



Communications Management Plan 2017-2022



Endorsed by Executive Management Team
on 20 June 2017

Introduction

This Communications Plan has been prepared to provide clarity and improve consistency in Council's approach to internal and external communications processes and practices.

The Plan provides detail about processes and practices already being undertaken as well as opportunities for improvement intended to be undertaken for the next 5 years.

Communication @ Campbelltown City Council means...

providing flexible, responsive and cost effective services that are valued by our Community.

Our External Communications are focussed on putting local people at the centre of our planning.

Our Internal Communications are focussed on sharing information and consistent messaging to enable the best service delivery outcomes for our Community.

The Benefits of Good Communication

Effective communication provides a strong foundation upon which Council can more effectively develop and maintain its local neighbourhoods as well as its relationship with the Community in the area as a whole.

By aligning Council's operating goals and plans with effective communication, the organisation can increase the speed that it achieves its day to day and long term goals.

Effective communication with the Community can provide the following benefits:

- Assist in building a positive reputation
- Strengthen relationships with customers, the Community and other interested stakeholders
- Generate Community support and participation
- Improve customer awareness, knowledge of Council programs and opportunities, and satisfaction levels
- Provide a platform of strength from which to manage any crisis
- Attract business and residents to the area
- Improve Staff morale and job satisfaction

Tangibly, good communication practice can reduce costs and increase Community support.

This Communications Management Plan has been developed based upon the principles of good communication, namely:

Visibility - This leads to recognition and acceptance of Council's administration and allows the community to see the breadth and value of activities at Council.

Simplicity - Simple and straight forward communication shows respect for the people's time and an awareness that language literacy skills vary within the Community.

Value - Council communications need to be meaningful in terms of interest and breadth of appeal to the Community and provide value for money in terms of investment of public funds.

Variety - To reach a broad range of Community members, Staff need to consider a range of communication tools relevant to the messaging being provided. A one size fits all approach is unlikely to be successful; Staff need to consider the approach best suited to project, program or service needs. For general Community messaging a broader coverage is likely if a range of technological and non-technological tools are used.

Engagement - Communication is more likely to be effective if Council is open and encouraging to receiving feedback as well as selling its own messages. Council needs to listen as well as promote its messages.

Consistency - To build credibility and a positive reputation messages need to be consistent. It is important to be reliable in terms of messaging and approach and this in turn will generate interest and increasingly earn Community respect.

Evaluation - To know if communication tools are working, Council needs to evaluate the effectiveness of its messaging.

Environmental Analysis (SWOT)

Strengths

- Staff with significant experience and capability to manage the Communications program
- Extremely effective at managing the Communications program with minimum resources
- Effective policies, procedures and training documentation for managing the website and social media sites
- Council and management that support the use of social media to promote Council's projects, programs and services
- Recognised as a leader within Local Government in social media and managing several social media platforms effectively
- Communications and graphic design is centrally managed within Council
- Active participation by Staff in LGA Communications networks
- Council is an early adopted of mobile applications programs (including the LGA's My Local Services App) enabling considerable influence in the outcomes of the program
- Several Staff trained in basic photography and graphic design skills thereby providing a support network for other Staff

Weaknesses

- Minimum Staff capacity to extend the programs beyond what is already being delivered
- Small budget to deliver the Communications program
- Limited budgetary capacity to communicate with Community Members with literacy, accessibility or language barriers (identified through Access and Inclusion Action Plan)
- Multiple processes to follow to implement a communication strategy; no one-stop shop for Staff to access regarding communications matters.
- No proactive Communication Plan to promote Council, Local Government or the local area to the local Community.
- There is no specific staff person whose role is to proof read and edit all material prior to its distribution to the Community, and this is not a skill requirement for many of the positions required to prepare material for the public.

Opportunities

- LGA Communications networks assist Staff to learn new strategies and practices for delivering programs effectively
- Increased networking with external graphic designers would broaden Council's capacity to access external assistance when needed

Threats

- Reliance on local media can impact Council's ability to easily and reliably distribute its messages and promotional material
- Lack of (or project managers with limited understanding of) a communication strategy for major projects and services resulting in lost opportunities and a reactionary communication rather than an effective, coordinated, well prepared approach; this is a threat to achieving best outcomes for the project or service.
- Council relies on the Local Government Association continuing its communications service; hosting the Unity platform (which hosts Council's websites and My Local Services App), coordinating the Local Government Communications Network, coordinating and distributing statewide relevant publications, being a conduit for metropolitan or statewide media requests and assisting with the branding and provision of Local Government elections collateral.

Current Environment

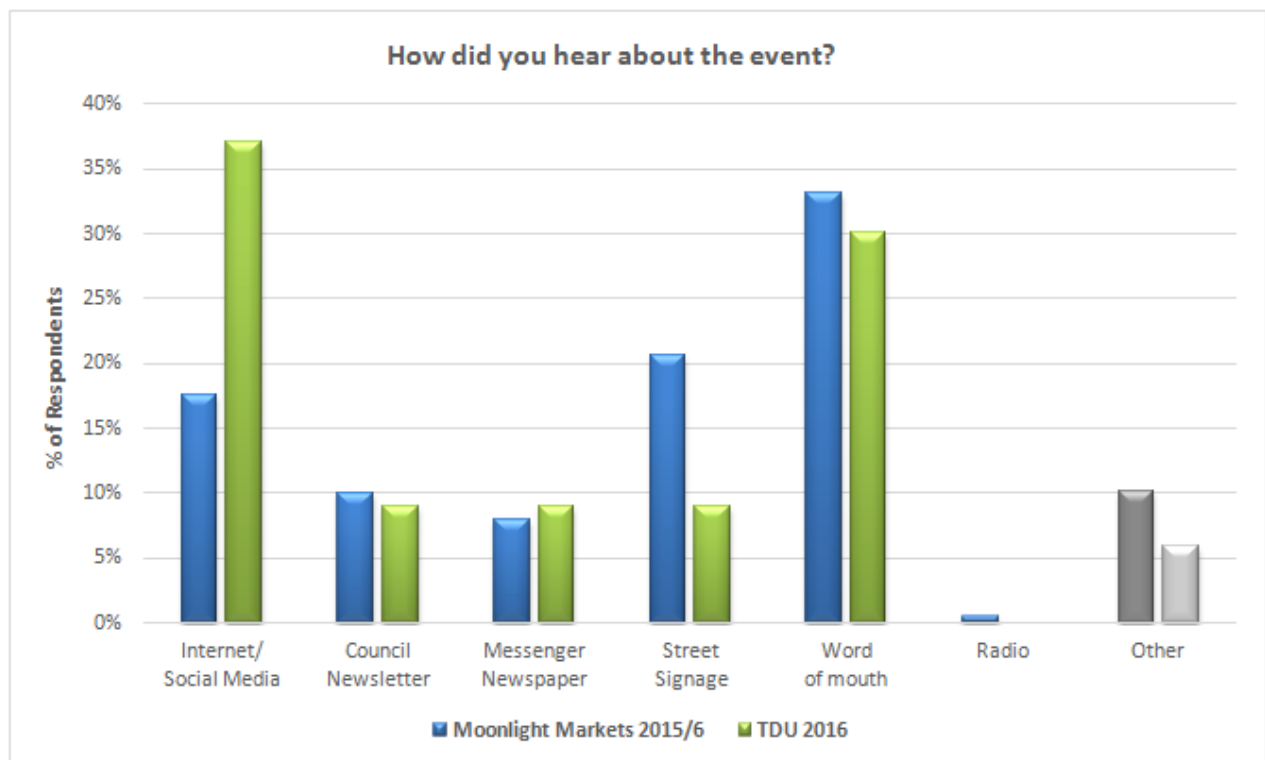
- Between 31 May 2016 – 30 May 2017 Council's website had 297,367 sessions and 138,587 users from the Adelaide area. The ARC Campbelltown, Campbelltown Library, Kids Computer Club, Contact and Swim Centre pages were the most commonly viewed website pages during this period.
- Council mostly communicates with its residents and ratepayers using free or low cost collateral. An extensive social media suite and street banners are heavily relied on for distribution of information, along with a monthly column in a local free newspaper (the East Torrens Messenger).
- The number of followers on Council's social media suite at 30 May 2017 are:
 - Facebook – Council – 2,205
 - Facebook – Moonlight Markets – 9,101
 - Facebook – ARC Campbelltown – 3,569
 - Facebook – Campbelltown Public Library - 972
 - Facebook – OPAL Campbelltown - 336
 - Facebook – Campbelltown Youth – 1,116
 - Facebook – Thorndon Park – 1,869
 - Facebook – Campbelltown Function Centre - 90
 - Twitter – Council - 3,209
 - Twitter – Campbelltown Food Trail - 388
 - Instagram – Council - 186
- On average, the gallery for Council meetings contains 4-6 residents and the [Council Minutes and Agendas](#) web page has been visited 3,528 times in 2,861 sessions (31 May 2016 – 30 May 2017).

- As a recognised Child Friendly organisation, Council is committed to embracing/improving its communication with children.

Community Feedback

Surveys and other consultations conducted over the past few years show a growing preference to receive information electronically.

The most recent data from attendees to Council's Moonlight Markets (2015/2016 season) and Tour Down Under Gear Up @ Campbelltown (2016) demonstrates the value of using online communications whilst recognising there needs to be a balance between online and hard copy communication methods.



Resourcing

Communications (including Graphic Design work) is shared amongst 4 Staff (1 FTE equivalent plus time allocated by Manager Governance & Communications and the Community Engagement Coordinator). Staff are responsible for:

- Internal and external communications
- Coordination of advertisements, street banners, flags and corflutes across Council
- Provision of advice to other Staff in respect to effective Communications Strategies for project based work
- Graphic Design of external promotions and corporate documents
- Website management
- Social media management

The budget associated with this program includes the Online Communications Officer(s) and Graphic Design Officer's salary and ancillary expenses. Costs associated with external graphic design, printing, signage etc are project driven and paid for by the customer where relevant.

Media

Media Contact

In seeking to manage the image portrayed of Council in the media, all media enquiries are directed to the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer in the first instance, with the Chief Executive Officer delegating media contact to a senior staff member with knowledge of the subject matter where relevant.

Council Spokespersons

Council's principal spokesperson is the Mayor, as set out in Section 58(1)(c) of the Local Government Act 1999. Section 58(2) enables Council to appoint an alternative Elected Member as principal spokesperson for Council if desired, however Council has adopted a policy position that the Chief Executive Officer is its second spokesperson.

Key spokespersons for Council are dependent on the subject matter:

- The Mayor is the principal spokesperson for Council on matters of policy and Council decisions.
- The Chief Executive Officer is the spokesperson for Council on issues of factual information and professional advice including comment about Council management and operations, or routine matters.

Procedure for dealing with the Media

Staff will seek guidance from the Chief Executive Officer (or nominee) and utilise Council's Media Procedure when responding or liaising with media contacts.

Note: Media Management during Emergencies

Under circumstances of emergency, critical incident management and disaster recovery, refer to the Business Continuity Plan and Social Media During Emergencies Procedures for roles, responsibilities and procedures.

Communication Tools

Council uses a range of tools (print material, signage, audio messages, social media etc) to promote its programs, events and services as appropriate. The tools are selected on a case by case basis to ensure best reach to the relevant target audience (eg youth, older persons, families, general community).

Tools regularly used by Staff for promotions include:

- Advertising (The Advertiser, East Torrens Messenger, Monthly Messenger Column etc)

- Annual Report
- Digital TV Image
- Displays at Council Office, Library, shopping centres, etc
- Emails
- Events & Activities News
- Flyers/Brochures/Booklets (Food Trail Booklet, School Holiday Program, Waste and Recycling Booklet, What's On at the Library, etc)
- Mail outs
- Management Plans
- Media Releases
- Meetings and Events
- My Local Services App
- New Residents Kits
- Informal and/or targeted personal contact (door knocking, making enquiries, offering assistance, answering questions, etc)
- Posters on Noticeboards (Office, Library, shopping centres, etc)
- Public Notices
- Newsletters (ARC Newsletter, CHSP Newsletter/Calendar, Online Panel Newsletter, etc)
- Snippet
- Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc)
- Street Banners/Corflutes/Flags
- Telephone On Hold Message
- Website (Latest News, Banner, Events Calendar)

Goals and Objectives

After reviewing all information on the effectiveness of Council's current communication processes, community feedback and the current environment for communications, it was found that Council can improve its communication efforts to better meet the needs and expectations of the Community.

This Communications Plan dovetails with the Council's Digital Media Strategy, Community Engagement Framework, and Customer Service Charter and focuses on 5 key goal areas, with objectives and goals as per the Action Plan below.

Action Plan

Key:

MGC = Manager Governance & Communications

CEC = Community Engagement Coordinator

OCO = Online Communications Officers

GD = Graphic Designer

Goal 1: Communicate Council news and information in a timely, accurate and proactive manner.

Objective	Action	Priority (H/M/L)	Responsible Officer	Budget Requirement	Timeframe
1.1 Plan communication strategies for projects and major events to improve accessibility and inclusiveness for all community members.	1.1.1 Raise awareness with Staff of the need for communication strategies for all major projects and events.	M	MGC	Nil	December 2017
	1.1.2 Facilitate the establishment of communication strategies for relevant projects and major events to meet target audience needs.	M	MGC	Nil	December 2017
	1.1.3 Consolidate intranet request processes for communication and graphic design to provide a one-stop-shop for staff.	M	OCO	Nil	June 2018

Objective	Action	Priority (H/M/L)	Responsible Officer	Budget Requirement	Timeframe
	1.1.4 Develop a process for the EMT and Communications staff to share departmental information with all staff.	L	OCO	Nil	June 2018
	1.1.5 Develop processes to improve the coordination of planned and reactionary communications with the community.	M	OCO	Nil	June 2018
	1.1.6 Ensure communication activities respond to the diversity of community needs and improve equity of access to Council's projects, services and events.	M	MGC/CEC	\$5,000 – new initiative for additional website programs (eg LOTE)	December 2018
	1.1.7 Invest in resources to keep abreast of accessibility improvements in communications and establish tools as needed to meet community needs.	L	OCO	Existing training budget	Ongoing
1.2 Proactively identify and coordinate Council information to be communicated both internally and externally.	1.2.1 Ensure consistency and quality of the content and appearance for all corporate publications and communications.	H	CEC/GD	Existing project budgets	December 2017

Objective	Action	Priority (H/M/L)	Responsible Officer	Budget Requirement	Timeframe
	1.2.2 Raise general staff awareness about opportunities to promote newsworthy projects, events and services.	M	OCO	Nil	December 2017
	1.2.3 Establish a process to periodically monitor and evaluate Council's communication activities.	M	MGC	Nil	June 2018
	1.2.4 Regularly distribute 'good news' stories, and news and event information using appropriate communication tools.	L	OCO	Nil	Ongoing
1.3 Improve internal communication channels for staff and management.	1.3.1 Research additional/alternative tools to enhance internal communication of staff news and achievements.	L	OCO	Nil	June 2019
	1.3.2 Develop a cross-departmental team to explore opportunities to improve internal communications.	L	CEC/OCO	Nil	December 2018

Goal 2: Promote the Council and positive attributes of the local area and encourage the community to communicate with Council

Objective	Action	Priority (H/M/L)	Responsible Officer	Budget Requirement	Timeframe
2.1 Proactively promote a positive image of Council and the local area	2.1.1 Identify key publications to distribute at major community events to improve community access to important information.	L	CEC	Existing project budgets	December 2018
	2.1.2 Keep up-to-date Council's promotional materials for key services and facilities.	L	GD	Nil	Ongoing
	2.1.3 Identify and promote key locations throughout the Council area where hard copy and electronic information is accessible and available to the community.	L	OCO	Nil	December 2018
2.2 Encourage and invite ratepayers, residents and visitors to obtain information on Council and its services and participate in Council decision-making processes.	2.2.1 Raise awareness within the community about the various avenues to obtain Council information and 'have their say' in Council decision-making processes.	M	CEC	Existing project budgets	June 2018

Goal 3: Enhance the corporate brand and implement it across all Council communication collateral.

Objective	Action	Priority (H/M/L)	Responsible Officer	Budget Requirement	Timeframe
3.1 Reflect the corporate brand in internal and external communications.	3.1.1 Ensure quality control processes are followed by Council staff for all internal and external communications (including use of Council logo).	M	CEC	Nil	June 2018
	3.1.2 Improve consistency and quality of communication methods using branding guidelines.	M	GD	Nil	June 2018
	3.1.3 Create user-friendly writeable pdf forms that reflect the corporate brand for electronic completion and submission by customers.	M	CEC	Nil	June 2018
3.2 Resource improvements to communication methods and tools.	3.2.1 Source quality imagery for use in publications.	L	OCO	Existing photography budget	Annually
	3.2.2 Use Cumulus software to capture/manage photographic images.	L	OCO	Existing software budget	Ongoing
	3.2.3 Research costs and approach of alternative communication methods and tools.	L	OCO	Existing training budget	June 2018

Goal 4 - Be a Local Government leader in the use of technology for effective communication

Objective	Action	Priority (H/M/L)	Responsible Officer	Budget Requirement	Timeframe
4.1 Ensure the design of Council's websites are attractive, responsive and easy to navigate.	4.1.1 Continuously enhance Council's Websites to provide the best customer experience possible.	M	OCO	Existing website budget	Ongoing
	4.1.2 Develop a plan for funding and resourcing the regular update and redesign of websites to enhance customer access and use.	H	MGC	Nil	June 2018
	4.1.3 Investigate customising the email subscription service (Monthly Events & Activities News) to further meet customer needs.	L	OCO	Nil	June 2019
	4.1.4 Continually train specific staff in the most up-to-date trends in website design, development, maintenance and use.	H	MGC	Existing training budget	Ongoing
	4.1.5 Improve key information on Council's website (library, parks and reserves, calendar of events, development section) to promote use by the community.	M	OCO	Nil	June 2018

	4.1.6 Explore opportunities and costs to include videos on Council's websites for key projects, services and facilities.	M	OCO	\$10,000 – new initiative, follow on project to ARC Video project	June 2019
4.2 Enhance the amount, quality, and delivery of information using digital media tools	4.2.1 Develop a digital media strategy.	H	OCO	Nil	December 2017
	4.2.2 Review Council's existing Social Media suite (in particular Twitter) to ensure that the channels remain relevant to Council's audience.	M	OCO	Nil	June 2018
	4.2.3 Market and promote the availability and benefits of digital media to Staff and external customers.	L	OCO	Nil	June 2018
	4.2.4 Invest in resources to investigate and adopt appropriate trending and new technologies (including Linked In, Trip Advisor and Instagram) as they become available	L	MGC	Existing training budget	June 2018
	4.2.5 Promote the Events and Activities News as a method of keeping the community and staff informed about Council's projects, events, services and facilities.	L	OCO	Nil	Ongoing

Goal 5: Provide emergency information before, during and after a natural or manmade disaster or major community event.

Objective	Action	Priority (H/M/L)	Responsible Officer	Budget Requirement	Timeframe
5.1 Regularly review internal procedures for communicating with staff and the community during emergency situations.	5.1.1 Establish a documented strategy/plan for the use of digital media during emergencies.	H	OCO	Nil	December 2017
	5.1.2 Establish digital media channels as an effective form of crisis communication.	H	OCO	Nil	December 2017
	5.1.3 Review the emergency management plan to ensure the use in an emergency of the latest available digital media tools.	H	MGC/OCO	Nil	December 2017
	5.1.4 Place fire and flood zone maps on the website.	H	OCO	Nil	December 2017
5.2 Educate the community about informational resources available during an emergency or major community event.	5.2.1 Identify and inform partners and entities who should receive direct information and updates during emergencies.	M	OCO	Nil	December 2017

	5.2.2 Raise awareness amongst staff and the Community about the Council website emergency switch-over feature as a means of providing immediate notification about Council's emergency status and to facilitate emergency responder links for use by Staff and the public in an emergency.	M	OCO	Nil	December 2017
5.3 Prepare easy to follow internal communication processes specifically for use in an emergency or major community event.	5.3.1 Create quick-use response and recovery messages for digital media use with key emergency and major community events.	M	OCO	Nil	December 2017
	5.3.2 Create a simple communications process (drawn from the emergency management plan) for an emergency or major community event that can be implemented by any member of the Governance and Communications Team.	M	OCO	Nil	June 2018

Conclusion

Establishment and implementation of a Communications Management Plan for Council will raise awareness of Council's Communications with the Community, Council and Staff alike.

This is an inaugural Communications Plan with limited resourcing to support it. As such, whilst it provides direction and strategy for Staff to implement, it generally aligns expectations with Council's existing resource capacity (Staff and monetary budget) to implement new directions for Council in this regard.

References

Campbelltown City Council Revised Strategic Plan 'Towards 2020'

Campbelltown City Council Corporate Style Guide

Campbelltown City Council Digital Media Strategy

Goal 1: Communicate Council news and information in a timely, accurate and proactive manner.

Goal 2: Promote the Council and positive attributes of the local area and encourage the community to communicate with Council

Goal 3: Enhance the corporate brand and implement it across all Council communication collateral.

Goal 4 - Be a Local Government leader in the use of technology for effective communication

Goal 5: Provide emergency information before, during and after a natural or manmade disaster or major community event.

Objective 1.1: Plan communication strategies for projects and major events to improve accessibility and inclusiveness for all community members.

Objective 2.1: Proactively promote a positive image of Council and the local area

Objective 3.1: Reflect the corporate brand in internal and external communications.

Objective 4.1: Ensure the design of Council's websites are attractive, responsive and easy to navigate.

Objective 5.1: Regularly review internal procedures for communicating with staff and the community during emergency situations.

Objective 1.2: Proactively identify and coordinate Council information to be communicated both internally and externally.

Objective 2.2: Encourage and invite ratepayers, residents and visitors to obtain information on Council and its services and participate in Council decision-making processes.

Objective 3.2: Resource improvements to communication methods and tools.

Objective 4.2: Enhance the amount, quality, and delivery of information using digital media tools.

Objective 5.2: Educate the community about informational resources available during an emergency or major community event.

Objective 1.3: Improve internal communication channels for staff and management

Objective 5.3: Prepare easy to follow internal communication processes specifically for use in an emergency or major community event.