



Media Policy: Muizenberg Improvement District (MID)

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1. Purpose

This policy outlines the coordination of contact between the MID and the media. It applies to directors and staff and is designed to ensure that in all dealings with the media, the MID acts in a professional, coordinated manner and that all statements made are accurate and appropriate.

Our general policy will continue to be one of openness and accessibility towards the media. The MID tries to maintain a full and steady flow of information to the media in order to:

- Increase public awareness of the services provided by the MID and the functions it performs
- Provide advance and ongoing publicity on matters of public interest
- Ensure that those who are affected by our decisions, policies and priorities are given the information to understand them and to have a real and informed say about them

Media interaction can positively build the reputation of the MID and create better understanding of its strategies and activities. However, when an organisation opens itself up to media scrutiny, there are risks and the policy sets out to provide MID directors and employees with guidelines to manage the risks associated with media engagement.

For the purposes of this policy, media contact includes: providing information via media releases or statements, letters to the editor, responding to media enquiries over the phone and via email, interviews or briefings, disclosing information to the media, comments on talkback radio, addressing a seminar or conference where the media are present, posting and commenting on social media sites, and media activities for events, reports, and launches.

2. The difference between Traditional Media and Social Media

Communicators distinguish between four types of media:

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Traditional
Media | { | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid Media - Advertising • Owned Media – e.g. an organisations’ website • Earned Media - news stories and publicity E.g.: coverage on radio, television and in newspapers and magazines • Social media –communication tools like Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, You Tube and Vimeo |
|----------------------|---|--|

Traditional Media

Paid, owned and earned media are referred to as Traditional Media. The advantages of paid and owned media are that publication is scheduled and controlled by the organisation.

The advantage of earned media is that it is not paid for but is achieved because an editor deems it newsworthy and relevant to audiences. The disadvantage of earned media is that an organisation does not control the end result. Information can be inaccurate or distorted or a conflicting point of view can be included in the news article. (SEE ANNEXURE 2) This is why earned media needs professional expertise and a clear understanding of how the media works and how to engage with journalists and editors.

Social Media

The rapid growth in digital technology and the rise of social media platforms over the past few years have revolutionised the way in which people communicate and share information. Social Media tools provide an opportunity for two-way communication between the MID and its stakeholders thereby increasing the frequency and speed of engagement. At the same time social media presents new challenges to the MID directors and employees. It is time-consuming and requires real-time response which is not always possible given that the MID Directors are volunteers and there is only one employee. Engagement with social media

requires managing increasing citizen expectations, a more informal communication style, and taking care not to blur the lines between personal voice and institutional voice.

Different media channels can drive each other. Most newspaper, television and radio channels now have online sites. This means that media that was traditionally consumed in a passive way is now duplicated online where audiences are able to comment and share the link on social media sites. This generates wider circulation and conversation. Social media can also be used to drive audiences back to traditional media channels like the MID website where information has been carefully prepared and controlled.

It is useful to monitor conversations on social media sites like the Muizenberg Notice Board on Facebook and comments on Muizenberg-related videos on You Tube and Vimeo. These conversations help the MID to gauge public sentiment and identify possible partners and champions. While the MID directors and manager can undertake this type of monitoring, the social media environment is an extremely fluid one. We need to be realistic about how much effort can be expended on it as it is time-consuming and often distracting. The MID communication objectives, stakeholder profiles and availability of human and technical resources will dictate when and how social media is used.


The goal is Effective Stakeholder Engagement

The measure of success for any traditional media or social media tool should be: Does it allow the MID to engage with internal and external stakeholders by facilitating one or more of the following:

- Communication
- Disseminating information
- Interaction
- Education

In order to be effective, communication initiatives must form part of a wider communications strategy that utilises the full potential of both traditional and social media to deliver at least some of the tangible benefits listed above. **The MID Stakeholder Engagement Strategy** defines a variety of communication tools which should be carefully selected to suit the intended audience and to achieve maximum impact. Face-to-face engagement, phone calls, sms and email conversations enable direct and clear communication between the MID and its stakeholders and partners and should not be neglected.

Table 1 below sets out the key differences between Traditional Media and Social Media.

Traditional Media Outbound ↙ ↓ ↘ Read Watch Listen		Social Media Inbound ↑ ↖ Tweet it Share it
One-way Information		Two-way conversation
Closed system		Open system
About YOU		About ME
Controlled Communication		Unstructured Communication
Professional content		User-generated content
Metric: Reach		Metric: Engagement
Pre-produced / Scheduled		Real-Time Creation
Set preparation and interview time		Time consuming – needs constant monitoring
Passive Involvement with stakeholders		Active involvement with stakeholders

3. Responsibility for Media Relations and Engagement

- 3.1. **The Chair of the MID** will be the official spokesperson and will coordinate contact with the media through the MID manager. Where the topic relates to a particular portfolio, the MID Director responsible for that portfolio should also be involved in the media engagement, may manage the media interview, and should have input into the media release/advert or background material provided to the media. The Media usually require quick responses and the relevant portfolio director/s should supply input as timeously as possible
- 3.2. **The Stakeholder Engagement Director** is responsible for overseeing all media content including: media releases, media statements, letters to the editor, the MID website, the MID Facebook page and Twitter.
- 3.3. **Portfolio Directors** will advise the Stakeholder Engagement Director and Chair of likely events, announcements or issues that may attract media interest, and ensure information provided to the Media Relations team is accurate.
- 3.4. **The Media Relations Team:** Comprises: the Stakeholder Engagement Director; the board members or official responsible for managing the MIDs' Facebook and Twitter communication; and the MID Manager who is responsible for managing day-to-day media relations and liaison as described below.
- 3.5. **The MID Manager** will cultivate relationships with journalists, field and filter media enquiries, and keep media contact records. Other responsibilities include coordination of media releases and statements and coordination of media interviews, media kits and background material; day-to-day management of the MID Facebook page (posting news and information and responding to posts); liaison with appropriate directors to coordinate responses to media issues, and alerting the Board members to sensitive or controversial media issues relevant to the organisation.
- 3.6. **Media Releases:** The Stakeholder Engagement Director is responsible for developing or finalising content for all media releases. The MID Media release template (ANNEXURE 1) is the required format for the design of any media release, statement or backgrounder. All communication with the media (including interviews) must be accompanied by a written media release/backgrounder which is supplied to the media so that publication of inaccurate facts and distortion can be minimised. The MID Boiler plate "about the MID" and the MID website URL must always be included in communication with the media.
- 3.7. **Website:** The Stakeholder Engagement Director is responsible for developing website content in consultation with the chair and by collaborating with portfolio directors. Portfolio Directors are responsible for ensuring that information pertaining to their portfolio is accurate and appropriate.
- 3.8. **Access to media passwords and log-in:** The user names, passwords and log-in details for the MID website, Facebook page, Twitter account and any communication tools to be used in the future (like a bulk SMS distribution account) should be kept on file by the Chair and the MID Manager. When a Director or employee or agent who has had access to this information leaves the MID, these passwords and user-names should be changed.
- 3.9. **Email correspondence:** A MID email address has been assigned to each portfolio. This is to ensure that email correspondence is kept on electronic record and can continue to be accessed and used as background by a new director taking over a portfolio. Board members should always use their MID email when communicating with stakeholders in their official role. When a Director leaves the MID Board, the password for their portfolio email should be changed.

4. Media Policy Guidelines

- Ask: Is there a good reason to issue a media release, hold a media interview, place a comment or respond?
- As a rule, the MID will never respond with “No Comment” but may decide to limit engagement due to confidentiality on a particular issue or assist the media in identifying a better source of information should the topic not be one the MID wishes to be associated with.
- Ask: Who is the potential audience? This will help tailor content to their needs and also to choose the most appropriate media tool. For example, some audiences will be poorly reached by social media tools, while other stakeholder groupings may be well reached by newer technologies.
- Media responses should always be ‘on the record’. They will be truthful and accurate, and not include speculation, guesswork or personal opinion. They will not include disparaging comments about other organisations or individuals.
- All media enquiries and responses are to be logged by the MID manager.

5. Traditional Media Liaison Guidelines

When liaising with the media all directors and staff should:

- Be responsive – reply as quickly as possible to any media enquiry or social media question
- Be credible – accurate, fair, thorough and transparent.
- Be respectful – encourage constructive criticism and deliberation.
- Be cordial, honest and professional at all times.
- Listen before you talk – before entering any conversation you need to understand the context
- Write and say what you know – you have to know your facts and cite credible sources.
- Acknowledge if a mistake is made through your comment or response and respond to it immediately.

6. Social Media Liaison Guidelines

When posting or responding to comments on social media all directors and staff should:

- Keep postings legal, ethical and respectful.
- Before engaging with a specific social media channel, ensure you understand its terms of reference, conventions and etiquette.
- Employees and Directors may not engage in online communication activities that could bring the MID into disrepute
- When speaking on behalf of the MID, personal details of yourself or other MID employees/directors should not be given out – only the official contact details (official cell phone number, office telephone, e-mail or fax) for reference purposes

Annexure 1: Media Release Template



Topic (maximum 5 words)

Date:

Media Release

Start with a short introduction of two – three lines (bold font) always using the active voice. The Muizenberg Improvement District reports a dramatic down turn in crime since ...

Explain and drill down into the issue, tailor it to audience concerns and interests. Read it as if you had never heard of the MID and see if it still makes sense. Cite credible sources – a research report, an expert opinion.

Use a quote. MID Chair, Tony Smith said: "Our board grappled with the problem of We listened to residents and set about finding a practical solution ..."

Now provide additional information and if the aim is to mobilise a group of stakeholder, be very specific about the actions they can take or the people they can contact.

Put the least important information last as editors will often shorten a media release and add in other sources and opinions. Remember that when you supply a photograph to the media it must have a caption which includes the names and surnames of all persons featured in the photograph. If the photograph was not produced by the MID, permission to use must be sought from the photographer and the photographer must be credited in this way: Photo credit: Razeen Daniels. When you have said all there is to say type "Ends" and remember to include the boiler plate "About the MID".

Ends

About the MID:

The Muizenberg Improvement District [MID] is a geographic area where property owners have contracted to pay a levy to facilitate a joint effort by the City of Cape Town and the local community to ensure more effective management of public areas and to promote business confidence.

The MID supplements normal municipal services provided by the City, focusing its funds on Public Safety & Security, Cleansing, Environmental Upliftment and Social Development issues like vagrancy and finding workable solutions for the homeless. The Muizenberg Improvement District is a legal entity established under the City's Special Rating Areas by-law and also governed by the South African Companies Act 2008.

While MID levies are obligatory for all rate payers, membership of the MID is voluntary. Property owners are encouraged to download the membership application form from the **MID website: www.mid.org.za**

Enquiries:

Chevone Petersen, Manager: Muizenberg Improvement District

manager@mid.org.za

021 788 1196/082 463 1525

Annexure 2: Earned Media

Weekend Argus

Making life harsh for street people no solution, say NGOs

May 9 2015 at 12:39pm
By Asanda Sokanyile

Conflicting point of view

[Comment on this story](#)

SEVERAL NGOs are not impressed with the City of Cape Town's new campaign to combat the number of people living on the streets, complaining that its "big stick approach" of making the streets so uncomfortable that people will be forced off is not the best solution.

Through their Give Responsibly campaign, the city urges people not to give money to those begging at traffic lights, warning that this practice makes "life on the street more viable" and, in the worst case scenario, "can feed a cycle of antisocial behaviour that keeps people on the street and away from help".

It offers people the chance to send a text to the number 38088, thereby donating about R8 per SMS to NGOs it says are working to offer people on the streets "the right help at the right time".

But Patric Solomons, director of Molo Songololo, counters that the reasons people live on the streets of Cape Town are many and varied, and certainly not limited to monetary gain.

"Many leave home because of lack of food, shelter, safety and protection in their own living environments, or one or other form of abuse, violence, crime, exclusion.

"Many parents, especially fathers, abandon their children, and children also leave home because it's not 'nice' at home – and they 'prefer' to be elsewhere. Some even express that the 'street' is a better place than home," he said.

Other factors which forced people on to the streets included a breakdown in and lack of support systems for poor and marginalised groups, lack of jobs, low wages, and exploitative practices, among other things.

Greg Andrews, convener of the Street People's Forum, added his voice to the concerns raised, saying that people living on the street "are a reflection of the failure of our social contract".

And "we are all responsible", he charged, adding that he believed the Give Responsibly campaign should rather focus on encouraging members of the public not to give to children.

"The city's approach at the moment is a stick approach: make the streets as uncomfortable as possible in order to force people off the streets."

But he warned that "sticks tend to make angry people angrier, and make scared people good followers of angry people".

"If we want less begging, it is not going to help to simply stop giving money and criminalising people sleeping on the streets with by-laws.

"The solution lies in creating the opportunities people are clearly longing for," Andrews said.

Asked to comment, mayoral committee member for social development and early childhood development Suzette Little, said the objective of the campaign was to educate the public that handouts don't help, and can hurt people.

"Residents are known to be generous people. We want to harness this generosity to support shelters, rather than begging."

She said handouts too often simply perpetuated the cycle of begging, encouraging people to remain on the streets.

As part of the campaign, Little said, there were 12 assessment centres which had been set up to assist with the 14 active shelters in the metropole.

"Currently we have 14 active shelters in the metropole, and 12 assessment centres.

"Any street people who wish to be reunited with their families are encouraged to contact the city's assessment centres, and the Reintegration Unit will facilitate this," she said.

As part of the campaign, the city produced an online advertisement which shows an out-of-order vending machine spewing out coins, with people hovering around waiting for spare change.

Little said the aim of the creative exercise was to show that small change keeps people on the street.



Venetia Orgill helps to feed the homeless in the city centre every Thursday. Picture: David Ritchie

Campaign opened up to media scrutiny

Correct information about the campaign was published but the City of Cape Town did not have control over the published story.