

Media

COUNCIL POLICY NO. 101

1. POLICY OBJECTIVE

To ensure the transparent and accountable operation of Council and to encourage an informed and engaged community.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Elected members and nominated Council officers making public statements regarding Council matters should ensure that:

- Information is conveyed accurately.
- Such information is responsible and does not contain information that may be deemed confidential.
- It is made clear whether they are representing Council in an official capacity or whether they are speaking as a community member.
- The Mayor is the primary spokesperson to the media on major issues and decisions that are made by Council.
- Ward Councillors are the primary spokesperson, where possible, for the Council on matters relating to their ward.
- The CEO and Executive Leadership Team members are the primary spokespeople on operational matters, and will act as secondary spokespeople on Council matters, should Councillors be unavailable.
- Certain Council staff members may be authorised to speak to the media if approved by the CEO or the Executive Leadership Team.
- All written materials provided to the media must be approved by the CEO or the Executive Team before distribution.

Councillors, the CEO and members of the Executive Leadership Team should be aware that all comments made at public events and meetings are on the public record and can be utilised by the media.

Council will ensure transparent communication with representatives of the media by:

- Regularly issuing media releases to local media outlets.
- Responding to all media inquiries in a timely manner.
- Ensuring the availability of Councillors and members of the Executive Leadership Team to provide further information or comment to media outlets.
- Ensuring all information of importance and relevance to local residents is made public, unless the provision of information contravenes Council's duty of care and/or could infringe laws or regulations which govern Council's operation.
- Providing appropriate media training to all Councillors and staff who regularly interact with members of the media.
- Making written information available via a range of formats (i.e. online, in hard copy, on social media or via a public meeting).
- Ensuring permission to use any quotes, statements and photographic images from a third party is obtained before distribution.

3. RELATED POLICIES

Policy No. 078 – Elected Members Code of Conduct further details Gannawarra Shire Council’s position on media communication by elected members.

4. POLICY REVIEW

Council will review this policy as required but always within two years after a general election of the Council. At the time of review, this policy was compliant with the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

Members of the public may inspect all Council policies at Gannawarra Shire Council’s Kerang and Cohuna Offices, or online at www.gannawarra.vic.gov.au.

Any enquiries in relation to this policy should be directed to the Director Community Wellbeing on (03) 5450 9333.

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To be reviewed by:

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