

ATTACHMENT TO AGENDA ITEM

Ordinary Meeting

17 May 2016

Agenda Item 8.1 Media Policy 07.POL1

Attachment 1 Media Policy 07.POL1..... 171

GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL

Policy Number **X.X**

(Media Policy)

Version 1.0

(First number changes for a major rewrite, second number changes for a minor amendment)

Adopted **Day Month Year**

Last Reviewed **Day Month Year**

Business Unit:	Marketing and Communications
Responsible Officer:	Manager Marketing and Communications
Approved By:	Chief Executive Officer
Next Review:	

PURPOSE

Greater Shepparton City Council (GSCC) recognises the important role the media plays in informing the public about Council activities, programs, events, services and initiatives.

As a community leader and a government body responsible for providing and maintaining essential services and infrastructure, protecting the environment, planning for sustainable development, safeguarding public health and supporting community development, it is important GSCC has processes that support an active response to media enquiries.

Interaction with media in a government context requires careful attention to a range of factors including audience, public interest and political sensitivity.

The Media Policy provides a framework around roles and responsibilities, authorised spokespersons, media comments, site visits and procedures for generating media coverage.

This policy provides understanding and guidance for the appropriate use of media platforms and tools by staff, councillors, contractors and volunteers for the purpose of conducting Council business.

The Media Policy will support Council and its respective brands engaging with the media effectively and successfully. The purpose of Council's Media Policy is to ensure the interface between Council and the media is managed appropriately to maximise the benefits for Council and to minimise the risk of adverse publicity and misunderstanding due to inaccurate information or inappropriate sharing of information.

The Policy ensures key messages are consistent relayed and aligned with the current position of the organisation, and facilitates the development and maintenance of a strong relationship with local media by providing a central contact point and responding quickly and accurately to enquiries.

The Policy provides the framework and more detail can be found in the Media Procedures document.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this protocol are to:

- Provide guidelines relating to the authorisation of Council spokespersons
- Clearly identify roles and responsibilities for Council staff in terms of media management and the pro-active promotion of Council's services, events and activities
- Ensure the media receives accurate information in a timely manner
- Ensure media spokespeople are skilled and feel confident to communicate with print, online and broadcast media
- Ensure that there are clear processes in place in using the media to communicate emergency information

SCOPE

This protocol applies to all Council staff, councillors and volunteers or committee members when representing Council in the media. This protocol also applies to verbal and written comments in the media, public speaking engagements, media releases and the use of social media.

DEFINITIONS

Reference term	Definition
Media	Refers to communication channels through which news, entertainment, education, data, or promotional messages are disseminated. Media includes every broadcasting and narrowcasting medium such as newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, billboards, direct mail, telephone, fax, and internet.
The organisation or GSCC	Greater Shepparton City Council and all sub brands and their staff.
Sub brands/ programs/ activities/ committees	Includes Aquamoves, KidsTown, SAM, Riverlinks and any other associated programs, activities, committees – both Section 86 and Advisory committees.
Emergency / crisis	A crisis can be anything that threatens to or does cause physical or mental harm to a councillor, council officer or resident of Greater Shepparton. It could also be an issue of a political or legal nature that threatens to or does damage the reputation of the council, a councillor or council officer.

POLICY

1. Roles and Responsibilities

a) Marketing and Communications

Marketing and Communications is the central point of contact for media enquiries and for staff who wish to promote their activities, services, programs or events to the community through the media.

This includes:

- Providing a centralised media service
- Providing information to the media
- Coordination of authorised spokespeople
- Management of contentious issues and sensitive news events
- Development and implementation of a proactive media program
- Media monitoring
- Media skills training
- Media briefings
- Ministerial liaison in relation to media events, announcements, openings etc
- Emergency/crisis communication coordination

b) CEO, Directors and Managers

The CEO is the spokesperson for all high-level administrative, operational, sensitive and management issues. The CEO may authorise a Director to speak on matters.

Directors are the spokespersons for matters relating to major projects/operational issues in their respective Directorate. A Director may authorise a manager to speak on matters.

Managers are the spokespersons for non-contentious Council activities, events and projects. The Manager may authorise a member of their team such as a Team Leader or Project staff to speak on specific matters.

c) Council staff

Greater Shepparton City Council has dedicated official media spokespeople. No other Council officer may liaise with the media without the permission of either the CEO or their Director. Staff approached by media out of business hours should be aware that any comment they make in a personal capacity may reflect on the organisation.

d) Mayor and Councillors

The Mayor can provide official comment to the media on behalf of Council where the matter is of a political, controversial or sensitive nature. This includes:

- State-wide political issues affecting local government
- Contentious local issues that impact the community that do not relate directly to the business of Council but to the representation of the community
- Issues pertaining to policy and Council decisions
- Issues relating to the strategic direction of the Council

The Mayor may nominate to another Councillor to make official comment on behalf of the Council, where appropriate. The Deputy Mayor will act as the principal spokesperson in the absence or unavailability of the Mayor.

Individual Councillors are entitled to express independent views through the media (including social media), however such comments should be a personal view and not seen to represent the position of the Council. Where an issue is before the Council, individual Councillors can speak publicly and freely to encourage community involvement, feedback and participation in the decision making process.

In recognising that an individual Councillor may have a view that differs from the official Council position, Councillors who express personal views – not Council views – should qualify their remarks to indicate this is a personal view.

RELATED POLICIES AND DIRECTIVES

- Media Procedures
- Social Media Procedures
- Emergency Communications Plan
- Council Code of Conduct
- Style Guidelines

RELATED LEGISLATION

- n/a

REVIEW

This directive should be reviewed every two years by the Marketing and Communications Manager, Team Leader and Communications Officer.

Peter Harriott
Chief Executive Officer

Date

ATTACHMENTS

Example:

Appendix A: Title of Appendix

Attachment 1: Title of Attachment

Policy