and to identify relevant MMC’s or CoT officials to address the media at such media conference and/or to respond to enquiries made by the media at such media conference;

h) promptly and effectively liaise, consult and co-operate with a designated spokesperson assigned by the City Manager/ Deputy City Manager: Strategy Development and Implementation;

i) establish and maintain an appropriate filing system in terms of filing procedure of the CoT for purposes of properly recording and keeping record of all CoT media communication including, but not limited to, enquiries and reports received.
CME must regularly, but at least once a week, or when requested by higher offices, report to and inform about all CoT media communication that occurred during the relevant reporting period.

8.5 Community Safety and Emergency Services Departments

The two departments have Communication Sections on their micro structures and may therefore perform media liaison duties.

The departments are authorised to deal with the media on issues falling within their scope of work only. They may also conduct media interviews and briefings on site during an incident or accident.

However, information shared with the media should be cleared with CME. It is important for CME to know about developments in these departments as it will often happen that CME is expected to deal with issues related to these departments, as directed by the CM, DCM, the departments themselves or the gravity of the matter or situation.

8.6 Councillors

In the interest of the image of the city, Councillors must refrain from making comments to the media on municipal issues without verifying the facts with the relevant department/division.

The announcement and launch of projects, events and services form part of an overall communication strategy and no Councillor should issue information regarding projects, events and services to the media without prior consent of the Speaker if that information is not factual and confirmed by the relevant department through the Office of the Speaker.

8.6 Designated media spokespersons

Any senior manager of the CoT may be assigned by the Executive Mayor, City Manager or CME to deal with the media on a specific issue within their expertise. Such a senior manager will be the designated spokesperson and must confine themselves to the issue they have been assigned to deal with only.

8.7 Departmental representatives

The official departmental representatives will assist with content for the preparation of media releases for their departments. CME will develop media releases, approve them and distribute to the media.

Redirect all media enquiries sent to their respective departments by journalists and assist with information for the purpose of responding to such enquiries.
8.8 Other CoT employees who are not media communicators

All other employees who are not authorised spokespersons shall, under no circumstances, communicate with the media on behalf of the City.

Employees may not obstruct media communication between CME and journalists;

Employees may not bar CME from obtaining relevant and requested information where such information will not detrimentally affect the CoT in the performance of its functions; and

must, when approached by a journalist with a request for information or any other enquiry direct such enquiry to CME. Employees releasing official information to journalists will be subjected to disciplinary procedures of the City.

9. PROCESSING OF MEDIA ENQUIRIES AND INFORMATION REQUESTS:

Upon receipt of a media enquiry CME shall direct such enquiry to the relevant department/division immediately and request information for the purpose of responding to that enquiry;

The department/division from which information has been requested shall respond to such a request for information within 8 working hours or relatively soonest if the requested information is readily available (simple and straightforward enquiries) or within 16 working hours (complex enquiries) if the requested information necessitates consultation.

CME shall respond to media enquiries within 16 working hours after receipt of the enquiry. However, CME shall strive to respond with speed and promptness to media enquiries.

10. IMPLEMENTATION

The policy will be implemented immediately after approval has been granted by the Mayoral Committee and signed by the City Manager.

CME shall, within three days of approval, circulate the policy internally and make all employees aware of its existence by using the following communication channels:

Corporate message
Intranet
Article
Memo to SED's advising them to ensure that all employees in their departments are aware of the existence of the policy, its contents and implications if contravened. This is to ensure the inclusion of employees who do not have access to computers or emails.

11. POLICY REVIEW

This policy is valid from the effective date outlined herein (date of approval) and is valid until further notice.

This policy shall be reviewed once per fiscal year; however, events could also necessitate a review which might lead to the amendment of the policy. In this instance, the policy with proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Mayoral Committee again for approval.

The policy shall be re-circulated using the same channels as identified for sensitising staff.

12. CONTRAVENTION OF THE POLICY

Any City of Tshwane official, who shall be found to have:

a) interacted with the media on behalf of the City without the necessary permission or delegated authority;
b) released corporate information to the media whether intentionally or negligently;
c) responded directly to the media upon receipt of a media enquiry,

shall be dealt with according to the disciplinary procedures of the City of Tshwane.

13. CONCLUSION

Adherence to this policy will assist in minimising negative publicity the City has been receiving and ensure that all communication from the City, in printed form or otherwise, meets City standards.

It will also empower the city's leadership to deal with employees who leak information to unauthorised sources and to the media.