



## COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Our Vision</b> <i>A Place to Grow</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Our Mission</b></p>	
<p><b>PURPOSE</b> The purpose of this Communications Strategy is to guide Councillors, CEO and staff in the sharing of information, the gathering of views and opinions, being customer centric and promoting the Shire.</p>		
<p><b>OUR COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a positive image of the Shire through our communication platforms and wider media</li> <li>• Improve quality, consistency and management of our publications and platforms</li> <li>• Allocate resources to deliver our strategy</li> <li>• Utilise social media to communicate clearly and consistently to the Shire’s audience</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase positive perception of the Shire</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and community cohesion</li> <li>• Improve Shire decision-making and service delivery</li> <li>• Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Attract business and residents to the area</li> </ul>		
<p><b>WHO WE ARE</b></p>	<p><b>TARGET AUDIENCE</b></p>	
<p>Comprising over 2,500km<sup>2</sup>, the population of the Shire of Victoria Plains was 921 (2016 Census). There are 510 dwellings in the Shire. Townsites within the district include Bolgart, Calingiri, Yerecoin, Piawaning, Gillingarra and Mogumber, as well as the New Norcia community (monastic town). In 2016 47% of the population of the Shire was under 45yrs. The median age of the Shire is 46.2yrs compared to 37.2yrs for the rest of Australia. Majority of the population was born in Australia, only 3.3% speaks a language other than English at home. Main industry is agriculture. Approximately 75% of dwellings have internet access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Residents</li> <li>- Local businesses and employees</li> <li>- Developers relevant to us</li> <li>- Surrounding communities</li> <li>- Wider Perth metro area</li> <li>- Staff</li> <li>- WALGA</li> <li>- DLGSC</li> <li>- Wheatbelt Development Commission</li> <li>- RDA Wheatbelt</li> <li>- Progress Associations</li> <li>- Clubs and associations</li> <li>- Suppliers</li> <li>- State Government, it’s agencies and politicians</li> <li>- Federal Government, it’s agencies and politicians</li> <li>- Media – both local and mainstream</li> <li>- Prospective visitors and event attendees</li> <li>- Prospective new residents and investors</li> <li>- Volunteers</li> <li>- Funding bodies</li> <li>- Potential employees</li> </ul>	

<b>COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES</b>			
<b>Young People</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use clear, simple and informal language, free from jargon and acronyms</li> <li>- Consider incentives</li> <li>- Use channels they are already familiar with</li> <li>- Use existing relationships e.g. schools</li> </ul>	<b>Older People</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use large print for written materials</li> <li>- Choose accessible venues</li> <li>- Use existing relationships e.g. seniors group</li> </ul>	<b>Working Families</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider timing and childcare needs</li> <li>- Consider venue options that are appropriate for children</li> </ul>	<b>Farmers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider seasonal impacts</li> <li>- Use existing relationships e.g. grower groups</li> </ul>
<b>People with a Disability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use clear and simple language, free from jargon and acronyms</li> <li>- Avoid long periods of concentration</li> <li>- Encourage participants to bring a support person</li> <li>- Ensure adequate lighting</li> <li>- Avoid or reduce background noise whenever possible</li> <li>- Repeat and rephrase as required</li> </ul>	<b>Indigenous</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Invite and encourage involvement of respected elders</li> <li>- Use clear and simple language, free from jargon and acronyms</li> <li>- Use existing relationships</li> </ul>	<b>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use clear and simple language</li> <li>- Consider use of interpreters</li> <li>- Translate printed material</li> <li>- Respect cultural difference</li> <li>- Invite respected community leaders</li> <li>- Consider dietary requirements</li> </ul>	
<b>OUR ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES</b>		<b>OUR COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS</b>	
Attending and/or holding stalls at local events   Attending local community group and committee meetings   Workshops   Information sessions   Public participation at council meetings   Annual electors meetings   Forums   Media releases   Advertisements   Shire website   Electronic and printed newsletters   Signage and banners   Distribution of flyers and brochures   Information boards   Surveys   Social media		Facebook Page   Email distribution list   Telephone   Street banners Signage   Notice boards   Face-to-face   Emails   Printed material   SMS   Shire and Community Newsletter   Community workshops   Website   Radio   Annual Budget   SCP and CBP   Annual report  Our community preferences: Facebook, website, SMS, email, noticeboards and newsletter	
<b>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b>			
The Shire of Victoria Plains official communications will be consistent with relevant legislation, policies, standards and the positions adopted by the Council. Our communications will always be respectful and professional. Official communications undertaken on behalf of the Shire of Victoria Plains, including on the Shire's Social Media accounts and third party social media accounts must be created and retained as local government records in accordance with the Shire's Record Keeping Plan and the State Records Act 2000. These records are also subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1992.			
<b>Councillors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have the responsibility to encourage active community member participation in</li> </ul>	<b>CEO</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage Councillors and staff to undertake best practice community engagement</li> </ul>	<b>Customer Service</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adhere to the IAP2 Public Spectrum</li> </ul>	<b>OCM and Advisory Roles</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To advise on the levels of engagement/communication as required.</li> </ul>

<p>community engagement activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to, understand and consider feedback</li> <li>- Be advocates of the Shire and its communities</li> <li>- Council has a statutory obligation to satisfy itself that there is an effective mechanism in place to disseminate information to the public and that there is an effective means with which to provide the message received by the relevant necessary parties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure Council adequately resources community engagement and the communications strategy</li> <li>- Receive feedback and translate it to Council or take action</li> <li>- Encourage the community to engage with the Shire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide feedback to participants when they contribute feedback and engagement</li> <li>- Commit to continually improve the Shire's community engagement efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To advise on, and update, the Communications Plan</li> </ul>
<b>VALUES THAT UNDERPIN OUR COMMUNICATION</b>		<b>KEY MESSAGES</b>	

## OUR COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

1. INFORM	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS
1. Develop key messages for Shire priorities and service areas to demonstrate our purpose and value		
2. Annually identify and define campaigns on major projects, key deliverables and initiatives and prepare messaging		
3. Produce regular media releases that share Shire news, updates and decisions		
4. Promote the Shire's website and social media pages as primary sources of information		
5. Use social media, email and SMS as cost effective communication platforms for various target groups		
6. Regularly update the Shire's website and review its functionality for users		
7. Distribute monthly Shire and Community newsletter		
8. Distribute quarterly progress report on our SCP		
9. Develop a Signage Strategy to inform consistent fit-for-purpose and user-focussed signage		
10. Develop a Social Media content schedule		

2. CONSULT	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS
1. Engage with the community during Strategic Community Plan minor and major reviews		
2. Feedback forms and mechanisms are available on the website and in the Shire Administration Office		
3. Train staff and Councillors in the Community Engagement Policy		
4. Continually update the Customer Service Charter, promote it and train staff to deliver upon it		
5. Consult and respond through digital media platforms		

3. INVOLVE	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS
1. Gather feedback from the community on matters that impact them		
2. Respond to feedback when it has been requested and advise the respondents as to how the information will be used		
3. Promote voting in the local government election process		
4. Promote nominations for Council		

4. COLLABORATE	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS
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1. Maintain a media contact list		
2. Councillors and senior staff represent and attend various community groups		
3. Councillors nominated as delegates to Committees		
4. Clubs Connect contact list and engagement activities		

<b>5. EMPOWER</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS</b>
1. Advertise the Annual Meeting of Electors		

Author:

Adopted:

Reviewed: