

**LEKWA-TEEMANE
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
"NW396"**



**DDRAFT COMMUNICATION
POLICY**

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DRAFT LEKWA-TEEMANE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY COMMUNICATION POLICY

1. BACKGROUND

Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality as an institution of government has an obligation to provide the public with open access to information about policies, programs, services and initiatives. Information for public use must be disseminated and readily available.

In order for the municipality to meet the information needs of all its citizens, it must consider the following:

- The constitutional right of the people to access of information
- To have trained and knowledgeable staff for providing information to the communities
- To ensure service is timely, courteous, fair, efficient and offered with all due regards 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.

2. LEGISLATION FRAMEWORK

The constitution contains a number of sections that set the tone for local government communications.

Section 152(1) (e) - in setting out the objects of local government, municipalities must encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in matters of local government

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

2.2 Section 162(3) - municipal by laws must be accessible to the public

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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 language usage and preferences of their residents when communicating with them.

3. OBJECTIVE

To assist Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality to deliver well coordinated, effectively managed and responsive communication to the needs of the public.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The policy seeks to assist the Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality to:

- 4.1 Provide the public with the timely, accurate, clear, and complete information about its policies, programme, services and challenges
- 4.2 Communicate at least three official languages depending on the area
- 4.3 Identify important and crucial issues for communities and address implementation of the Local government program of action
- 4.4 Consult the public, listen to and take account of people's interests and concerns when establishing priorities, developing policies and planning programmes
- 4.5 Continue build public trust and confidence in the integrity of our Municipality
- 4.6 Ensure that communication is integrated and coordinated within Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality
- 4.7 Continuously ensure that the Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality is visible and accessible to the public.
- 4.8 Continuously ensure that the information service is managed in a citizen centered and client focused manner.

5. APPLICATION AND AUTHORITY

The communication policy shall apply to both officials and councilors of Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality.

6. POLICY ISSUES

6.1 Official language

In all communications, the equality of status of all official languages as established by the constitution of our country shall be respected.

Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality must identify and respect all official languages requirements that apply when engaging in any communication activities.

6.2 Plain language

Plain language and proper grammar must be used in all communications with the public, to ensure clarity and consistency of information

6.3 Corporate identity

In order to maintain a recognisable and unified corporate identity, the municipality shall apply a unified identity and ensure that its buildings, facilities, programmes and services are clearly identified.

Clear and consistent corporate identity is required to assist the public in recognizing, accessing and assessing the municipal services.

6.4 Reflecting diversity

Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality shall ensure that its publications and other communication material depict nature of the Municipality in a fair and representative and appropriate manner. It shall be sensitive to differences among and within the constituencies and wards, and also ensure balance in its communication plans and activities so that the needs and interests of local and special populations are reflected and addressed.

6.5 Public Releases

Public releases (e.g. media releases, corporate profiles, issue backgrounders, biographies on executive management, speech transcripts, stock video footages, etc) must be signed by either the Municipal Manger or the Mayor.

6.6 Environment Analysis

The Municipality will continuously monitor and analyze the public environment as it relates to its policies, programs, services and initiatives. It will also use a variety of tools to assess the environment in which it operates, including citizen feedback, enquiry analysis, media monitoring and opinion research.

6.7 Consultation and citizen engagement

Communities shall be informed about opportunities to participate in public consultation and other initiatives looking at citizen engagement. Open and responsive communications are critical to the success of public consultations

6.8 Risk communication

Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality shall anticipate and assess potential risks to public health and safety, to the environment, and to policy and program administration.

Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality is required to have plans and strategies to communicate about risk effectively, demonstrate interest and concern for all opinion and positions, and respect their underlying premises.

In this regard Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality shall:

- 6.8.1 Foster open dialogue with the public on issues involving risk and build a climate of trust, credibility and understanding
- 6.8.2 Facilitate the interactive exchange of information on risk and risk related factors among interested parties inside and outside of it boundaries.
- 6.8.3 Respond to public perceptions and provide factual information to address misconceptions or misunderstandings about the risk.
- 6.8.4 Integrated environment analysis and communication planning and strategy into risk assessment and decision - making processes.

6.9 Crisis and Emergency Communication

Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality shall put in place a crisis and emergency communication plan that will ensure that during crisis information is coordinated and communicated in time.

6.10 Media

Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality shall develop media policies and guidelines to guide on spokesperson, media strategy, rules and procedures of disseminating information to the media

6.11 Events Management

The Policy shall ensure integration and coordination in Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality to promote partnership, Vis-a Vis, competition and duplication. An annual calendar of events shall be adopted and communicated to other spheres of government or sector departments.

6.12 Advertising and Marketing

Advertising and Marketing shall address the following principles:

- Information relating to education and service delivery issues
- Political faces shall be seen as messengers of service delivery

6.13 Internal Communications

Obligation shall be placed on Municipal Manager to keep staff informed on strategic issues. There shall be at least monthly meeting of staff to deal with developmental issues.

6.14 Institutional Arrangements

The Communication Officer shall be located in the Office of the Mayor and report administratively to the Director: Corporate Services.

The Communication Officer shall participate if given permission by the Director: Corporate Services in various strategic committees within the municipality in order to gain direct information.

6.15 Communication cycle

Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality shall align its communication activities with the local government communication cycle which is as follows: