

1 Policy History

Revision No.	Council Meeting Date	Minute No.	Adoption Date
1	14/01/2003	25	14/01/2003
2	30/09/2008	0393	30/09/2008
3	11/05/2010	0142	11/05/2010
4	09/06/2015	15/161	09/06/2015
5	11/04/2017	14/15160	11/04/2017
6	12/04/2022	xxx	xxx

2 Policy Objective

- ~~To Maintain effective communication between Council and the community as well as improve communication within the organisation.~~
- To Ensure information is provided by those who are authorised to speak on Council matters.
- ~~To Maintain community confidence in the processes of Council by:~~

3 Policy Statement

~~The media provides an important link between Griffith City Council and the community as a means of promoting the activities, projects and initiatives of Council.~~

~~The policy is designed to strengthen and build on Council's existing relationship with the media and to ensure there is consistency in the way that Councillors and Council staff deals with the media on a day to day basis.~~

~~Councillors and Council staff are encouraged to cooperate at all times with media outlets requests for interviews/photographs in line with the following policy.~~

4 Policy Purpose

- 4.1 ~~To Ensuring all communication with the media is consistent, well informed, timely and appropriate and is a true representation of Council.~~
- 4.2 ~~To Clearly identifying Council's authorised spokespersons and also identify the subjects on which they are able to comment.~~
- 4.3 ~~To Improving communication with internal and external customers and enhance Council's public image.~~
- 4.4 ~~To establish protocols and consistent methods for managing and monitoring communication to the media to ensure relevant and approved comments.~~

4.5 To Positively promoting Council's role in the community and to assist the community to better understand that role.

3 Roles and Responsibilities of the Mayor and Councillors

3.1 Mayor

The Mayor is the official spokesperson of Council on matters concerning policy and decision making. This includes making major Council announcements, speaking at civic occasions and community events and chairing public meetings.

Contact with the media should be done in the first instance (when possible) by Media Release.

The Mayor may delegate this authority to another Councillor.

~~Whilst representing Council within a media interview, the Mayor shall not express a personal point of view but rather a view that is the general consensus of Council. When approached by the media to speak on issues not of a Council nature, the Mayor is required to indicate whether they are speaking as a Councillor in accordance with this policy or if they are presenting their personal viewpoint as an individual.~~

5.2 Councillors

Contact with the media should be done in the first instance (when possible) by Media Release.

When communicating with the media, Councillors are not to use or disclose information gained during the ordinary course of business of Council in a way that may:

- a) cause significant damage or distress to a person;
- b) damage the interests of Council or a person; or
- c) confer an unfair commercial or financial advantage on a person or business when dealing with the media; or
- d) disclose any confidential information discussed during a confidential session of a council or committee meeting or any other confidential forum (such as, but not limited to, Workshops or briefing sessions).

All Councillors should notify the Communications Officer of any contact with the media that relates to Council matters.

The Councillor Chairperson of a Council Committee is the primary spokesperson on matters that have been discussed by a Committee. Priority should be given to the Chairperson to

comment on Council decisions, projects and initiatives associated to the relevant Committee unless the Mayor elects to do so.

Unless requested by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor (in the Mayor's absence) Councillors should not write Letters to the Editor on behalf of Council. ~~Councillors are; however, free to write as individuals — providing in doing so they do not use the opportunity to discuss Council related matters.~~

~~Councillors are, as individuals, free to talk to the media at any time on issues of interest. However, they should always do so with the best interests of the organisation in mind.~~

~~Councillors may communicate with the media as private individuals with the following restrictions:~~

- ~~▪ That they do not comment on Council business or policy~~
- ~~▪ That they are not identified as Councillors by the media organisation~~
- ~~▪ That their comments are not perceived as representing official Council position or policy.~~

~~When speaking with the media, Councillors are required to indicate whether they are speaking as a Councillor in accordance with this policy or if they are presenting their personal viewpoint as an individual.~~

5.3 Council Committee Chairpersons

The Chairperson of a Council Committee is the primary spokesperson on matters that have been discussed by a Committee. Priority should be given to the Chairperson to comment on Council decisions, projects and initiatives associated to the relevant Committee unless the Mayor elects to do so.

Contact with the media should be done in the first instance (where possible) by Media Release. All Chairpersons should notify the Council Corporate Communications Officer of any contact with the media that relates to Council matters.

5.4 Council Committee Members

The Chairperson of a Council Committee is the primary spokesperson on matters that have been discussed by a Committee.

When communicating with the media, Council Committee members are not to use or disclose information gained during the ordinary course of business of Council in a way that may:

- e) cause significant damage or distress to a person;
- f) damage to the interests of Council or a person; or
- g) confer an unfair commercial or financial advantage on a person or business when dealing with the media; and
- h) disclose any confidential information discussed during a confidential session of a council or committee meeting or any other confidential forum (such as, but not limited to, Workshops or briefing sessions).

All Committee members should notify the Communications Officer of any contact with the media that relates to Council matters.

7 Council Committee Members

~~Members of Council's Committees are also bound by this policy. For the purposes of consistency, the nominated spokesperson for all council committees shall be the Chair.~~

~~Council committee members are not to use or disclose information gained during the ordinary course of their committee duties in a way that may cause significant damage or distress to a person; damage to the interests of Council or a person; or confer an unfair commercial or financial advantage on a person or business when dealing with the media.~~

~~Committee members may communicate with the media as private individuals with the following restrictions:~~

- ~~▪ That they do not comment on Council business or policy~~
- ~~▪ That they are not identified as Council Committee members by the media organisation~~
- ~~▪ That their comments are not perceived as representing official Council position or policy~~

~~All council committee members must notify the Communications Officer of any contact with the media where such contact relates to committee business.~~

~~As members of the community, Committee members are entitled to enter into public debate in their private capacity and make comment, provided they clearly state that such public comment reflects their own personal opinion and is not the view of Council or the committee on which they sit.~~

8 Letters to the Editor

Relocated to 5.2

6 Role and Responsibilities of the General Manager

The General Manager is the official Council spokesperson on all matters concerning Council's operations including staff, administrative, election and industrial issues. In addition, the General Manager may act as the Council spokesperson in regard to technical or legislative matters and all issues relating to the day to day management of Griffith City Council.

At the General Manager's discretion, the approval of media releases or responding to enquiries on routine operational issues may be delegated to Directors or facility managers. In addition to this, the General Manager may delegate authority for other officers to communicate with the media on specific issues. All media requests are to be referred the Communications Officer.

Contact with the media should be done in the first instance (where possible) by Media Release. The Corporate Communications Officer should be notified of any contact with the media that relates to Council matters.

When communicating with the media, the General Manager is not to use or disclose information gained during the ordinary course of business of Council in a way that may:

- i) cause significant damage or distress to a person;
- j) damage the interests of Council or a person; or
- k) confer an unfair commercial or financial advantage on a person or business when dealing with the media; or
- l) disclose any confidential information discussed during a confidential session of a council or committee meeting or any other confidential forum (such as, but not limited to, Workshops or briefing sessions).

7 Related Documents

GOV-CP-404 – Code of Conduct

GOV-CP-402 – Council Committees

8 Directorate

Economic & Organisational Development

Council official acknowledgement

I acknowledge and confirm:

- receiving a copy of Council's Statements to the Media Policy;
- I have read and will comply with the Policy; and
- I understand there may be disciplinary consequences if I fail to comply the Statements to the Media Policy, including up to termination of my employment.

Name:

Signed:

Date:
