

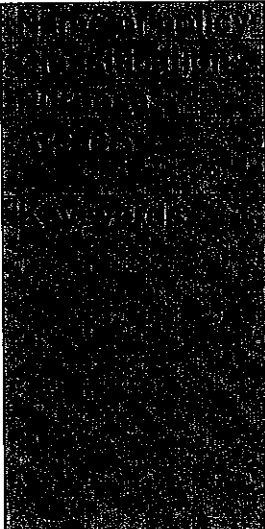
UMSOBOMVU

MUNICIPALITY



LANGUAGE POLICY

Summary of policy

	Language policy
	Human Resources
	To provide a guideline for the use of languages in the municipality
	Written and spoken communication
	Internal and external communication
	Legislative framework
	Internal spoken communication
	External spoken communication
	Internal written spoken
	External spoken communication
	Public participation
Official municipality language	
Municipal signage	
Linguistic profile	

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DEFINING KEY CONCEPTS

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APPROVAL

DEFINING KEY CONCEPTS


Council means the Council of the Municipality of Umsobomvu

Equitable use means the use of language which is fair, impartial and even - handed


Multilingualism means the use of two or more languages by an individual or a group of people


Official language means the a language used in government, education business or the media

Working language means an official language chosen by the municipality as the language

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- 1.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provides for eleven official languages and recognizes the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous languages of the people of South Africa.
 - 1.2 It provides further that everyone has a right to use their languages and to participate in the cultural life of their choice.
 - 1.3 Municipalities are enjoined by the Constitution and the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000), take into account the language usage and preferences of their residents when communicating, including the special needs of the people that cannot read or write.
 - 1.4 According to constitutional language stipulations the municipality must take the following factors in consideration for developing a language policy:
 - Usage of language
 - Practicality
 - Expenses
 - Regional circumstances
 - Balance of needs and preferences of the population (referring to residents)

The national and provincial governments must use at least two official languages for government business, and secondly, the stipulations as above. In the case of municipalities, no number of languages is specified, suggesting that they may use only one language or an unlimited number for official purposes.

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- 2.1 The translation of the language rights enshrined in the Constitution into a coherent and effective approach to multilingualism in the Umsobomvu Municipality.
 - 2.2 The promotion of the equitable use of the official languages of the municipality.
 - 2.3 The facilitation of equitable access to municipal services and information in more than one language.
 - 2.4 The protection of language diversity and the promotion of respect for multilingualism and unity in diversity.
 - 2.5 The use of multilingualism for effective administration and communication processes within the municipality.



The Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) emphasises community participation in local government. The following constitute the legal framework for this policy:

- 3.1 Section 6 and 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.
- 3.2 Section 1.2.4 of the Implementation Plan: National Language Policy Framework, 2003, which states that local government will determine the language use and preferences of their communities within an enabling provincial language policy framework. Upon determination of the language use and preference(s) of communities, local governments must, in broad consultation with their communities, develop, publicise and implement a multilingual policy.
- 3.3 The promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000).

3.4 The white paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele White Paper), 1997.



The policy is based on the following principles:

4.1 Language rights

To promote respect for the language rights of residents as enshrined in the Constitution.

4.2 Language equity

To ensure the equal treatment of the official languages of the municipality.

4.3 Redress

To enhance the status and roles of previously marginalised languages.

4.4 Non-discrimination

To prevent the use of language for the purpose of exploitation, domination and discrimination.

5.5 People-centredness

To address the needs, aspirations and interests of language communities in the spirit of Batho Pele.

4.6 Partnerships

To collaborate with public and private language institutions and agencies to promote multilingualism.

4.7 Good Governance

To use all the official languages of the Municipality to ensure transparent, accountable local government who is responsive to the linguistic needs of its constituency.

4.8 Participation



To enable municipal employees, as well as Umsobomvu residents, to contribute to municipal strategies and goals.



The above summary is the result of various resources identifying the significant languages of the region:

Afrikaans	Dominant
English	Less, but still significant
Xhosa	Dominant
SeSotho	Significant
Other	None significant

English, due to its global nature, can be regarded as the business language most often use in South African industry and service delivery environment (various resources). It is therefore recommended that Umsobombu Municipality adopts 4 official languages, namely Afrikaans, English, Xhosa and Sesotho.

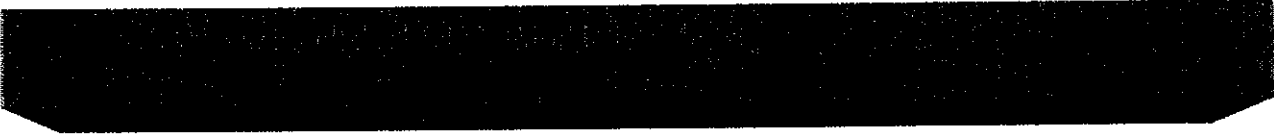
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- 6.1 Any of the official languages of the Municipality may be used in spoken intradepartmental and interdepartmental communication, provided that all involved in the communication event understand the language(s) being spoken.
 - 6.2 Any of the official languages of the Municipality may be used in any debates or proceedings of Council. However, any member or official, may at any time object if the language spoken is not understood. In that case, the municipality must provide an interpreter.
 - 6.3 It is therefore advisable that in the event of a meeting the language that will ensure a common understanding will be selected to avoid unnecessary delays and interruptions.
 - 6.4 In general, disciplinary hearings, job interviews and performance assessments in the Municipality, will be conducted in the language of choice of the target person (e.g. applicant) with the understanding that the person conducting the interview, assessment or hearing is also efficient in that language.
 - 6.5 An interpreter should be made available in the event that a common language does not exist between the two parties.
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- 7.1 The municipality must, in its spoken communication, strive to serve all its clients in the language of their choice.

- 7.2 It is compulsory for staff members to assist fellow-colleagues with language interpretation in striving to render services to the public.
- 7.3 In the event of public meetings, the municipality must ensure that expertise is available to address the public in all the adopted official languages (Afrikaans, English, Xhosa and SeSotho).



- 8.1 To promote operational efficiency, English should be the working language of all documents of the Municipality, and translations in the other official of the Municipality will be made available on request.
- 8.2 The municipality's policies, procedures, conditions of service, strategic circulars, important human resource information, health and safety information and other strategic documents must be made available in all the official languages of the Municipality in the event of:
- Requested by a significant portion of the staff and or public (significance will probably refer to at least 20%)
 - Requested by the MEC, and/or other provincial authority
 - In other case that merits the costs of translation of any documents
 - Approved by Council and/or management
- 8.3 Although no employee of the Municipality may be prevented from using an official language of his or her choice at any given time, all municipal documents that needs to be archived must, for practical administrative reasons, be available in one of the official languages of Council.
- 8.4 The use of a language understood by most must be encouraged in internal documents to facilitate understanding and improve communication.

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- 9.1 All official notices, statements, tariffs, by-laws, regulations, policies, advertisements etc. applicable to a significant part of the public must be made available in all the official languages of the municipality, where applicable and financially viable and specifically requested so by that portion of the community.
 - 9.2 The municipality must identify personnel that possess of multilingual skills to assist the public in the interpretation of any of the above, and if required or requested by the public, translate such documents.
 - 9.3 The municipality must promote all its official languages on its website.
 - 9.4 Letterheads should contain all four official languages of the municipality.
 - 9.5 All external documents of the municipality (especially letters) must carry a sentence at the foot of the page stating that the document can be made available in any of the official languages of the municipality.

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- 10.1 The municipality must erect direction signs in all the official languages of the municipality.
 - 10.2 All identification signage, direction signs and road signs relating to municipal signs buildings, services, facilities, infrastructure and vehicles must be in the four official languages of the municipality where practicable.



The municipality must, on request and where practically, provide for the needs of people with language disabilities.



	For approval
	For consultation and acceptance
	For execution
	Administration
	Notification and discussion with members
	Notification and clarification