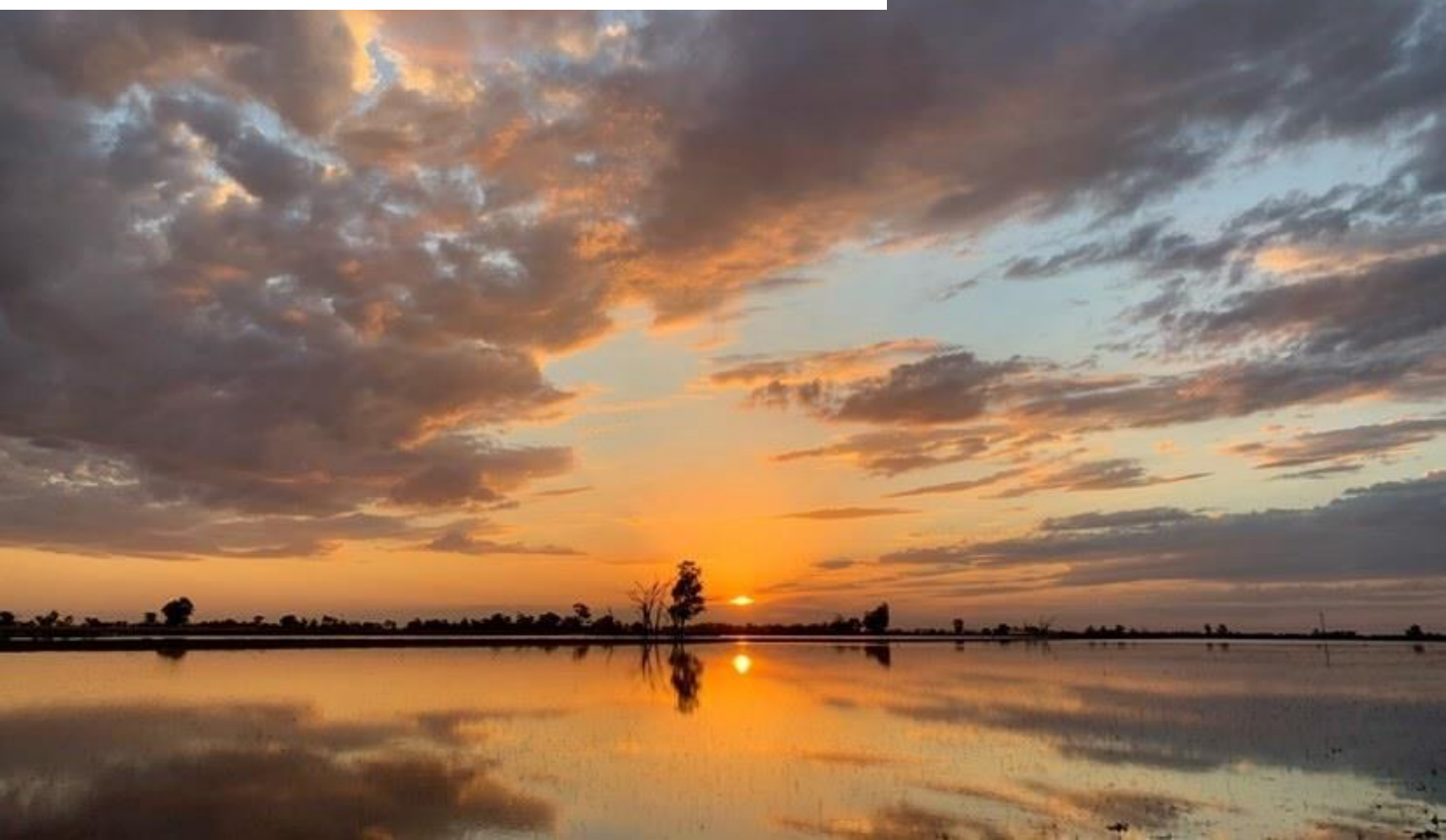


# Berrigan Shire



Communication Strategy 2021 - 2027

***Our Vision:*** *To build and foster a stronger connection between Berrigan Shire Council and its communities through informative, consistent and engaging communications that promote trust and support Council's vision to 'attract residents, families and tourists'.*

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# 1 Background

Berrigan Shire (pop 8784<sup>1</sup>) on the New South Wales and the Victorian border is three hours north of Melbourne (270 km) and 7 hours (670 km) south-west of Sydney. A rural community with Murray River tourism and exceptional recreation, social and health services and facilities in its four towns (Berrigan, Barooga, Finley and Tocumwal) the Shire's towns service surrounding dry land and irrigated farming districts.

The residents of Berrigan Shire are weighted towards seniors, empty nesters and retirees, with the 60-84 year age group representing over a third of the population.

Agriculture is the largest employer with 18.5% of the workforce occupied in agriculture, forestry or fishing roles. Health Care and Social Assistance is next which is looking to be the highest growth industry in the region overtaking tourism, (accommodation and food services).

## 1.1 Context

The system of local government in NSW is changing. Recent reforms reinforce the need for all levels of government, including local government, to plan and be responsive to change in the social, economic and environmental expectations and needs of the local communities.

Berrigan Shire Council, like most other Local Government organisations, faces the challenge of meeting the increasing expectations of its community and stakeholders in a complex operating environment and with limited resources. Ensuring a coordinated, professional and committed approach to corporate communications can achieve significant gains in raising levels of community awareness, building trust and increasing satisfaction.

## 1.2 Industry Trends

Rapidly evolving technology has transformed the way councils communicate and engage with their communities. These changes bring both opportunities and risks as new and cost-effective tools allow instant and interactive communication involving levels deep within Council's structure.

While Council currently delivers a broad range of internal and external communication activities, this Strategy seeks to harness a more planned and measureable approach. This Strategy outlines objectives and actions that are relevant across the organisation and not the sole responsibility of the Communications Officer.

This Strategy will not encompass every occurrence of Council communicating with internal and external stakeholders. Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting portfolio and Economic Development Strategies and incorporating programs for business targets and Customer Service operations will also define the communications process. The principles of the Communications Strategy are to ensure smooth efficacy for the Communications Officer to provide high quality communication and engagement services for key projects and initiatives, and the dissemination of general information to internal and external audiences.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics: [3218.0 Regional Population 2019-20](#). Released 30 March 2021

### 1.3 Council's Role

The overall aim of this Strategy is to manage the Berrigan Shire Council methods of communicating effectively, proactively and consistently. Everything we do, say and deliver, and the way we look, influences the public's perception of Council. The Council has a statutory obligation to disseminate information to the public and ensuring there is an effective means with which to provide the message received by the relevant necessary parties.

While there has been an underlying strategy behind the Council's use of communications, this is the first Communications strategy.

Council has a corporate obligation to provide information to the public as per the following Acts:

- Local Government Act 1993
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (PPIP Act)

### 1.4 Resourcing

Council have allocated a Communications Officer .6 EFT.

This position requires the following operational budget to undertake the role:

- Laptop & additional screen
- Mobile phone
- Graphics software
- DSLR Camera
- Video / Sound Equipment
- Advertising Budget
- Subscriptions to newspapers and graphics software programs.

Advertising and publications budget is currently divided between both Corporate and Technical Services, but may instead be redirected to the Communications role.

## 2 Strategy Objectives

The Berrigan Shire Council Communications Strategy is designed to assist the Council communicate how its activities are conducted in a manner which is transparent, informed, inclusive, representative, responsive, and deliberate, hence, accountable. The focus of this strategy is therefore, that communication is both a governance activity and community engagement tool contributing to the following Berrigan Shire 2027 strategic outcomes, strategic objectives and 4-year delivery program objective.

<b>Strategic Outcome</b>	2. Good Government
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	2.1 Berrigan Shire 2027 objectives and strategic actions facilitate the effective governance by Council of Council operations and reporting
<b>Delivery Program Objective</b>	2.1.3 Council operations and financial management support ethical, transparent and accountable corporate governance
<b>Strategic Outcome</b>	3. Supported and engaged communities
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	3.2 Support community engagement through life-long learning, culture and recreation
<b>Delivery Program Objective</b>	3.2.1 Provide opportunities for life-long learning, cultural expression and recreation 3.2.2 Facilitate and partner with local communities in the development of township plans
<b>Strategic Outcome</b>	4. Diverse and Resilient Business
<b>Strategic Objective</b>	4.2 Diversify and promote local tourism
<b>Delivery Program Objective</b>	4.2.1 Implement the Berrigan Shire Tourism Strategy

## 3 Strategy Development

As the first Communications Strategy developed by the Berrigan Shire Council its development is informed by:

1. Desktop review of the Council's current strategies and engagement plans
2. Desktop review of publicly available Communication Strategies developed by NSW Councils
3. Internal workshops held with key personnel with responsibility for:
  - Providing information to the community about Council programs and services
  - Facilitating community engagement
  - Council operations and customer service
  - Promoting economic development – marketing of the LGA as a Destination
4. Johari Window analysis designed to elicit what is known and which needs to be known about communication as a function or activity of Council – participants in this analysis included – the Director Corporate Services, Enterprise Risk Manager, Economic and Industry Development Liaison and the Strategic and Social Planning Coordinator

## 4 Strategic Context

Information sharing is often a balancing act, and it can be difficult to get the balance right between telling the community what they need to know, as well as what they want to know. It is important that we are seen to be providing clear, accessible and relevant information to the communities of Berrigan Shire. This Strategy will help support the Council's objective of delivering good governance and its efforts to support ethical, transparent and accountable corporate governance.

Communication supports stronger connections between Council and its communities. Making the community more aware of the important services provided by Council, and how to access these services, also helps to promote the overall health, safety and prosperity of the Shire and its residents.

While all Councillors and staff are responsible for ensuring communications with stakeholders are conducted in line with the guidelines set out in this strategy, the Communications Officer will be the person to action the Communication Strategy and support the rest of the organisation to increase awareness, confidence and satisfaction in services provided by Berrigan Shire Council.

The Workforce Plan 2021 identified the following:

### ***Changing Community Expectations***

*Changing how the Council communicates with residents and ratepayers and in doing so changing also community expectations about the immediacy and timeliness of the Council's response. Requiring that the Council, further develop its social media, communication and electronic records and content management systems and invest in training and supporting staff develop the skills, knowledge and expertise needed to respond to increased demands (particularly when Council services are disrupted or disruption is planned) for timely information about Council services.*

### **4.1 Communications vis-a-vis Engagement**

Many interpret communications and engagement to be one in the same or working hand in hand. Communication can be defined as the imparting of information via speaking, writing or some other medium, whereas engagement is referred to as the process of encouraging people to be interested in the work of an organization and assumes an opinion is sought.

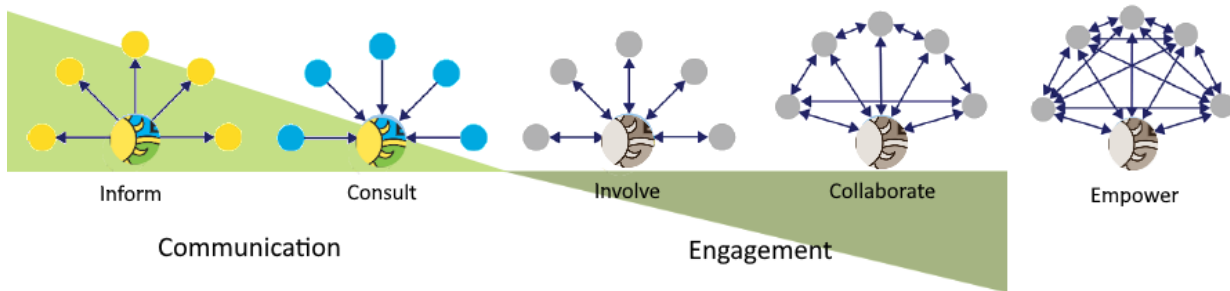
The aim of the Communications strategy is to encompass the needs of Councils communications, to be utilised as a tool for engagement on an as-needs basis in collaborations with Social and Strategic Planning and Economic Development strategies.

Sensis Social Media Report (2018) stated that at that time 79% of Australians were on social media and almost a quarter (24%) of those using social media to follow brands or businesses. Even more pertinent to Council is the finding that almost two thirds of respondents (64%) declared they were more likely to trust a brand if they interact in a positive way on social media.

The benefit to Council is that while organisations on a national level may struggle to reach their key audience, local government has the advantage of only needing a narrow approach. Since the audience is their community, approaching content is far simpler and a great way to get residents involved.

IAP2: International Association of Public Participation

## Berrigan Shire Communication Strategy IAP2 Levels of Engagement



<b>Inform</b>	communication of Council program - community feedback is not being sought
<b>Consult</b>	communication of Council program - community feedback is being sought as per legislation - via formal submissions to council identified questions
<b>Involve</b>	communication to be informed via an engagement strategy
<b>Collaborate</b>	communication to be informed via an engagement strategy with partners - may be Economic Development Projects or Community initiated

**\*IAP2:** International Association of Public Participation

Council's efforts to deliver effective, timely and relevant communications to the community will help to:

- Build a positive image of the Berrigan Shire Council through the media
- Improve quality, consistency and management of publications
- Allocate resources to maintain an engaging social media presence.
- Utilise social media to communicate clearly and consistently to Council's audience
- Increase positive perception of Council via communications
- Promote social inclusion and community cohesion
- Improve Council decision-making and service delivery
- Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction
- Attract business and residents to the area



## 5 Profile of Current Activity / Services

### Communications channels

The Council uses the following media platforms with weighting assigned according to effectiveness:

Platform	Values	Weighting
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a positive image of the Berrigan Shire Council</li> <li>• Maintain an engaging social media presence.</li> <li>• Communicate clearly and consistently to Council's audience</li> <li>• Increase positive perception of Council</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and community cohesion</li> <li>• Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Attract business and residents to the area</li> </ul>	35
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve quality, consistency and management of publications</li> <li>• Increase positive perception of Council</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and community cohesion</li> <li>• Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Attract business and residents to the area</li> </ul>	25
Newspapers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a positive image of the Berrigan Shire Council</li> <li>• Increase positive perception of Council</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and community cohesion</li> <li>• Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Attract business and residents to the area</li> </ul>	4
Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a positive image of the Berrigan Shire Council</li> <li>• Maintain an engaging social media presence.</li> <li>• Communicate clearly and consistently to Council's audience</li> <li>• Increase positive perception of Council</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and community cohesion</li> <li>• Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Attract business and residents to the area</li> </ul>	0
Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a positive image of the Berrigan Shire Council</li> <li>• Maintain an engaging social media presence.</li> <li>• Communicate clearly and consistently to Council's audience</li> <li>• Increase positive perception of Council</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and community cohesion</li> <li>• Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Attract business and residents to the area</li> </ul>	24
Media Releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a positive image of the Berrigan Shire Council</li> <li>• Improve quality, consistency and management of publications</li> <li>• Increase positive perception of Council</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and community cohesion</li> <li>• Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Attract business and residents to the area</li> </ul>	3
Television	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a positive image of the Berrigan Shire Council</li> <li>• Increase positive perception of Council</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and community cohesion</li> <li>• Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Attract business and residents to the area</li> </ul>	6

<b>Radio</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a positive image of the Berrigan Shire Council</li> <li>• Increase positive perception of Council</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and community cohesion</li> <li>• Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Attract business and residents to the area</li> </ul>	1
<b>YouTube</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a positive image of the Berrigan Shire Council</li> <li>• Maintain an engaging social media presence.</li> <li>• Communicate clearly and consistently to Council's audience</li> <li>• Increase positive perception of Council</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and community cohesion</li> <li>• Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Attract business and residents to the area</li> </ul>	1
<b>LinkedIn</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a positive image of the Berrigan Shire Council</li> <li>• Maintain an engaging social media presence.</li> <li>• Communicate clearly and consistently to Council's audience</li> <li>• Increase positive perception of Council</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and community cohesion</li> <li>• Increase resident, visitor and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Attract business and residents to the area</li> </ul>	1

### 5.1 Berrigan Shire Council social media

NSW Government agencies do not advertise via Victorian publications and media agencies, essentially removing up to 90% of traditional communications means to the Berrigan Shire, an example is preceding State elections, whereby the majority of residents are not even aware there is an election.

Berrigan Shire Council recognised this gap in communications, essentially as a cost shift to Council, and addressed this with a practical solution of building an engaged audience via the utilisation of social media. To ensure continued engagement of the audience, a formula incorporating 70 – 80% community news with council content occupying the remaining 20 – 30% ensued.

Community news content is sourced from State Government agencies and health and human services such as the Berrigan Jerilderie Community Network (BJCN), of which Intereach and Centrelink are members. Feel good posts that inform and assist the community engage the audience, through the provision of information. Areas of focus include support available to special needs carers, grants for businesses and community groups, and educational information.

The provision of this community information is non-partisan, ensuring it is not supporting political parties or private enterprises. The information is to be of beneficial nature to the community and therefore references to politicians avoided, instead State or Federal Government to be the reference, unless in the event of a visit by a politician or comments directly attributed to a minister.

The Council will respect the legal and moral rights of content owners when publishing third-party content on its social media accounts. This includes ensuring that the Council has consent to use the material and that appropriate credit given to the creator.

With the decline of traditional media in the region, this will be more evident, and the reliance on social media to get the message across will become more of a necessity than luxury.

### 5.2 Traditional Mainstream Media



The Council also has a strong link to local papers, television and radio stations, with Media Releases distributed to all relevant media agencies included in an email group called 'media'. Whilst Media Releases have previously been the preferred method of choice in communicating to media agencies, with the development of social media over the past five years Council has identified a higher rate of uptake from media agencies via social media posts.

In fact on more than one occasion Berrigan Shire Council have posted information to social media sourced from other agencies media releases, personalized to Council's message, and this is the information disseminated via local radio news updates. An example is Total Fire Bans notifications for the Southern Riverina area were being identified as only encompassing Berrigan Shire due to Council's reporting on social media.

Recent legislative changes have allowed for statutory reporting to be conducted electronically, the implications that traditional mainstream media will possibly play a lesser role in the future is to be monitored and balanced in order to meet community expectations.

Key media outlets that provide us with exposure are as listed below:

**Newsprint:**

- Southern Riverina News; regional newspaper based in Finley catering to Berrigan, Finley and Tocumwal
- Cobram Courier; regional newspaper based in Cobram, catering to Barooga and Tocumwal
- Border Mail; regional newspaper from Albury/Wodonga, which will cover issues of a more important nature or areas of controversy within the Shire.

**Radio:**

- Ace Radio in Deniliquin have two stations, Edge 102.5fm and 1521 2QN which are proactive in their coverage of issues relating to the Shire.
- ABC Radio Goulburn Murray will respond to issues of relevance to the greater community and items of controversy or concern
- StarFM based in Albury Wodonga will often share a small media bite in news programs obtained from Council's Twitter feed.

**Television:**

Previously both WIN News and Southern Cross Media had journalists based in Shepparton and Albury to travel to feature items of interest for nightly news programs. This arrangement has diminished significantly and therefore less coverage is anticipated moving forward.

### **5.3 Tools**

Council utilising social media and the web to inform, educate, consult and engage with the communities can be very successful if performed correctly. Web 2.0, moving forward, is deemed the preferred avenue with internet applications aiming to allow sharing and collaboration opportunities. The nature of social media technology makes it an easy and popular way to communicate information to a select group of people or a much wider audience.

### **5.4 Visual communications**

Visual and auditory cues are the most successful in communicating, and the visual element the most powerful communications tool. Studies suggest only 7% of the success of any presentation

is the verbal content with over 90% of any presentation reliant on the visual cues. Effective graphic design is therefore essential, being a visual tool able to interpret and represent complex information that is appealing and engaging.

To ensure the most effective uptake of message delivery, across a varied audience the visual cue is therefore the most valuable tool, and cannot be discounted. Material provided will often require redesigning as it will be presented as an A4 document, DL flyer, or with imagery not suited to the local audience, including links to politicians or commercial enterprises.

Instagram posts must include an image. Twitter, limited to a 280-character message, benefits from an included visual image. Facebook encourages the either the use of still or video imagery, though any video is not deemed as successful without the inclusion of closed captioning, as this allows viewers to enjoy the video while maintaining appropriate social behaviour in public settings. Closed captioning also makes videos accessible to people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

## **6 Strategic Engagement – Economic Development / IP&R**

The Strategy will ensure communications to both internal and external audiences align to the key priorities and Strategic Directions of the Community Strategic Plan Berrigan Shire 2027.

The Strategy will also guide Council means to inform local residents, business-owners and other stakeholders about Council activities and operations, and increase engagement by addressing key themes and feedback provided through community consultation.

## **7 Facilities/Assets**

### **7.1 Policies**

This strategy reflects the Council's priorities as set down in Berrigan Shire 2027. While not formally part of the Council's four-year Resourcing Strategy, it does reflect the Council's plan to deliver communications as a key Council resource.

The following Council policies, plans and strategies have been considered in implementing this strategy, and some may require revision as this is implemented:

- Community Strategic Plan 2027
- Community Engagement Framework and Community Participation Plan Policy
- Legislative Compliance Policy
- Media Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Privacy Management Plan
- Economic Development Strategy 2020-2024
- Information and Communications Technology Strategy 2019-2024
- Active Ageing and Disability Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2021
- Privacy Management Plan 2013
- Tourism Strategy 2019-2023
- Sports Tourism Strategy 2012
- Volunteer Strategy 2012-2016
- Communication Devices Policy

## 8 User Group Survey

The development of this Strategy highlighted marked differences between the communication requirements and expectations of Council business units – customer service, governance, economic development, planning and development, water and waste services and Council’s outdoor operations.

Further, it became evident that without content from Council business units there was risk that Council communications would not be timely, practical or interesting. Hence, rather than conducting a survey of Council business units and their expectations – user group feedback was sought via a Johari Window exercise investigating

1. Understanding of Organisational Openness / Responsiveness to Communications Function
2. Perception of the Organisation’s Willingness to take or give feedback re: impact of Communications Function

### 8.1 Summary Analysis/ Recommendations

The results of this assessment highlighted the need for the Communication Strategy to include internally focused actions – actions designed to actively promote and build the capacity of the organisation to be responsive to feedback – internal and external. Using the Johari Windows developed from this exercise the internal discussion of the results highlighted the following.

1. The results suggest that the organisation has a limited understanding of the role of communications.
2. It also became apparent that little is known or open, therefore, public about communications as an activity of Council service delivery.
3. There was limited to no agreement about what is hidden or should be hidden in terms of Council communication channels and processes.
4. More importantly this exercise confirmed that participants were aware of organisational blind spots – blind spots that could only be uncovered by the organisation as a whole actively seeking and acting on feedback – internal and external.

Based on this analysis, therefore a key Good Government and Communication Strategy Action will be to ‘build the capacity of staff to communicate, engage and champion Council business’ requiring, therefore, the development of a communications toolkit based on the following communication principles.

## 9 Strategy – Principles

The following communication principles will inform Council decision making, planning, implementation and its evaluation of the Council Communications Strategy and its associated, programs, activities and actions.

Communication Strategy Framework	... contributes to Berrigan Shire 2027 outcomes
<b>Communication Principles</b>	
1. Accessible - communications are open and available to all	
2. Accurate - our communications will state what is known and provide information about how and who to contact for more information	
3. Actionable - our communication will focus on inviting our intended audience to provide comment or take action	
4. Credible and Transparent - our communication will foster trust through consistent principle-based communication and messaging	Good government
5. Recognisable - use a consistent style and branding	Supported and engaged communities
6. Relevant - within the Council' strategic framework our communications will be responsive to the communication needs of our audience	
7. Timely - Scheduled yet responsive to change in circumstances or community emergencies	
8. Understandable - we will use plain english, explain our acronyms and use images and graphs to communicate complex ideas and data	

## 10 Strategy 4 – Year Action Plan

### 10.1 Develop a Social Media Strategy

Berrigan Shire 2027: Good Government  
Strategy Action Plan 4 yrs

**Berrigan Shire 2027 Strategic Objective:** 2.1 Berrigan Shire 2027 objectives and strategic actions facilitate the effective governance by Council of Council operations and reporting

**Communication Strategy Plan Action:** Develop a Social Media Strategy

#### Key Principles

1. **Accessible** - communications are open and available to all
2. **Accurate** - our communications will state what is known and provide information about how and who to contact for more information
6. **Relevant** - within the Council' strategic framework our communications will be responsive to the communication needs of our audience
7. **Timely** - Scheduled yet responsive to change in circumstances or community emergencies

What we want to do	How are we going to do it?	What will be the outcome	Lead Responsibility	Cost/Other Resources	Commencing
Develop and implement a Social Media Strategy	Consult with internal stakeholders	A cohesive and guided strategy for the continuation of social media implementation by Council	Communications Officer		July 2021



## 10.2 Build the capacity of staff to communicate, engage and champion Council business

Berrigan Shire 2027: Good Government  
Strategy Action Plan 4 years

**Berrigan Shire 2027 Strategic Objective:** 2.2 Strengthen strategic relationships and partnerships with community, business and government

**Communications Strategy Plan Action:** Build the capacity of staff to communicate, engage and champion Council business

### Key Principles

1. **Accessible** - communications are open and available to all
2. **Accurate** - our communications will state what is known and provide information about how and who to contact for more information
3. **Actionable** - our communication will focus on inviting our intended audience to provide comment or take action
4. **Credible and Transparent** - our communication will foster trust through consistent principle-based communication and messaging
6. **Relevant** - within the Council' strategic framework our communications will be responsive to the communication needs of our audience
7. **Timely** - Scheduled yet responsive to change in circumstances or community emergencies
8. **Understandable** - we will use plain English, explain our acronyms and use images and graphs to communicate complex ideas and data

What we want to do	How are we going to do it?	What will be the outcome	Lead Responsibility	Cost/Other Resources	Commencing
Develop a 'Communications Toolkit'	Develop a toolkit to help staff understand the communication process for their projects	Staff and Communications officer will collaborate to deliver effective communications with the community	Communications officer		Ongoing
	Involve Communications Officer early in discussions to identify communications needs		Communications Officer		Ongoing
	Develop an internal communications plan to share news, ideas, learning and achievements among staff	Respect and understanding of other employee's roles; Less division within the organisation	Communications Officer		July 2021



### 10.3 Use Communications to build trust and increase Councils reputation and identity through ongoing consistent messaging and engaging visual presence

Berrigan Shire 2027: Good Government  
Strategy Action Plan 4 years

**Berrigan Shire 2027 Strategic Objective:** 2.2 Strengthen strategic relationships and partnerships with community, business and government

**Communications Strategy Plan Action:** Use Communications to build trust and increase Councils reputation and identity through ongoing consistent messaging and engaging visual presence.

#### Key Principles

1. **Accessible** - communications are open and available to all
2. **Accurate** - our communications will state what is known and provide information about how and who to contact for more information action
4. **Credible and Transparent** - our communication will foster trust through consistent principle-based communication and messaging
5. **Recognisable** - use a consistent style and branding
6. **Relevant** - within the Council' strategic framework our communications will be responsive to the communication needs of our audience
8. **Understandable** - we will use plain english, explain our acronyms and use images and graphs to communicate complex ideas and data

What we want to do	How are we going to do it?	What will be the outcome	Lead Responsibility	Cost/Other Resources	Commencing
Be our own News Station	Update the Council website and social media on a regular basis to reflect what's happening in the communities	Increased resident engagement in Council activities Awareness about Council programs, services and events	Communications Officer IT Officer	Relevant Updates to website templates	Ongoing
	Promote Council website via other Council communication channels	Increase website traffic Less phone enquiries	Communications Officer		Ongoing
	Establish the council website as the 'go-to' place to find out what's happening within the Shire	Awareness about Council programs, services and events	Communications Officer IT Officer		Ongoing
	Review and update the website homepage to give functionality and access to news		Communications Officer IT Officer	Relevant Updates to website templates	Ongoing

## 10.4 Use Communications to build trust and increase Councils reputation and identity through ongoing consistent messaging and engaging visual presence

What we want to do	How are we going to do it?	What will be the outcome	Lead Responsibility	Cost/Other Resources	Commencing
Build trust by showcasing Council expertise and capability	Create a content series highlighting different roles within the Shire.	Respect and understanding of other employee's roles; Less division within the organisation Better community understanding of the organisation	Communications Officer	DSLR Camera Video / Sound equipment	July 2021
	Explore new opportunities to connect with the community directly via our social media and website	Increased resident engagement in Council activities	Communications Officer		Ongoing
	Develop key messages for Council priorities and service areas to demonstrate our purpose and value	Awareness about Council programs, services and events	Communications Officer		Ongoing
	Create a user friendly experience on subject matter that is relevant to them.		Communications Officer		Ongoing
	Provide transparency on information that is relevant to members of the community		Communications Officer		Ongoing
Explore new ways to deliver information and connect council with community	Clearly communicate where the community can access formal council documentation, in the a user friendly way	Increased resident engagement in Council activities Awareness about Council programs, services and events	Communications Officer		Ongoing
	Produce explanatory videos featuring council subject matter	Better community understanding of the organisation	Communications Officer Leadership Team		Ongoing
	Set up working group to review Councils brand and make recommendations on improvement	Respect and understanding of other employee's roles; Less division within the organisation	Communications Officer Leadership Team		Current

## 10.5 Develop an ongoing communications plan that enables the community to easily access information they need

### Berrigan Shire 2027: Supported and Engaged Community Strategy Action Plan 4 years

**Berrigan Shire 2027 Strategic Objective:** 3.2 Support community engagement through life-long learning, culture and recreation

**Communications Strategy Plan Action:** Develop an ongoing communications plan that enables the community to easily access information they need

#### Key Principles

1. **Accessible** - communications are open and available to all
2. **Accurate** - our communications will state what is known and provide information about how and who to contact for more information
3. **Actionable** - our communication will focus on inviting our intended audience to provide comment or take action
4. **Credible and Transparent** - our communication will foster trust through consistent principle-based communication and messaging
5. **Recognisable** - use a consistent style and branding
6. **Relevant** - within the Council' strategic framework our communications will be responsive to the communication needs of our audience
7. **Timely** - Scheduled yet responsive to change in circumstances or community emergencies
8. **Understandable** - we will use plain English, explain our acronyms and use images and graphs to communicate complex ideas and data

What we want to do	How are we going to do it?	What will be the outcome	Lead Responsibility	Cost/Other Resources	Commencing
Facilitate greater self-service of information	Promote Council's social media and website as primary sources of information	Awareness about Council programs, services and events Council Newsletter	Communications Officer		Ongoing
	Educate our audience on where and how they can access information				
	Provide timely updates on Council meetings / outcomes through social media and possible EDMs				
Ensure content is easily digestible by the community	Review and develop content that is clear and consistent	Awareness about Council programs, services and events	Communications Officer		Ongoing
	Conduct a communications survey every two years to better understand community needs and satisfaction with current processes	Community satisfaction survey results (communication)	Communications Officer Strategic and Social Planning Coordinator	Mail chimp/ Survey monkey	FY22
Improve effectiveness of communications channels	Introduce a marketing campaign that informs the community on how to stay in touch with Council through our various communications methods	Awareness about Council programs, services and events	Communications Officer		Ongoing

## 10.6 Develop an ongoing communications plan that enables the community to easily access information they need

What we want to do	How are we going to do it?	What will be the outcome	Lead Responsibility	Cost/Other Resources	Commencing
Continued (pg 18)... Improve effectiveness of communications channels	Detailed social media plan to increase use of social media and create engaging content that is digestible for a wide audience	Data analytics Facebook and Instagram likes, views and engagement	Communications Officer		June 2021
	Align social media platforms so they fit with audience preference. Consider disabling Twitter account	Awareness about Council programs, services and events	Communications Officer		Ongoing
	Website overhaul to improve user experience. Review content housed on the website and update content	Improved website quality, search functionality and user experience	Communication Officer IT Officer		Current Project March 2021

## 10.7 Support and connect local communities and businesses

### Berrigan Shire 2027: Supported and Engaged Community Strategy Action Plan 4 years

**Berrigan Shire 2027 Strategic Objective:** 4.2 Diversify and promote local tourism

**Communications Strategy Plan Action:** Support and connect local communities and businesses

#### Key Principles

- 1. Accessible** - communications are open and available to all
- 2. Accurate** - our communications will state what is known and provide information about how and who to contact for more information
- 3. Actionable** - our communication will focus on inviting our intended audience to provide comment or take action
- 4. Credible and Transparent** - our communication will foster trust through consistent principle-based communication and messaging
- 5. Recognisable** - use a consistent style and branding
- 6. Relevant** - within the Council' strategic framework our communications will be responsive to the communication needs of our audience
- 7. Timely** - Scheduled yet responsive to change in circumstances or community emergencies
- 8. Understandable** - we will use plain English, explain our acronyms and use images and graphs to communicate complex ideas and data

What we want to do	How are we going to do it?	What will be the outcome	Lead Responsibility	Cost/Other Resources	Commencing
Create opportunities for local and tourism related social engagement	Use hashtags and keywords to drive wider audience, especially where tourism focused	Increased attendance to local events	Communications Officer		Ongoing
	Transform councils Instagram account into a platform that promotes visual content, with a key focus on tourism and community event related information	New visitor experience Growth of Instagram followers and engagement		DSLR Camera	Ongoing



	Share stories about community events, health and wellbeing, arts and culture; predominately housed on Instagram	Increased resident engagement in Council activities	Communications Officer		Ongoing
Share the stories that make Berrigan Shire a great place for both residents and visitors	Develop content campaigns to showcase and share stories from the local community	Increased resident engagement in Council activities	Communications Officer		Ongoing
	Increase content collaboration from internal and external sources by promoting opportunities to submit stories and streamlining process to do so				Ongoing
	Improve content sharing capacity by cross promoting across different social channels where appropriate	Growth on Instagram and Facebook, increased website views	Communications Officer		Ongoing

## 11 Review of other materials

- Mount Alexander Shire Council: Communications Strategy July 2018
- Surf Coast Shire Council - DRAFT Communications and Community Engagement Strategy
- Berrigan Shire Council Community Strategic Plan 2027