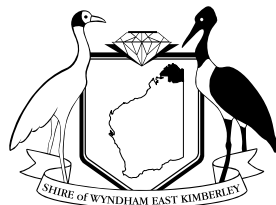


SHIRE OF WYNDHAM EAST KIMBERLEY

Connecting Communities, Building Together

Communication Strategy





Acknowledgement of Country

The Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley acknowledges the traditional custodians of the East Kimberley, the Doolboong, Gajerrong, Gamberee, Kadjorong, Kija, Kwini, Miwa, Miriwoong, Ngarinyin, Worla, Worora, Wunambul and Yijji people. We pay our respects to Elders both past and present and emerging and their connection to the land, waters and community.

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A message from the Chief Executive.

Introducing our new communication strategy for the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley.

Together, we'll connect communities, enhance liveability, and preserve our natural heritage. By engaging all voices and fostering strong relationships, we'll build a prosperous future.

Join us on this journey, share your ideas, and let's create a vibrant and inclusive community we can all be proud of.

Together, we'll achieve our vision of connecting cultures and celebrating the spirit of country and community.





Purpose

The aim of this Communication Strategy is to establish a basis for clear and uniform communication throughout the organisation, laying the groundwork for effective interaction between the Shire and its stakeholders.

The Strategy outlines various measures aimed at enhancing communication channels, aiming for increased transparency, clarity, and relevance. It also emphasises the establishment of effective feedback mechanisms in alignment with specific objectives.

It has been prepared in conjunction with an internal group and identifies key target markets the Shire interacts with and the appropriate channels to communicate effectively.



Our Vision

Connecting our cultures, striving for prosperity, celebrating the spirit of country and community

The vision for the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley sets out the Shire’s philosophy, values and priorities, developed in close collaboration with the local community.

Our Purpose

To work with our community to influence and lead change to deliver positive outcomes.

Our purpose statement guides our approach and Shire functions, helping us to set goals and achieve them in the future.

Our Values



Open Communication

We communicate openly with each other and our community.



Prioritising Health, Safety and Wellbeing

We are focused on the health and wellbeing of our colleagues and community.



Teamwork is Key

We work collaboratively to achieve shared goals.



Demonstrating Accountability

We take responsibility for our actions and behaviours.



Respect One Another

We are respectful of people, ideas, culture and environment.

How Are We Reaching You?



Website

Our website, www.swek.wa.gov.au, is the go-to source for information and its projects. While it underwent a major revamp in 2013, it does need to be updated. We continuously update the 'News,' 'Events,' and 'Have Your Say' sections. With an average of 9,000 monthly users and 19,000 page views, it remains a valuable resource.

We've also introduced the "Shape Your Shire" website to engage with a digitally savvy demographic, which will eventually be replaced by the "Council Connect" portal.



Social Media

We are currently on Instagram (718 followers) and Facebook (4.7K likes). We have dedicated pages for Sports Leisure Centres (756 likes) and Animal Management (152 likes).

Our paid advertisements have successfully reached our target audience, ensuring accessible information.



Public Notice Board

We continue to utilise public notice boards at the Libraries, Administration Offices, and Leisure Centre to ensure important announcements reach our audience.



Print Media

Previously, we had a fortnightly section in the Kimberley Echo newspaper, but due to limited reach and high costs, we have reallocated our resources to other print media. We continue to advertise in the Kimberley Echo, but monthly.

We've begun advertising in the Kununurra Sun Magazine to reach wider audiences and improve brand perception. Additionally, we occasionally advertise in the Wyndham Bastion Bulletin and are considering paid advertisements to reach the Wyndham audience.



E-newsletter

Our e-newsletter has over 500 subscribers. In 2023, we revived the e-newsletters.

The External e-newsletter is called Local Line, and informs the wider community about projects and news about the Shire.

In 2020, Markyt conducted a Community Resilience Scorecard, gathering opinions from across WA from residents, employees and business owners. Communication was a key component during this time. The Shire performed exceptionally well across WA and within the Kimberley.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Shire placed a paramount emphasis on delivering timely and precise information. They implemented a series of key strategies that significantly bolstered their communication endeavours.

A primary approach adopted by the Shire was the introduction of a centralised communication model. All communication materials underwent a rigorous review process led by the Communications and Marketing department, culminating in final approval from the CEO.

Furthermore, the Shire adopted a strategy to efficiently disseminate information to the public. Rather than duplicating information already provided by the State Government,

the Shire chose to relay the State Government’s updates through their social media channels. This ensured that critical information was promptly accessible to the wider public, while also making it clear that the Shire was not the original source of the information.

Another crucial strategy embraced by the Shire aimed at ensuring that dependable information reached the community. To achieve this, they incorporated an alert banner on their website, guiding people to a dedicated “Coronavirus Trusted Resources” page. On this page, the Shire provided direct links to the State Government’s official website pages containing the pertinent and accurate information.

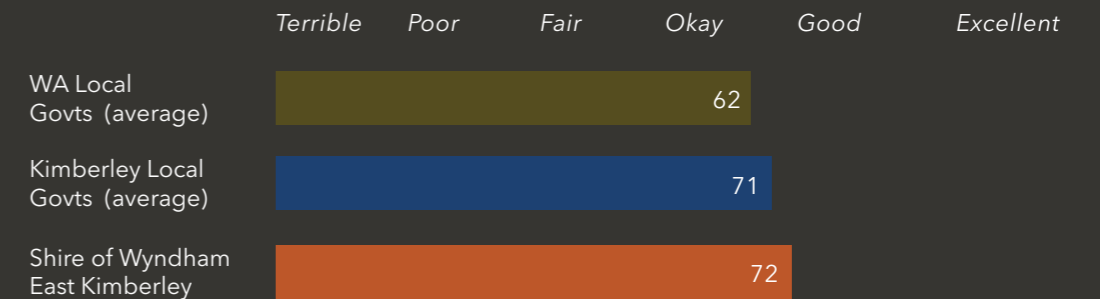
The Shire also collaborated with key local hospital, medical, and non-profit organisations to increase awareness of COVID-19 across the community.

Through these strategies, the Shire effectively and efficiently communicated with their audience.

As indicated by the survey, the Shire’s overall response to COVID-19 exceeded the WA and Kimberley averages sitting at 72. Moreover, a majority of the community felt that the Shire provided an appropriate amount of information, in contrast to the Kimberley average which stood at 71.

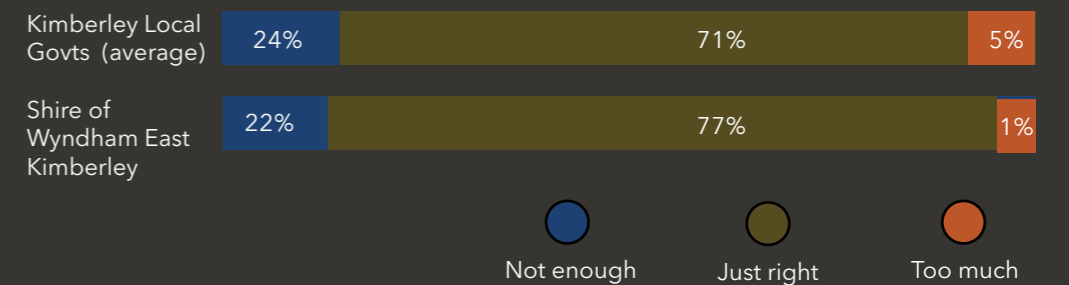
It is imperative that this Communication Strategy acknowledges the Markyt Community Resilience Scorecard and employs it as the cornerstone to further develop the communication tools and channels already in place within the Shire.

Overall response to COVID 19



Amount of COVID-19 Content from LG

% of respondents



In 2021, the Shire conducted a Community Scorecard, gathering opinions from 338 participants including local residents, business owners, community organisations, and Shire employees. Here is what you said...

25%

of residents agree that the Shire has developed and communicated a clear vision for the area.

23%

of residents agree that the Shire has a good understanding of community needs.

21%

of residents agree that the Shire clearly explains reasons for decision and how residents' views have been taken into account.

58%

of residents agree that the Shire is informed about what's happening in the local area

Overall Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley Performance Rating
(% of respondents)



Fig 1. Performance Index Score results for the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley, Community Scorecard Survey May 2021

Clear Vision for the area

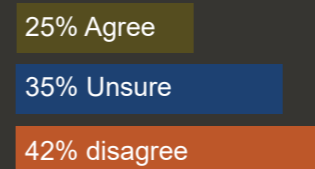


Fig 2. SWEK: 25% clear vision, industry is 34%

Explains decision & use

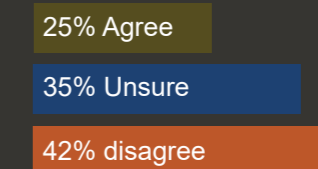


Fig 3. SWEK: 21% clear vision, industry is 27%

Good Understanding of Community Needs



Fig 4. SWEK: 23% clear vision, industry is 34%

Informed about what's happening

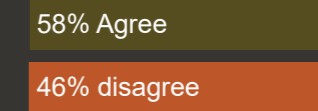
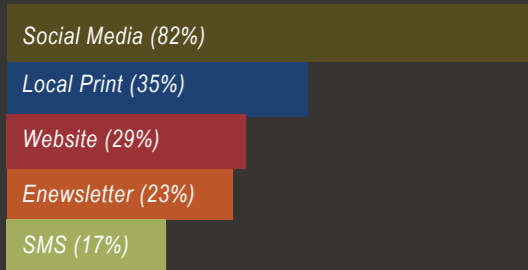


Fig 5. SWEK: 58% clear vision, industry is 54%

The Shire also undertook a communication survey to engage on what the community thought about the Shire's communication.

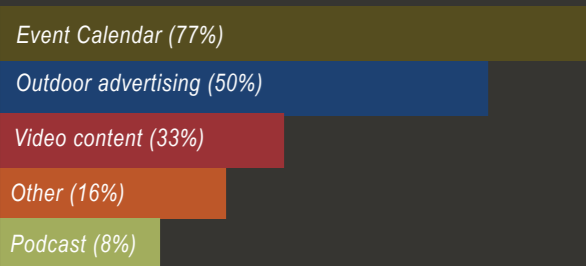
This was communicated through paid social media advertisement and public notice:

How we are reaching community



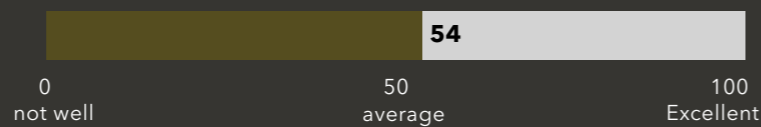
16% of respondents selected others with various response including google alerts, email, rates notice and library as a source of communication.

Communication tools that Shire should use

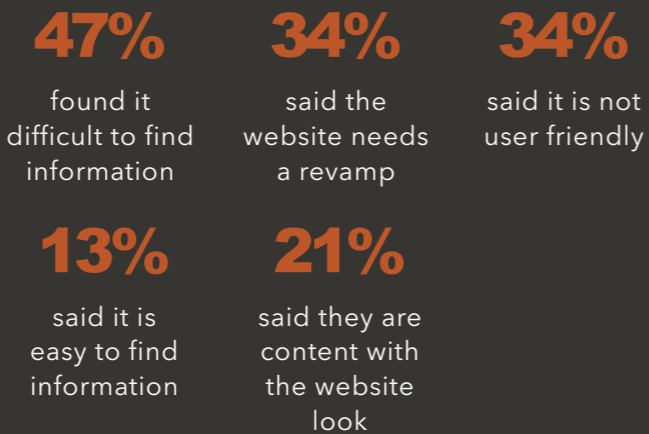


16% of respondents that picked other suggested email, Waringarri Radio, newsletter and linkedin. One suggestion included an invitation to ratepayers to contribute to community consultations.

How well we are doing at communicating?



Thoughts on current website



Tell us how you really feel and don't hold back...

A snapshot of comments made regarding the Shire's communication.

"It would be great to see the Shire revamp it's logo and also for [sic] better short videos that explains what the shire does"

"Road condition reports and road closures etc especially during the Wet need to be updated daily on the radio, website and side of road"

"As I use Facebook it's been great lately"

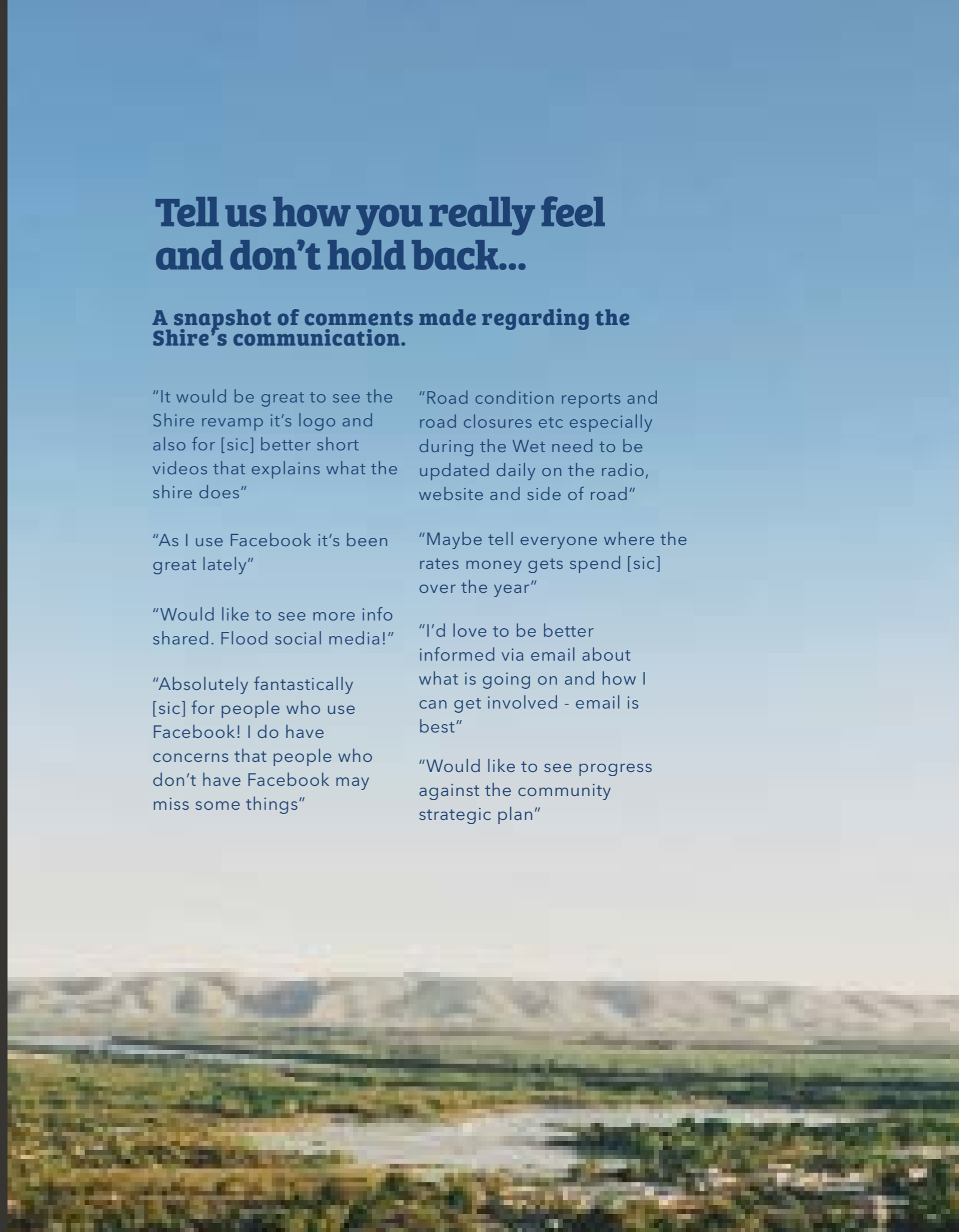
"Maybe tell everyone where the rates money gets spend [sic] over the year"

"Would like to see more info shared. Flood social media!"

"I'd love to be better informed via email about what is going on and how I can get involved - email is best"

"Absolutely fantastically [sic] for people who use Facebook! I do have concerns that people who don't have Facebook may miss some things"

"Would like to see progress against the community strategic plan"





Target Markets

- Young People
- Local residents and ratepayers
- Local businesses and industries
- Community organisations and interest groups
- Visitors and tourists
- Media outlets (local, regional, and national)
- Shire employees at all levels
- Indigenous People
- All-abilities

Maximising Communication Opportunities with Target Markets

Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, simple and informed language. • Use of social media channels they are currently with. • Work with existing organisations that interacts with target market.
Local residents and ratepayers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, simple and informed language. • Use of social media channels they are currently with.
Local Businesses and Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a strong working relationship with East Kimberley Chamber of Commerce and Industry (EKCCI). • Regularly host Business After Hours with EKCCI. • Establish Workshops and Training Sessions to educate businesses on Shire permits. • Regular business-based newsletter (in conjunction with EKCCI).
Community Organisation and Interest Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise online platform and social media. • Host Collaborative Projects and Initiatives with Groups. • Creating specific stakeholder groups for specific projects and activities.
Media Outlets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain media calendar that outlines key milestones. • Establish media contacts. • Provide media specific releases and media kits.
Shire Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and Development Opportunities. • Internal Social Media and Collaboration platforms. • Celebrate milestones and achievements of Employees.
Indigenous People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with Aboriginal Corporations on Projects. • Invite and encourage involvement of respected elders. • Use existing relationships.
All-abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use clear and simple language. • Consider Information format for all documents and website platform. • Work collaboratively with all-abilities agencies.

To effectively reach the target audience, a mix of current and new communication channels should be employed...

Traditional Media

Collaborate with local newspapers, radio stations, and television channels to disseminate news and information about Shire initiatives, events, and achievements.

Publish press releases and media kits to keep the media informed about significant developments and promote positive stories.

Digital Platforms

Develop a new website or a mobile app that serves as a central hub for information, news, events, and services. Ensure the website is user-friendly and regularly updated.

Utilise social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Tik Tok to engage with the community, share updates, and promote local activities.

Consider creating a blog or podcast to highlight community success stories, local businesses, and events.

Community Engagement

Organise regular community forums, town hall meetings, and public consultations to gather feedback, address concerns, and involve residents in decision-making processes.

Establish an online community forum or platform where residents can discuss local issues, share ideas, and collaborate with the Shire.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Collaborate with local businesses, tourism operators, and community organisations to cross-promote each other's initiatives, events, and services.

Engage with government agencies, both at the local and state levels, to leverage their communication channels and resources for wider reach.

Story Telling

Share compelling stories that highlight the Shire's efforts in improving liveability, enhancing connectivity, and promoting sustainability.

Feature success stories of local businesses, individuals, and community projects that align with the Shire's vision and goals.

Visual Content

Utilise visually appealing images, infographics, and videos to convey messages and capture the unique beauty and culture of the Shire.

Incorporate user-generated content to foster community engagement and showcase the diverse perspectives and experiences of residents.

Educational Campaigns

Launch targeted campaigns to raise awareness and educate the community on specific initiatives, such as sustainability practices, recreational opportunities, or social programs.

Collaborate with local schools, community centres, and organisations to develop educational materials and workshops.

Signage for Events

Work collaboratively with event organisers to ensure signage for events is made available in public spaces owned by the Shire.



Methods to **evaluate and measure** the effectiveness of our communication strategy

- Monitor website and social media analytics to track engagement, reach, and user feedback.
- Conduct regular surveys and feedback mechanisms to gather community opinions and measure perception of the Shire's initiatives.
- Capture media coverage and gauge public response.
- Review attendance and participation rates at community events and engagement platforms.
- Conduct periodic reviews and assessment of communication channels and adjust strategies based on feedback and emerging trends.

**“To
communicate
in an
Authentic,
Innovative
and Proactive
way that
empowers our
community”**

Goal 1: Cultivate an Authentic, Trustworthy, Relatable, and Humanised Brand Image.

Goal 2: Provide Customised Communication and Engagement to Address Diverse Community Requirements and Concerns.

Goal 3: Foster a Culture of Ingenuity and Originality.

Goal 4: Establish Sturdy Protocols and Systems to Bolster Our Communication and Engagement Endeavours.

Goal 5: Cultivate a Proactive Communication Culture Within the Organisation.

**Thinking
outside
the box...**

1. Cultivate an Authentic, Trustworthy, Relatable and Humanised Brand Image

Articulate the Shire's vision and values to the community and staff and promote Strategic Community goals.

Actions

- foster a widespread awareness of vision and values throughout the organisation, benefiting both the community and staff.
- Guarantee that the vision and values find explicit mention in all Shire documents, and are readily referenced in communications as necessary.
- Implement a focused media campaign aimed at explaining the objectives and progress as outlined in the Strategic Community Plan (SCP).
- Ensure marketing and communications align our actions with the SCP.
- Signage at community consultation and engagement visible with values and vision.

Measures

- Our vision and values are readily identifiable and recognisable by community members.
- Indications of improvement in future Community Perception Surveys regarding the communication, and understanding of, the Shire vision.
- The community now possesses a clearer comprehension of the Shire's SCP.

Implement consistent brand messaging across all channels and touchpoints.

Actions

- Establish brand guidelines to ensure consistency in messaging, tone and visual elements.
- Investigate advertising options - including outdoor and displays at third-party venues.
- Invest in a graphic design consultant on a retainer basis to ensure uniformity across external promotional materials.

Measures

- Increase consistency in the Shire's communication material and more brand recognition in the community.
- More comprehensive marketing by the Shire across the region.

1. Cultivate an Authentic, Trustworthy, Relatable and Humanised Brand Image

Update the Shire's branding to authentically represent the essence of the region.

Actions

- Conduct a brand audit- assess the current brand identity including logo, colours, typography and messaging.
- Conduct market research to understand current trends and preferences in branding within the Shire's target audience.
- Ensure our brand value and identity are informed in the rebranding process.
- Engage a professional design agency to lead the process.
- Create a brand corporate style guide that outlines new brand's visual elements, logo, colour palette, typography and imagery guidelines.
- Redesign logo and visual elements.
- Update marketing collateral and materials.
- Launch new website and digital presence.
- Conduct training sessions for staff members to familiarise them with the new brand identity and guidelines - stress the importance of consistent branding in their interactions with the community.

Measures

- Improved perception of the Shire.
- Improved in marketability of the region to potential skilled workers.

Increase knowledge of the Shire's role in our region by clearly articulating what we do and don't do and why.

Actions

- Specific educational outreach campaigns and workshops about the Shire.
- Utilisation of WALGA resources for clarifying distinctions between local, state, and federal government roles and responsibilities.

Measures

- Fewer complaints about things out of the Shire's control or jurisdiction.
- Increased community understanding of the Shire's role.

2. Provide Customised Communication and Engagement to Address Diverse Community Requirements and Concerns.

Customise communication and participation methods to create a more effective and personalised approach.

Actions

- Analyse current data (social media, community and subscription) to identify relevant stakeholders.
- Create tailored communication strategies ensuring that the messaging remains relevant.
- Forge stronger connections with hard-to-reach communities by collaborating with organisations that have the reach.
- Offer a range of participation methods that accommodate audiences at their preferred time and in their preferred manner.

Measures

- Shire's message is communicated effectively to target markets.
- Improved score in communications in future Community Perception Surveys.
- Higher engagement rates across different stakeholder groups.

Implement feedback mechanism to continuously refine communication approach.

Actions

- Implement feedback loop through surveys, forums and direct feedback channels at all consumer points to gather insights on community needs and preferences.
- Review and adapt communication strategies based on feedback received.
- Monitor and evaluate emerging engagement trends to ensure communications meets the needs of our community.

Measures

- Message is communicated effectively to target markets.
- Improved score in communications in future Community Perception Surveys.
- Higher engagement rates across different stakeholder groups.

3. Foster a Culture of Ingenuity and Originality.

Ensure open and honest communication regarding the responsibilities of the Council and staff, as well as the decisions and activities undertaken.

Actions

- Organise quarterly sessions where Council members and staff engage with the community to answer questions and address concerns.
- Implement live-stream for any public meeting held by Council.
- Communicate in clear, jargon-free language to ensure that information is easily understood by all members of the community.
- Publish a snapshot of highlights, accomplishments, challenges and key performance metrics of the Shire from the quarterly and annual reports.
- Actively encourage community members to attend meetings, provide feedback, and participate in decision-making processes.

Measures

- Improved community perception of the Shire's transparency, openness and honesty.
- Reduced number of complaints or grievances related to communication about Shire responsibilities and activities.

- Monitor how local media outlets report on Shire activities to gauge the accuracy and effectiveness of external communication efforts.

Remain on top of emerging communication channels and ways the Shire can utilise it to increase communication.

Actions

- Stay updated on new and emerging communication platforms, tools, and technologies through market research and industry reports.
- Equip the Marketing and Communications department with appropriate resources to create and manage innovative content.
- Invest in and provide training on the latest communication technologies and platforms that are relevant to the Shire's target audience.
- Keep an eye on trends and innovations in social media platforms and explore how they can be leveraged for effective communication.
- Encourage staff to explore and propose innovative communication solutions that align with emerging channels.
- Explore the option of a website vs a mobile Application (APP).

- Regularly survey and engage with the Shire's target audience to understand their communication preferences and where they spend their time online.
- Consider implementing chatbots or AI-powered communication tools to enhance engagement and provide instant responses.

Measures

- Measure the increase in reach and audience size on the new communication channels compared to previous platforms.
- Evaluate how seamlessly the new communication channels integrate with existing systems and workflows.
- Assess staff proficiency in using the new communication technologies through surveys.

Collaboration with media outlets.

Actions

- Build and nurture relationships with local journalists, editors, and media professionals to establish a positive rapport.
- Ensure that media outlets receive accurate and up-to-date information on Shire activities, initiatives, and events.
- Work with radio station on a podcast or regular segment regarding all things related to the Shire.
- Increase advertorials in local magazine/ newsletter.

Measures

- Monitor the number of times the Shire is mentioned in media outlets and estimate the overall impressions generated.
- Assess the accuracy of information presented in media coverage by comparing it to official Shire communications.

4. Establish Sturdy Protocols and Systems to Bolster Our Communication and Engagement Endeavours.

Ensure adequate communication resources to support communication.

Actions

- Conduct a thorough assessment of current communication resources and identify any gaps or deficiencies.
- Allocate budgetary resources specifically for communication tools, software, and equipment.
- Provide training and development opportunities for staff to enhance their communication skills and proficiency with communication tools.
- Establish clear communication protocols and channels within the organisation to streamline information flow.
- Regularly update and maintain communication platforms, ensuring they are user-friendly and up-to-date.
- Implement feedback mechanisms to gather input from staff regarding their communication needs and preferences.
- The establishment of an accessible and easy to utilise staff intranet site to act as a 'one stop shop' for information relevant to employees (relevant to them either in respect to them as an individual or as part of a broader team).

Measures

- Increased employee engagement such as participation in company initiatives, attendance at events and overall morale.
- Timely dissemination of information to reach staff and community members.
- Improved collaboration and teamwork.

Provide training to Councillors and staff regarding communications.

Actions

- Include training on different communication channels, such as public speaking, written communication, social media, and visual presentations.
- Develop a Media Guide specifically for elected Councillors - to be introduced as part of future induction processes.
- Media training for Councillors and the Executive Management team.

Measures

- Better representation of the Shire in the public and media.
- Gather feedback from participants about the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of the training program.

Centralise all Communications to one-point of contact.

Actions

- Conduct an audit on all points of external communications within the Shire.
- Communications and Marketing department to take responsibility of overseeing and managing all communication internally and externally.
- Develop a standardised process for routing all inquiries, messages, and requests through the central point of contact.
- Ensure that all official channels, including websites, social media profiles, and printed materials, prominently display contact person's information.

Measures

- Consistency in message and branding of the Shire.
- Increased knowledge of agreed communication processes by Shire employees as reported through relevant staff surveys

Establish a Content Calendar for the year for annual events.

Actions

- Take into account upcoming council meetings, events and other activities that may require communication and promotion.
- Work collaboratively with community event holders to ensure promotion activities are outlined in a content calendar and carried out as agreed.
- Allocate social media budget and execute tailored campaigns for each event.
- Reassess the events page on the Shire's website and investigate any other alternatives.

Measures

- Increase in engagement and reach for the Shire.
- Improved engagement in future Community Perception Surveys conducted.

5. Cultivate a Proactive Communication Culture

Encourage open and transparent communication within the organisation.

Actions

- Encourage an environment where staff feel comfortable approaching leadership with ideas, concerns, or feedback.
- Implement regular one-on-one meetings, team huddles, or departmental updates to keep communication flowing consistently.
- Leverage communication tools and platforms (e.g., messaging apps, project management software) to facilitate easy and regular interactions.
- Create opportunities for different departments to work together, fostering a culture of sharing information and insights.
- Recognise and celebrate milestones and achievements, reinforcing the value of proactive communication in achieving organisational goals.

Measures

- Increased employee engagement such as participation in company initiatives, attendance at events and overall morale.
- Timely dissemination of information to reach staff and community members.
- Improved collaboration and teamwork.

Set clear expectation for proactive communication and lead by example.

Actions

- Create a comprehensive document outlining the expectations, norms, and best practices for proactive communication within the organisation.
- Hold a meeting or distribute the communication guidelines to all staff, ensuring that everyone understands the importance of proactive communication.
- Actively encourage staff to ask questions, seek clarification, and provide feedback on communication processes and content.

Measures

- Improved employee satisfaction and comfort levels for future internal surveys.
- Timely dissemination of information to reach staff and community members.

Develop a Communication Crisis Management Plan.

Actions

- Identify potential communication-related risks and vulnerabilities that the organisation may face during a crisis.
- Establish clear goals for the communication plan, such as providing accurate information, maintaining stakeholder trust, and protecting the organisation's reputation.
- Form a Crisis Communication Team to assist with overseeing all communications efforts during a crisis.
- Define the primary communication channels that will be used to disseminate information, such as press releases, social media, website updates, and direct communication with stakeholders.

Measures

- Measure the time it takes to issue initial communication after a crisis occurs. Compare this against predefined benchmarks.

