

SIYATHEMBA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



WEBSITE POLICY

2019/2020

(Reviewed)

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1. INTRODUCTION

In line with the Batho Pele principles and the Constitution of the Republic, the South African government has the responsibility to make government information services available easily, widely and equitably.

Furthermore, the internet continues to grow as a key way to provide access to government information and services. Government departments and agencies realise that the internet is one of the strategic communication tools to advance the communication objectives of government. Municipalities across the country are increasingly using websites to communicate information about their functions, programmes, activities, services and products and to provide a platform for users to interact with them.

Also, e-government was established to improve transparency and communication opportunities between government's many components. The mere fact that information and knowledge are empowering contribute to greater understanding of what is happening in terms of governmental goals and aspirations.

2. THE NEED FOR WEBSITE POLICY

Firstly, Section 2(1B) of the Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000 stipulates the following:

- i. That each municipality must have its own official website and;
- ii. Place on the official website information required to be made public in terms of this Act and the Municipal Finance Management Act.
- iii. The Municipality Manager must maintain and regularly update the website (this responsibility has been delegated to the Communications Manager).

Additionally, there is a need for some level of conformity between municipal website to assist the user to find information easily, it is important that the website reflect the character of the municipality. We need to inform the user of the work that we do and the services that we render as a Municipality.

Secondly, Section 75 (1) of the Municipal Finance Management Act stipules the type of information that should be placed on the official website of the municipality such as:

- i. Annual and Adjustment budget
- ii. Budget related policies
- iii. Performance agreement
- iv. Annual report
- v. Long term borrowing contracts
- vi. Service delivery agreements

- vii. Assets disposed off
- viii. Quarterly reports.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

The objectives of the policy are:

- That the municipality meet its broader communication objectives
- That the Siyathemba Local Municipality's website be comprehensive and accurate
- That the information on the website be regularly updates
- That the website accessible to all (internal and external clients)
- That the municipality follow the best practices for quality websites

The policy aims to guide the Siyathemba Local Municipality in terms of the following:

- The kind of information that should be placed on the Website
- Structuring of the information on the website
- Ensuring that the website is user friendly
- Managing and maintaining information on the website
- Roles and responsibility of those who have to update information on the website.

4. PURPOSE OF THE MUNICIPAL WEBSITE

The purpose of the Siyathemba Municipal Website is:

- To deliver current, factual and official information about the municipality and its functions and programmes
- To provide the latest news about the municipality's activities and events
- To publish information about the municipality, support its strategic goals and meet legislative requirements (as stated above)
- To provide a vehicle for interaction between the municipality and the public
- To promote the municipality's image as the website directly speaks to the municipal image

5. ADVERTISING ON GOVERNMENT WEBSITES

There should not be endorsement or advertising of commercial products on the Siyathemba Municipal website. Paid advertising is not allowed on the municipal website. When the municipality have a significant input to an event such an event may be promoted on the website.

6.HOME PAGE

A clear, logical and consistent navigation scheme is essential to optimise access to information on the website. The navigation scheme should be user friendly and should allow users to find information coherently. To ensure a seamless experience for users, Siyathemba Municipality's municipal website must be consistent in the way in which the navigation items are displayed.

The Home page must:

- Create a positive first impression
- Look like a homepage. It should be easy to differentiate it from the other pages in the website
- Be updated frequently to ensure that it remains current.

7.WRITING FOR THE WEBSITE

The Municipality's communication on the website must be clear and concise. Guidelines on how to write for the website aims to ensure a standardize and consistent approach on government websites.

7.1 USE PLAIN LANGUAGE

Traditional government language is often unfriendly and difficult to understand. Always write with the audience in mind. Prepare content in such a way that all potential users, irrespective of their education, background and sophisticated can understand it. The basic requirements are:

7.2 PAGE LEVEL

- Write for the internet as a medium. Do not merely replicate printed products.
- Write clearly and concisely.
- Each page should be able to stand on its own, as users may view it without reference to relevant pages
- Each page must have clear main point. Limit each page to one topic
- Use a professional tone- Avoid clichés, jargon and humour. The style must be relatively formal and business-like, but not overly so.
- Use newspaper style, starting from the most important information and then moving to the least important information and then moving to the latest important information (inverted pyramid style).

- Limit the length of paragraphs
- In tables, use descriptive row and column headings
- Use sentence case for heading and menu items.

8. COMMON LOOK AND FEEL FOR SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WEBSITES

Siyathemba Municipality’s website must have a common identity with other Municipal, Provincial and National Departmental websites. The use of consistent branding, navigation items and a common approach to the location of these elements within a page will begin to create a consistent user interface. This will help users to identify any page of any website as belonging to the South African government and giving users a consistent experience of South African Government websites.

9 PROCEDURE FOR THE PLACEMENT OF INFORMATION ON THE WEBSITE

- 9.1 The Communication Unit creates the forms and register
- 9.2 The applicant fills out the form and provide form to his/her Director for verification and emails the amendments and additions to the Communications & IGR Officer
- 9.3 The Communications & IGR Officer controls and signs the form
- 9.4 The Municipal Manager approves and changes and signs the form
- 9.5 The amendments/changes are affected on the website and where applicable in consultation with the Service Provider
- 9.6 The Communications & IGR Officer signs the form for implementation and files the form in register

10. Reviewing of policy

The review of the policy only be done annually where required by legislation.

Approved by:

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Municipal Manager

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Date

Reviewed by Council: (DATE)