Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale

Strategic Communications Plan

2019–2023

Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale

Executive summary

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale (the Shire) is a local government with WA's fastest growing population.

Our organisation is also growing and evolving with our community, to ensure we are delivering the projects, programs and services to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

Following the results of our 2018 Community Perceptions Survey, the Shire has developed a Strategic Communications Plan (SCP) to provide clarity and improve consistency in our approach to internal and external communications.

The SCP will also assist us to build trust with the community and credibility of the brand (Council, administration, Shire) and align all Shire communication with the goals of our Strategic Community Plan as we strive to be a leader in delivering best-practice communication.

Using the results of our 2018 Community Perceptions Survey, additional focus group workshops were conducted to further identify a range of values, concerns and suggestions for improvement.

A range of audiences were categorised including existing and new residents, community and sporting groups, businesses, visitors and tourists, and Shire Councillors and staff.

Throughout the process, the tension of managing our rapid growth while maintaining the heritage and beauty of our natural environment was a recurring theme amongst our diverse community. Our goal is to unify our community by facilitating engagement and celebrating our successes.

Our diversity in people, culture and landscapes, as well as our passion to achieve, unites us towards the common goal of making our Shire the nicest place to live. Because you can't have a community without unity, we're growing together.

Our Growing Together initiative will be communicated across a range of offline, online and physical channels, with ongoing reporting and analysis to ensure our goals are being achieved.

Our Vision

City living offering a rural lifestyle with abundant opportunities for a diverse community.

Our Shire

Located approximately 45 kilometres from the Perth CBD, the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is set against the picturesque backdrop of the Darling Scarp.

Forested hills and wetlands is complemented by areas of pristine wilderness with an abundance of wildflowers and wildlife. This unique landscape delivers an enviable rural setting in close proximity to a major metropolitan area.

This Shire is the fastest growing local government in Western Australia and we need to balance the natural beauty of Serpentine Jarrahdale with the need for sustainable growth – not just environmentally, but also socially and economically.

Objective

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale has experienced significant growth over the past five years and will continue to grow over the next five years. This plan outlines how our communications will be targeted, delivered and monitored to ensure consistency and efficiency in line with the goals of our Strategic Community Plan.

Introduction

The Shire's Strategic Communications Plan 2019–2023 (SCP) is a five year outcome–based strategy to guide the Shire's efforts to implement consistent, innovative and targeted communications.

The SCP will also advance the Shire's efforts to unite our community and foster growth in all areas as indicated in our Strategic Community Plan 2017–2027.

The SCP was developed following the results of our 2018 Community Perceptions Survey, and several focus group workshops with Shire Councillors and staff that identified a range of values, concerns and suggestions for improvement.

The Shire has used this valuable feedback to deliver this path for implementation of our new communications positioning: ***Growing Together.***

At predetermined stages of the SCP, the Shire will conduct reviews and analyse the effectiveness of the communications, making adaptations as necessary to ensure our goals are met.

What you told us

2018 Community Perceptions Survey

Place to live
Shire score: 70/100
Industry standard: 77/100

Community advocacy
Shire score: –31NPS
(NPS range from –100 to +100)
Industry standard: 1

Advocacy and lobbying
Shire score: 37/100
Industry standard: 49/100

Governing organisation
Shire score: 43/100
Industry standard: 55/100

Rates value for money
Shire score: 26/100
Industry standard: 44/100

Community consultation
Shire score: 35/100
Industry standard: 46/100

Overall performance
Shire score: 57/100
Industry standard: 66/100

Council's leadership
Shire score: 36/100
Industry standard: 49/100

Economic development
Shire score: 44/100
Industry standard: 44/100

Customer Service
Shire score: 49/100
Industry standard: 60/100

Clear vision for the area
Shire score: 24/100
Industry standard: 36/100

Education and training
Shire score: 49/100
Industry standard: 49/100

Ordinary Council Meeting 18 November 2019

What do we want to achieve?

The SCP aims to improve sentiment by uniting our community in thankfulness for the diversity of our people and environment. By understanding and acknowledging the individuals and organisations making the Shire nicer in their own way, we can all say "Thank you" with pride in each others' contribution to this thriving community.

The goals for our Strategic Communications Plan are:

Show value for money in Shire rates

Increase knowledge of how the Shire is building and maintaining local roads

Provide greater insight into Shire advocacy and lobbying

Highlight what makes the Shire the nicest place to live

Generate increased tourism

Celebrate and support our equine industry

Further develop Shire staff culture and engagement

How will it look?

Growing together

What will we say?

Ultimately, the main communications objectives are behaviourally related, given that the audience behaving in a particular way will allow for the accomplishment of the goal. However, it may not be possible to change the audience's behaviour before addressing their knowledge and attitudes.

Throughout the five year period, the Shire will utilise a positioning cycle anchored around "Growing Together". The messaging will focus on creating awareness of the "Growing Together" initiative to facilitate understanding and acceptance of our values, which we can all respect; bringing unity and advocacy that in turn leads to further awareness.

AWARENESS

ADVOCACY

UNDERSTANDING

Growing Together

UNITY

ACCEPTANCE

RESPECT

Each of our goals has been written so that it can easily provide the basis for messaging. The primary message may be more simplistic than secondary messages that iterate the specifics in the objectives such as simple facts, examples or statistics. Additionally, persuasive elements may be employed to make messages play on humour, excitement, empathy or appreciation.

GOAL	MESSAGING SENTIMENT
Show value for money in Shire rates	We are a local government with 32,000 residents, and expected to grow to 100,000 by 2050. This is one of the projects/programs/services we are delivering to meet the needs of our growing community…
Increase knowledge of how the Shire is building and maintaining local roads	As we grow together, our infrastructure is growing too. This is what we're doing…
Provide greater insight into Shire advocacy and lobbying	The Shire is actively working with decision-makers and key stakeholders to realise our advocacy priorities for our growing community in the following ways…
Highlight what makes the Shire the nicest place to live	The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is the nicest place to live, because we're growing together. Here's how…
Generate increased tourism	The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is an amazing place to visit. Here's why…
Celebrate and support our equine industry	We have so many horses here, there's an entire industry within our community. Here's how we are celebrating and supporting it…
Further develop Shire staff culture and engagement	Our collaborative approach and "can do" attitudes make the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale a great place to work. Here's why…

How will we measure effectiveness?
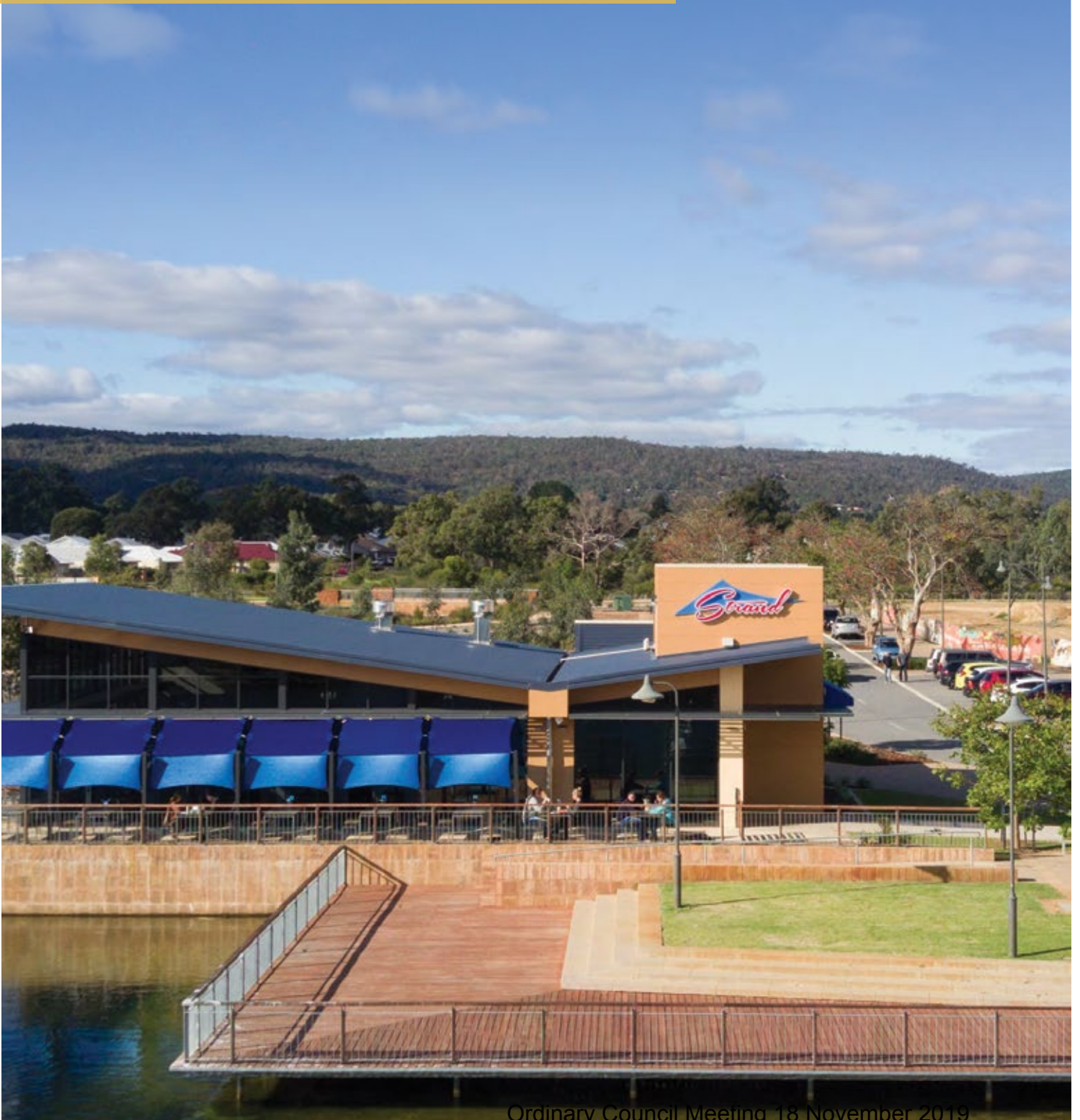
The SCP will be measured on an ongoing basis on the following key outcomes:

GOAL	WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE
Show value for money in Shire rates	• Reduced complaints around annual Shire rates • Recognition of Shire projects, services and events
Increase knowledge of how the Shire is building and maintaining local roads	• Increased positive sentiment • Reduced complaints about local road infrastructure
Provide greater insight into Shire advocacy and lobbying	• Increased positive sentiment • Increased engagement and support by community groups for advocacy projects
Highlight what makes the Shire the nicest place to live	• Increased positive community engagement • Increased Community Perception Survey results
Generate increased tourism	• Increased visitor numbers
Celebrate and support our equine industry	• Increased recognition of our equine industry • Increased positive community engagement
Further develop Shire staff culture and engagement	• Increased positivity in Staff Satisfaction Survey results • Increase in job applicants for open positions • Increased staff retention rates

At predetermined stages of the SCP, the Shire will conduct reviews and analyse the effectiveness of the communications, making adaptations as necessary to ensure our goals are met.

Who will we say it to?

The SCP's audience is defined as those with influence over the goals of our communications.
It should be noted that groups may vary greatly in influence and sentiment.

Existing residents

Generally on rural properties who have been living in the Shire for many years

New residents

Generally young families who have recently bought, or are looking to buy, a home within the Shire

Community groups

Organisations within the Shire that act for a specific purpose or provide a specific service for the benefit of the community

Businesses

Covering a range of sectors from retail to agriculture

Visitors and tourists

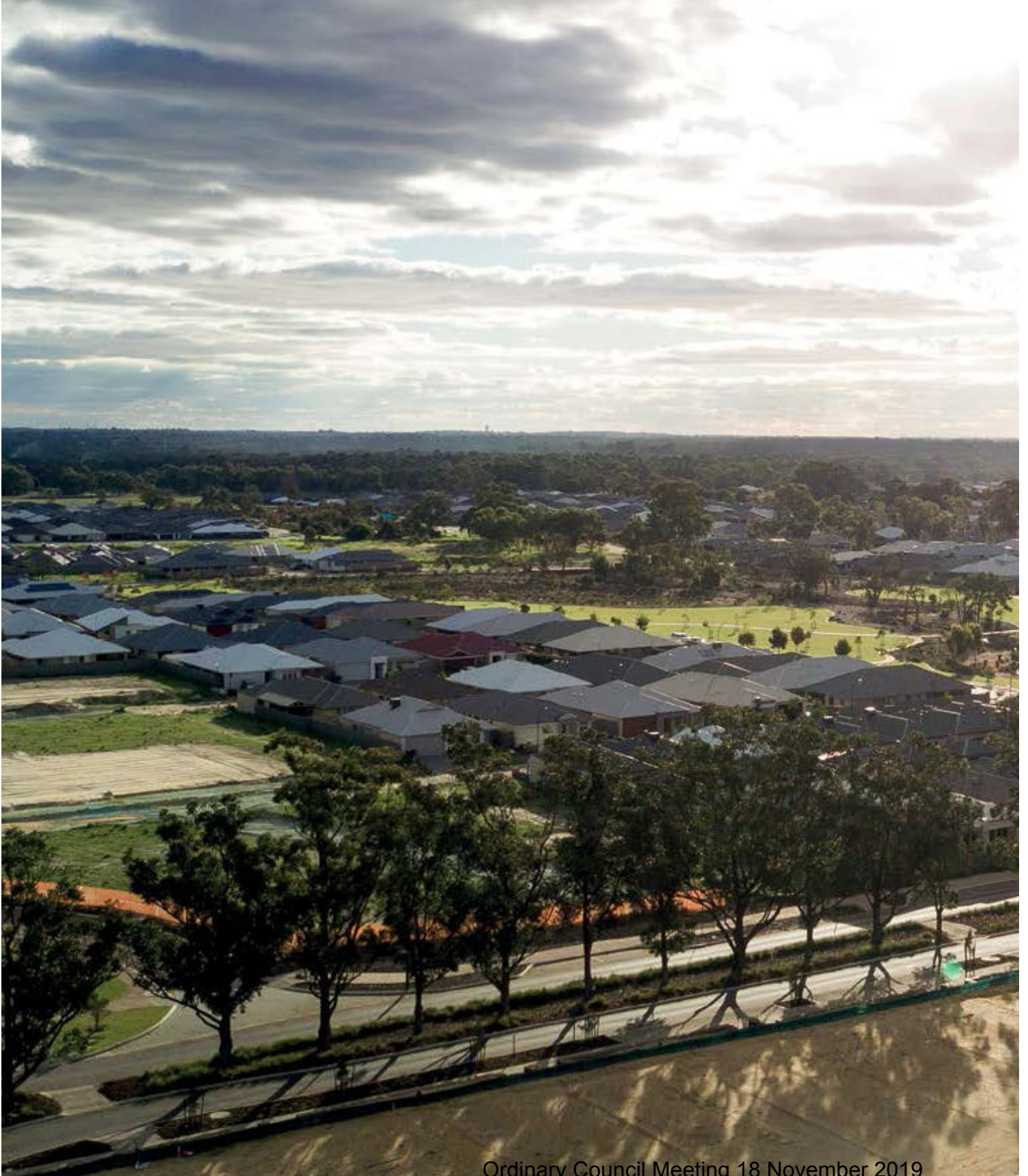Local (Perth metro), interstate and international visitors to the Shire

Shire Councillors and staff

Elected Members and anyone employed by, or contracted, to the Shire

How will we say it?

Goal 1

Show value for money in the Shire rates

What We'd Like to See:

- Reduced complaints around annual Shire rates

- Recognition of Shire projects, services and events

Messaging Sentiment:

- We are a local government with one of Australia's fastest growing populations, servicing the needs of 32,000 residents now with a forecast of 100,000 by 2050, and here's how we're doing that....

Key Initiatives

INITIATIVES	What We'd Like to SeeS
- Develop an annual communications and content plan to increase awareness about our programs, services and achievements. - Provide timely updates on Council meetings and decisions through news channels, social media and monthly meeting summary. Trial video formats and broadcasting options. - Improve relationships with local, community and industry media through weekly media releases, response to queries, and pitching story ideas and interview opportunities. Review advertising, editorial and partnership opportunities. - Roll out a social media plan to increase use of social media, and create engaging and accessible content for diverse audiences. - Deliver and maintain a new corporate website to improve user experience, search and accessibility. - Continually review communication methods to ensure they are cost effective and meet community needs.	- Reduced complaints around annual Shire rates - Reduce price sensitivity - Awareness about Shire programs, services and events - Community satisfaction survey results - Number of Shire e-newsletter subscribers, open rates and click throughs - Number of likes, views and engagement on social media channels - Number of website visitors - Number of online service requests - Number of media releases, interview opportunities and briefings - Quality and quantity of media coverage - Number of advertisements in local and community media - Feedback from community (written, email, verbal and online) - Improved website quality and accessibility standards - Improved website search functionality and search engine rankings - Benchmarking with other Councils

Ordinary Council Meeting 18 November 2019

How will we say it?

Goal 2

Increase knowledge of how the Shire is building and maintaining local roads

What We'd Like to See:

- Increased positive sentiment

- Reduced complaints about local road infrastructure

Messaging Sentiment:

- As we grow together, our infrastructure is growing too. This is what we're doing...

Key Initiatives

INITIATIVES	WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE
- Increase community understanding and awareness of how the Shire is building local roads. - Increase community understanding and awareness of how the Shire is maintaining local roads. - Increase community understanding and awareness of how the Shire is building and maintaining footpaths, trails and cycleways, and public transport opportunities (travel other than by car). - Promote news when Shire receives external funding for road projects.	- Communication plans are developed and implemented for all Shire transport–related infrastructure projects (new and upgrade projects) - Increased usage of footpaths, trails, cycleways and public transport - Number of likes, views and engagement on social media channels - Number of website visitors to project pages - Number of media releases, interview opportunities and briefings - Quality and quantity of media coverage - Community satisfaction survey results - Feedback from community (written, email, verbal and online) - Benchmarking with other Councils

How will we say it?

Goal 3

Provide greater insight into Shire advocacy and lobbying

What We'd Like to See:

- Increased positive sentiment

- Increased engagement and support by community groups for advocacy projects

Messaging Sentiment:

- The Shire is actively working with decision-makers and key stakeholders to realise our advocacy priorities for our growing community in the following ways...

Key Initiatives

INITIATIVES	WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE
- Demonstrate to the community that we are working hard to make the Shire an even nicer place to live. - Develop and implement proactive communication strategies for major projects and issues. - Ensure consistent branding and an engaging visual corporate image for the Shire. - Provide Councillors and Shire staff with the information and tools they need to be ambassadors for the Shire.	- Increased positive sentiment - Number of media releases, interview opportunities and briefings - Quality and quantity of media coverage - Community satisfaction survey results - Number of Shire e-newsletter subscribers, open rates and click throughs - Number of likes, views and engagement on social media channels - Number of website visitors - Increased engagement of community members and community groups - Number of meetings with Government Ministers, Departments and Agencies - Develop and implement a new Corporate Style Guide - Develop and implement key messages for Shire communications - Community satisfaction survey results - Benchmarking with other Councils

How will we say it?

Goal 4

Highlight what makes the Shire the nicest place to live

What We'd Like to See:

▪ Increased positive community engagement

▪ Increased Community Perception Survey results

Messaging Sentiment:

▪ The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is the nicest place to live, because we're growing together. Here's how...

Key Initiatives

INITIATIVES	WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE
▪ Reaffirm the liveability of the Shire in the minds of existing and future residents. ▪ Promote the liveability of the Shire to visitors. ▪ Actively promote a positive image of Council and the local area.	▪ Increase in number of residents year-on-year ▪ Awareness about Shire programs, services and events ▪ Community satisfaction survey results ▪ Number of Shire e-newsletter subscribers, open rates and click throughs ▪ Number of website visitors ▪ Number of likes, views and engagement on social media channels ▪ Number of media releases, interview opportunities and briefings ▪ Quality and quantity of media coverage ▪ Number of advertisements in local and community media ▪ Feedback from community (written, email, verbal and online) ▪ Benchmarking with other Councils

How will we say it?

Goal 5

Generate increased tourism

What We'd Like to See:

- Increased visitor numbers

Messaging Sentiment:

- The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is an amazing place to visit and we are growing together through the new experiences we share.

Key Initiatives

INITIATIVES	WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE
• Develop a destination marketing brand for the Shire. • Promote the Shire's cultural, historical and natural attractions. • Continue to support the growth and promotion of the Shire's local equine industry and events. • Collaborate with relevant peak bodies, departments, agencies and other local governments to promote the Shire, and region, as an attractive destination for tourism investment. • Improve relationships with tourism and travel media by providing media releases and pitching story ideas and interview opportunities.	• Develop and implement a tourism brand for the Shire • Develop a destination marketing program • Update website to provide information about tourism attractions • Number of visitors to dedicated tourism pages on website • Number of visitors to local tourism attractions • Number of media releases, interview opportunities and briefings • Quality and quantity of media coverage • Feedback from visitors (written, email, verbal and online) • Feedback from tourism operators (written, email, verbal and online) • Benchmarking with other Councils

How will we say it?

Goal 6

Celebrate and support our equine industry

What We'd Like to See:

▪ Increased recognition of our equine industry

▪ Increased positive community engagement

Messaging Sentiment:

▪ We have so many horses here, there's an entire industry within our community. Here's how we are celebrating and supporting it...

Key Initiatives

INITIATIVES	WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE
▪ Develop and strengthen the Shire's identity and reputation as the leading equine region in Western Australia. ▪ Develop an equine brand that reflects the local equine reputation and culture built over many years. ▪ Improve relationships with equine media by providing media releases and pitching story ideas and interview opportunities. ▪ Support, assist and promote local community–based equine organisations where possible via ordinary Shire programs and activities.	▪ Develop an equine brand ▪ Update website to provide information about local equine organisations and events ▪ Number of visitors to website to dedicated equine pages ▪ Number of media releases, interview opportunities and briefings ▪ Quality and quantity of media coverage ▪ Feedback from equine community (written, email, verbal and online) ▪ Benchmarking with other Councils

How will we say it?

Goal 7

Further develop Shire staff culture and engagement

What We'd Like to See:

- Increased positivity in Staff Satisfaction Survey results

- Increase in job applicants for open positions

- Increased staff retention rates

Messaging Sentiment:

- Our collaborative approach and "can do" attitudes makes the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale a great place to work. Here's why...

Key Initiatives

INITIATIVES	WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE
- Develop an internal communications program with creative ways to share news, ideas, learnings and achievements among staff. - Promote the achievements of the Shire and staff to the community.	- Internal communications survey and satisfaction results - Number of job applicants for open positions - Increase in retention rates - Update Customer Service Charter - Number of queries answered at first call - Reduced response time to customer service requests - Number of communications and engagement plans developed and implemented - Community satisfaction levels - Number of nominations for Employee of the Month program - Number of media releases, interview opportunities and briefings - Quality and quantity of media coverage - Feedback from community (written, email, verbal and online) - Benchmarking with other Councils

Our engagement model

How we will communicate at each stage of our positioning cycle:

GOAL	Show value for money in Shire rates	Increase knowledge of how the Shire is building and maintaining local roads	Provide greater insight into Shire advocacy and lobbying	Highlight what makes the Shire the nicest place to live	Generate increased tourism	Celebrate and support our equine industry	Further develop Shire staff culture and engagement
AUDIENCE	Existing Residents New Residents Businesses	All	Existing Residents New Residents	Existing Residents New Residents Community groups	All	All	Shire staff and Councillors
AWARENESS	Here's what our staff are doing each day to help the community We're listening to you, and here's what we're doing	We're growing together, and so is our infrastructure, here's how We know our roads and paths need attention and this is what we're doing	We currently support or are working on the following initiatives We're developing new initiatives We want to hear from you	We believe the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is the nicest place to live, here's why	This is why the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is an amazing place to visit	We have so many horses here, there's an entire industry within our community. Here's how we are celebrating and supporting it…	Our collaborative approach and "can do" attitudes make The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale a really nice place to work. Here's why…
UNDERSTANDING	These are our completed, current and future projects	These are our completed, current and future projects	Thank you for helping us with this	Take a look at what our community is doing	Did you know that the Shire has this? Here's something else you can do in our Shire	This is how to equine industry has supported our community over the past 100 years, and still is now	We're proud to be a part of this. Here's why…
ACCEPTANCE	We're giving you incredible value for money	We've taken your feedback on board and this is what we're doing	We've achieved so much together	Here's what our community is saying about the Shire	We're proud of what we have, and so is our community	Here's how you can get involved in our equine industry	How can we help you grow with us?
RESPECT	Thank you for being part of this with us	Thank you for helping us improve and grow our Shire together	Thank you for being a part of our success	Thank you for helping us make the Shire a nicer place to live	Thank you for helping to make the Shire an amazing place to visit	Thank you to the pioneers, innovators and contributors to our equine industry	Thank you for making the Shire such a nice place to work
UNITY	This is how we're growing together	We made this happen together, and we'll keep it going together too	Our differences are our strength, together we achieve more	Together, we're making the Shire the nicest place to live	We love living here, because we have so much at our doorstep	Together, we've achieved so many things for our community	Let's celebrate our staff's achievements together
ADVOCACY	Here's what our community is saying	These are the results we've achieved thanks to the work we've done	Thank you to the individuals who made this happen with us	Thank you to the individuals and groups making our Shire a nice place to live	Here's what people are saying about their recent visit to the Shire	Thank you to everyone who is celebrating and supporting this	The Shire is a really nice place to work

Contact us

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This document is available in an alternate format on request.

Shire of
Serpentine
Jarrahdale