



CITY OF PLAYFORD

Policy: MEDIA MANAGEMENT POLICY

DATE POLICY ADOPTED:	<i>26 July 2011</i>
ADOPTED BY:	<i>Ordinary Council</i>
LAST REVIEW DATE:	<i>July 2011</i>
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	<i>May 2015 (to be reviewed within 12 months of a General Election as part of the Code of Conduct)</i>
RESPONSIBILITY:	<i>Governance Department</i>

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Playford understands that the media plays a significant role in the management of the reputation of the Council. Therefore, Council has nominated spokespersons to ensure that a unified voice is portrayed to the community.

This policy outlines the role that Councillors, staff, volunteers and independent members have with the media and the authorisation that is required to speak on behalf of the City of Playford.

Any person authorised to speak on behalf of the City of Playford shall in publications, speeches, media interview and other public appearances in connection with the City of Playford undertake this in a manner that is constructive and professional.

This Policy recognises that:

- Councillors are entitled to express their personal views in public but are obliged to state that such views are not made on behalf of Council
- As private citizens, staff, volunteers and independent members may make comments about a Council matter in a personal capacity.

Personal attacks on a Councillor, staff member, volunteer, independent member or contractor in the media are breaches of the Code of Conduct.

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Chief Executive Officer – Tim Jackson

.....
Date

and

.....
Chairperson – *approving group* – Name

.....
Date

or

Minute details if approved by Full Council

2. **BACKGROUND**

The City of Playford interacts with all stakeholders in the community using mediums such as *North is Up*, the City of Playford website and through the local broadcast and print media. Working closely with the local media can assist in sending the message that the City of Playford is available to help its community and neighbouring Councils. This policy is designed to assist in that process and ensure that Council's interaction with all forms of media is professional, timely, concise and appropriate.

3. **POLICY OBJECTIVES**

This policy aims to provide a central voice for the media on issues that are of interest to the community. The policy provides guidelines on how Councillors, staff, volunteers and independent members deal with the media. In the event that a Councillor, staff, volunteer or independent member breaches the guidelines outlined, this policy addresses the process to be taken when such a breach is made.

4. **LEGISLATION AND REFERENCES**

Section 58 of the Local Government Act (1999) states that: *the role of the principal member (that is, the Mayor) is (c) to act as the principal spokesperson of the council.*

5. **PROCEDURES**

5.1 **Media and Public Comment**

Who can make comment on behalf of Council?

The Mayor, as per the Act, is the principal spokesperson, authorised to speak publicly on behalf of Council and its committees.

The Mayor, as the principal spokesperson, may authorise the Chief Executive Officer, a General Manager or a Councillor to speak publicly on behalf of Council.

Only Council Officers that are specifically authorised to do so by the Chief Executive Officer or General Manager may make public comment about Council matters.

The Strategic Communications Planner is authorised to liaise with the media as part of their role but may not make comment on behalf of the organisation unless authorised to do so by the Mayor.

What comments can be made by Councillors?

This policy recognises that Councillors have a right to state their personal views publicly. Personal comments should be clearly identified to the media as such. Any personal comment given in relation to the Council or Council decisions must not be a misuse or misrepresentation of information or facts.

There will be times when a Councillor does not support a decision of the Council or Committee and may wish to inform the electors of his or her personal position on the matter. In such a situation the Councillor should communicate clearly the decision of the Council, the process taken to arrive at the decision and then indicate his or her personal view.

Publications, speeches, media interviews and other public appearances in connection with the City of Playford should be approached in a manner that is constructive and professional.

What comments can be made by staff, volunteers or independent members?

The City of Playford recognises that staff, volunteers and independent members may be residents or ratepayers of Playford. As members of the community they have the right to state their personal views publicly. Any comments made to the media should therefore be acknowledged as their personal views, as they are not authorised to speak on behalf of the City of Playford.

When making a comment to the media, staff, volunteers and independent members will not disclose Council information that is not available to the general public.

What do I do if I receive a media enquiry?

All media enquiries will be referred to the City of Playford's Strategic Communications Planner who, in consultation with the Mayor the CEO or General Manager, will ascertain the most appropriate person to speak on the matter on behalf of Council (See Appendix 1).

It is important to note the editorial freedom of the media should be considered when providing information. If people receive enquiries from the media it is recommended that they ask further questions as to the nature of the enquiry to forward onto the Strategic Communications Planner and then decline to make any comment.

5.2 Breaches to this Policy

Any person authorised to speak on behalf of the City of Playford shall in publications, speeches, media interviews and other public appearances in connection with the City of Playford will undertake these in a manner that is constructive and professional.

Personal attacks on a Councillor, staff members, independent member, volunteer or contractor in the media are breaches of the Code of Conduct and will be investigated if a complaint has been made using the Breaches of the Code of Conduct Policy.

Councillors will comply with the provisions outlined in the Council and Committee Member Access and Use of Council Information Policy. Breaches of the said policy will be deemed a breach of the Code of Conduct and will be investigated if a complaint has been made using the Breaches of the Code of Conduct Policy.

If an individual wishes to report a breach, they must follow the process outlined in the Code of Conduct and any action taken will be based upon that process.

6. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

The Media Management Policy will be read in conjunction with and as part of the Code of Conduct Framework. The policy will also be read in conjunction with any other State and Federal legislation and Council policies and procedures. The standards outlined in the is policy are in addition to statutory requirements of the Local Government Act 1999 and any other relevant Act or Regulation.

This policy is not intended to diminish any right or employment condition under an Act, Award, Industrial Agreement or Contract of Employment and is to be read in conjunction with these documents.

7. REVIEW AND EVALUATION

The Media Management Policy will be reviewed when the Code of Conduct Framework is reviewed, 12 months after each general election.

8. PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE POLICY

The Media Management Policy is made available upon request to Council's Customer Service Centres or on the City of Playford website www.playford.sa.gov.au

9. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about the Policy please contact:

Strategic Communications Planner
12 Bishopstone Road, Davoren Park SA 5113
Telephone: 8256 0333
Facsimile: 8256 0578

MANAGING THE MEDIA - PROCESSES

