Public Relations and Marketing Policy

1. **Purpose**
   
The purpose of the policy is to ensure that a proper procedure is in place for Council’s external communications and management of media-related issues.

2. **Scope**
   
   2.1. This policy will apply to Council’s elected members, staff, contractors and agents and consultants on behalf of Council.

   2.2. All Council publications, documents and printed information – both external and internal

   2.3. Council’s designated spokespersons are the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer, unless otherwise directed.

   2.4. No media comment is to be made by staff without consent or direction from the Chief Executive Officer.

3. **Policy Aims**

   The aim of this policy is to ensure:

   3.1 accurate, timely and consistent information is provided to the media;

   3.2 The most qualified and appropriate spokesperson and/or sources of information at Council are identified;

   3.3 Council maintains pro-active communications and an open working relationship with media in managing issues and minimising negative impacts for residents.

   3.4 issues are monitored and handled in an appropriate manner;

   3.5 Council’s integrity and professional image is preserved;

   3.6 All Council publications, documents and printed information – both external and internal – are presented in a consistent format to ensure continuity and enhance recognition and understanding of Council publications and documents.

4. **Policy Details:**

   **Procedures**

   The following steps will be taken by Council to fulfil the requirements of this policy:

   All media and external communications issues are to be addressed firstly to the Chief Executive Officer who will promptly liaise with the Mayor, subject to the nature and importance of the issue. If any staff or elected member of Council is contacted or likely to be in contact with the media or believes an issue may have broader ramifications, they should contact the Chief Executive Officer directly.
Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Chief Executive Officer of Council is responsible for:
   • Implementing this policy.
   • Reporting on Council’s success in meeting objectives of this policy.
   • Reporting on the review and evaluation of this policy.

4.2 All council members, staff, contractors and agents and consultants acting on behalf of Council take responsibility for their actions by:
   • Considering the public ramifications of their actions/communications at all times.
   • Identifying potential risks of Council-related issues, as well as identifying opportunities for positive promotion. Council’s Management should be advised of these issues for consideration/action.
   • Maintaining high levels of consistent internal communications within the Council, including contractors, agents and consultants.

4.3 Media Enquiries
The following procedures must be undertaken in response to any media enquiry:

4.3.1 All media queries must be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer.

4.3.2 In the event that a Council staff member is contacted directly by the media, a message must be taken and forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer to determine an appropriate response.

4.3.3 Media queries are to be followed up immediately and assessed as to their importance with, in most cases, the Chief Executive Officer contacting the media involved.

4.3.4 The Mayor and Chief Executive Officer are to be advised of all media queries.

4.4 Media Statements
The following procedures must be undertaken when providing any media with a prepared statement:

4.4.1 Any public comment or statements on behalf of Council likely to be reported must be cleared by the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.

4.4.2 Where necessary, a written media statement will be prepared in response to a major issue to ensure members of the media are given the correct message.

4.4.3 No unauthorised written material claiming to represent the Council is to be forwarded to the media without approval from the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.

4.5 Media Releases
Prior to issuing any media release on behalf of Council, the following procedures must be undertaken:

4.5.1 All media releases – whether prepared internally by other Council staff or externally by a consultant – are to be approved by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with clauses 4.4 and 4.5.2 of this policy, prior to being issued.

4.5.2 Any other Council staff wishing to prepare their own media release must advise and obtain approval from both the Chief Executive Officer and Mayor.

4.6 Media Opportunities
It is Council’s policy to build a positive working relationship with the media and broader community. Staff and council members are therefore encouraged to contact the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer on any communications issues or positive media opportunities.
4.7 Web-site and other marketing material

It is essential that all external communication from Council is consistent in content and appearance. All printed and electronic marketing material, including material published on Council’s web-site and forms of social media must be cleared through the Chief Executive Officer or under delegated authority.

4.8 Paid Advertorials

Any requests for media advertising/advertorials, aside from Council’s regular advertising program are to be directed to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration. A decision on advertising will be based on the following criteria:

4.8.1 The value to Council residents of advertising.

4.8.2 The relevance of the target audience and anticipated effectiveness of the advertising.

4.8.3 The cost and whether Council’s annual marketing budget allows for level of cost.

4.9 Format guidelines for all printed Council information/documentation for Public Relations and Marketing

To ensure consistency of information, all printed Council documents and information must be presented as follows:

4.9.1 Council logo to be printed on top left hand corner of header page.

4.9.2 Type face to be Arial font and 12point size.

4.9.3 Heading to be printed in bold.

5. References

Code of Conduct for Council Members
Code of Conduct for Council Employees
Social Media Policy
Council Member Records Management Policy
Website Standards
Public Notice Media Advertising Procedure

6. Review and re-evaluation

In order to ensure Council continues to provide the best possible internal review of council decisions for its customers, this policy will be subject to evaluation and review within 12 months of a Council election.

7. History of Policy Amendment
