

POLICY TITLE: EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATION INFORMATION

POLICY NUMBER: CGFS-001

CATEGORY: Council Policy

CLASSIFICATION: Strategic

Approved by Council		Meeting number and date	
26 August 2014		26 August 2014	
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Approved by CEO		26 August 2014	
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16 July 2014		16 July 2016	
Policy Author			
Governance and Corporate Services			
Endorsed by			
Director Corporate Governance and Financial Services			
Responsible Position			
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Version 1
 Policy No: CGFS-001
 Authorised by: Director Corporate Governance and Financial Services
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1. Purpose

To ensure Isaac Regional Council (IRC) communicates effectively and that there is a free flow of information between IRC, its stakeholders and the community. This will establish a unified corporate brand and enhance key stakeholder's perception of the organisation.

Communication is a vital tool in achieving IRC's vision, priorities and how the community can access and use services. A positive perception amongst community and stakeholders is critical, in achieving this and is influenced by delivery of service key messages, achievements and aspirations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all elected members and staff.

3. Definitions

Media: communication of news to the public via print, web site, radio or television

Public Relations: the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies policies and procedures of the public interest and plans and executes a program of action to facilitate public understanding and acceptance.

Media Release (or news release): a written or recorded communication issued to inform the media of information to attract favorable media attention

Advertising: the promotion of goods and services for sale through impersonal media, such as radio or television, often coordinated through the website, publications, local newsletters and newspapers

IRC: Isaac Regional Council

4. Policy Statement

4.1 Key Stakeholders and Target Audiences

IRC positions itself amongst local, regional and national audience as:

- A diverse and forward thinking organisation, dedicated to sustainable living, and committed to working as the voice of the entire Isaac community
- Business friendly
- Future focused
- Committed to the community
- Professional, responsive and responsible

Key external stakeholders include:

- Ratepayers
- Federal government

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- State government
- Other local governments
- Business
- Mining sector
- Unions
- Agricultural sector including rural landowners
- Emergency services
- Health sector
- Local associations or branches of national organisations
- Media (local, national and trade)
- Potential investors
- Residents: permanent, short-term (under 10 years)
- Community and sporting groups
- Resident's associations, suppliers, visitors, voluntary organisations

Key internal stakeholders include:

- Employees
- Management
- Councillors
- Contractors

4.2 Policy Provisions

The external and internal communication information policy will:

- Develop a culture within the organisation of honesty, openness and transparency where official messages are trusted
- Improve communication within IRC
- Ensure staff are fully informed so they can effectively participate in the organisation
- Ensure that views and concerns of employees are encouraged, listened to and responded to, ensuring staff feel valued and are aware of their contribution to the business
- Explore new channels of communication between staff and management

Internal Communications		
Strategy	Tools	Method
Regularly measure employees attitudes towards communication in the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal communication audit • Annual staff gathering feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups, in-depth interviews and staff opinion survey
Celebrate achievements and keep employees regularly informed of organisation's activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly internal newsletter • Annual IRC awards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion through staff noticeboards / payslip inserts and the staff newsletter

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External Communications		
Strategy	Tools	Method
Improve employee access to factual information and provide one standardised source of information across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intranet – include online booking systems • Email • FAQ sheets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Resolute to develop a proposal for intranet • Engage staff in development of intranet • Train key staff in use of intranet • Integrate departmental systems with intranet • Develop online forms/booking systems for all relevant services
Establish a unified corporate brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Standards Guide Style Guide • Corporate Identity Toolbox including templates and proformas (email, memo, fax) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand current Visual Identity Guide to a complete Visual Standards Guide including advertising templates and signage • Create a Style Guide to standardise writing style • Include customer service training, supervisor training) in induction • Create Corporate Identity Toolbox including templates and proformas, on intranet including events guide • Establish corporate image working group • Update all external publications
Increase dynamic communication opportunities such as face-to-face individual or group meetings as a vehicle to build relations, resolve conflicts and gauge emotional content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO/Mayor Toolbox Talks • Team meetings • Department briefings and meetings • Inter-departmental forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate tool box talks with roundtable timing and promote through noticeboards/payslip inserts
Develop a culture where managers and staff feel motivated and empowered to make a contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive and staff training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively promote training and development opportunities across the region

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External Communications		
Strategy	Tools	Tactics
<p>Establish a unified corporate brand through centralised coordination of all internal and external media communications, including advertising centralised and consistent approach to reputation management. Provide management feedback on coverage gained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media policy • Media training for Councillors, the CEO, Directors, public relations employees and identified employees with an education role within the organisation. • Media monitoring • Photography library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to all media enquiries same day • Annual media training • Promotional corporate video of region • Monthly media monitoring reports issued to management • Establish region-wide photography library updated every two years. • Develop banner policy • Media distribution list
<p>To deliver key messages consistently to all audiences, and target specific messages to specific stakeholders</p> <p>To provide clear, accurate, timely and accessible information that creates opportunities for interaction</p> <p>To raise awareness and understanding among our audiences and stakeholders of the IRC's vision, services, policies and initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media kits, releases and updates • Mayoral briefs • Media liaison • Bi-annual newsletter • Fact sheets • Advertising/public notices • Events • Campaign outlines • Website • Community Round Tables • Radio interviews • Council publications including newsletter, Community Plan, Corporate Plan, Annual report, Cultural Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue at least three media releases/updates weekly with high resolution images • Produce media kits and Mayoral briefs for controversial issues or major events • Produce campaign outlines where multiple audiences are targeted with different messages • Investigate opportunities to enhance website such as social networking opportunities, podcasts, e-newsletters • Regular Mayoral interviews with community radio stations • Investigate factsheets such as 'Who is Your Councillor', 'A-Z Guide,

		<p>'Frequently Asked Questions – Our Guide to Services'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continually improve the IRC's website to simplify navigation enabling users to get to information quickly, create an A-Z of services administered by IRC, accurate contact information for all hours, simple information about each service, provide most used forms for download by customers and have a 'progress on major projects' section and update regularly
<p>Conduct regular community surveys to measure the public's attitude toward IRC and recognition of the brand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community survey Community engagement activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform a community survey every two years and communicate results and solutions

5. Communication Channels

The External and Internal Communication Information Policy will be communicated throughout the IRC via:

- An announcement on IRIS
- Online Policy Library

6. References and Related Documents

- Local Government Act (2009)
- Community Engagement Policy
- Media Policy