

	Function: GOVERNANCE	Adopted: 3 RD MARCH 2010
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MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY		

Policy Statement

1. Introduction

Council recognises that it is imperative to ascertain the needs, wishes and ideas of its constituents to ensure efficient and effective service delivery. The purpose of this document is to articulate strategies that Council intends to implement to achieve this effective two-way communication. The policy focuses on Council's relationships with external stakeholders – residents, ratepayers, community groups, peak industry groups and government agencies.

2. Applicable Legislation

Local Government Act 1999, Section 58(1)(c).
 Privacy Act 1998
 Freedom of Information Act 1991
 Copyright Act 1968

3. Integration with Corporate Objectives

Governance Objective – Leadership

To provide leadership and ensure community resources are managed effectively.
 Communications and public relations – to promote a positive Council image and ensure effective communication and consultation with the community

4. Definitions

Nil

Lifestyle location of choice

5. Application

The Mayor and CEO regularly liaise with the media on behalf of Council with the objective of promoting a positive and authoritative image of Council, as well as an understanding of Council policies. Council's dealings with the media are aimed at projecting a consistent and united image.

To ensure that this occurs, it is essential that a coordinated approach be taken to releasing information to the media and responding to enquiries. The following points outline how this is to occur:

1. The Mayor is the official Council spokesperson on all matters of policy and decision-making enquiries including civic occasions, community events and major Council announcements.
2. At the Mayor's discretion, approval of an Elected Member or a committee chair to speak on behalf of council on matters where they are more informed or if the Mayor is unavailable.
3. The Chief Executive Officer is the official Council spokesperson on all matters concerning Council's operations including staff, administrative, election and industrial matters. Additionally, the CEO may act as the Council spokesperson in regard to technical or legislative matters affecting policy.
4. At the CEO's discretion, approving media releases or responding to enquiries on routine operational issues may be delegated to Directors. Furthermore the CEO may delegate the authority for other officers to communicate with the media on specific issues.
5. Management shall provide information to the media which is freely available to any member of the public. This information shall be provided in order to improve or clarify the media's understanding of the issues.

The media may approach individual Elected Members or staff in order to obtain a different perspective on a matter. Staff members are not to respond to media requests except as authorised in accordance with this policy. Likewise, Elected Members are not authorised to speak on behalf of Council other than as outlined in this policy and the Code of Conduct for Council Members

The CEO should be advised of any media request for information on Council matters to ensure a single, coordinated response is provided.

Individual Elected Members speaking to the media on their own behalf must clearly convey this to the media and avoid any perception that their views are not necessarily those of Council.

If there is any doubt in the application of this policy or how to respond to a media request, the matter is to be referred to the CEO or the Mayor, as appropriate, to determine.

Lifestyle location of choice

Record Keeping

The Records Officer maintains records of media enquiries and responses, copies of media releases and background information.

All media releases are placed on file at reception. Copies of all statements, either oral or written, made to the media are also kept on file.

This affords some protection against misinterpreting.

All staff are requested to pass on published information relating to Council activities so that detailed records may be kept. Staff who read publications in languages other than English are especially encouraged to pass on articles mentioning District Council of the Copper Coast.

Promoting Council Activities

The CEO is responsible for issuing media releases about Council's activities, decisions and plans. All staff are required to pass on important information to the CEO which could be used as the basis for a press release. The CEO, in consultation with other staff members, will decide if the event warrants a media release and/or photo.

Designing Advertisements/Brochures

Council staff must pass on planned media advertisements and brochures to their Director for approval and to check accuracy, quality and corporate style.

Council has a corporate identity which enables publications or advertisements constructed in this style to be easily identified and associated with District Council of the Copper Coast. The corporate style will enable a consistent image for District Council of the Copper Coast and communicate most effectively with the community.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Records Management;
- Delegations Manual;
- Code of Conduct for Council Members;

6. Delegation

Enquiries in relation to this Policy should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer.

Lifestyle location of choice

7. Adoption and Review

The Policy will be reviewed as required, with the review being undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer and report provided to Council for consideration and adoption. The Policy review process will be undertaken on the following basis:

- Has the implementation of the Policy achieved its Aim and satisfied the implementation of the identified Council Corporate Objectives?
- Has the implementation of the Policy been easy to manage and administer without requiring considerable or additional resources of Council to be used?

8. Availability of Policy

This Policy will be available for inspection without charge at the Council's Principal Office during normal business hours, and on Council's website.

A copy of this Policy may be obtained on payment of a nominated fee from Councils' principal office or may be down loaded from Councils' website.

Signed _____

Mayor

Date 18/10/16

Signed _____

Chief Executive Officer

Lifestyle location of choice

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

STRATEGY	RATIONALE	TARGET / COVERAGE	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
1.1 Public Meetings – 'Mayors Listening Post'	To update interested members of the public on Council activities and give them the opportunity to put forward questions.	Residents of town and environs - Monthly	Update of community on Council activities and budget
1.2 Web Development	To develop a whole of region web site that involves business organisations and community groups, and gives all stakeholders access to Council information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development/Update – all community groups and businesses Information source – all stakeholders 	Access to Council and community information
1.3 Visit Community Groups	Senior Executives/Elected Members are available by invitation to visit community groups to update on Council activities and ascertain specific needs and opinions on effectiveness of Council operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All groups and organisations at least once per annum Write to all groups so that visits can coincide with special events they may have. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of relationship with key individuals in community; Ascertain needs of community groups and issues affecting them; Ascertain opinion of effectiveness of Council operations and recommendations for improvement.
1.4 Local Government Awareness Week	To promote the services and activities of Council to the community.	Visit to local schools by staff and Elected Members, Invite schools to tour Council facilities.	Enhanced public awareness of the role and activities of Council.
1.5 Reference Groups	Invite representation from the community to act as a member of reference groups in areas where they have a particular interest or vocation – education, health, welfare, environment, etc.	Significant matters of policy before Council would be referred to these people for comment.	Provision of advice to Council from constituents who have expertise/interest in particular matters.

Agentyle location of choice

STRATEGY	RATIONALE	TARGET / COVERAGE	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
1.6 Direct Surveying	Directly survey residents/stakeholders on matters of significance and on Council performance.	Single Matters – whole of town/area affected when required. Performance: • General: selection of 400 residents/ stakeholders at random once per annum; • Specific: selection of users at random once per year.	Resident needs, wants or opinion. • Residents needs and opinion of Council performance; • Residents needs and opinion of Council performance.
1.7 Press Releases	Residents tend not to read advertisement notices but do notice relevant articles particularly if a photo is involved. Place emphasis on releasing information via newspaper articles.	All Council residents and readers of the local newspaper.	Better informed on Council activities.
1.8 Mayors Radio Segment	To ensure current issues are addressed publicly.	All Council residents and listeners to the radio.	Better informed residents. Current issues raised are addressed on the day.
1.9 Media Policy	Necessary to coordinate and ensure the accuracy of statements made to the media by Council.	All press, radio and television (advertisements, press releases, interviews, etc.)	• Accurate and non-conflicting information communicated to media. • Improved image of Council.
1.10 Request (Suggestion / Complaint Form)	Distribution via website of a Request Form that residents can fill in and return to Council.	All Council residents and ratepayers	• Uniformity of method of making requests/ complaints. • Improved ability to gather data and log requests.
1.11 Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)	• To advise Council on issues specific to youth. • Council to seek youth's input on Council issues.	Youth – 12-25	Better information on the needs of youth and issues facing them.
1.12 Newsletter	Distribution of a quarterly newsletter	All Council residents	Better informed on Council activities.

flexible location of choice

STRATEGY	RATIONALE	TARGET / COVERAGE	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
1.13 Council Meetings	Council meetings will be held on the 1st Wednesday 7pm each month at Council Chambers	All Council residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfying residents' specific information needs. Regular and consistent.
1.14 Public Notices including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posting notices around town; Delivery of notices to residents 	Council often needs to reach residents quickly, e.g. public consultation; surveys etc.	Depending on circumstances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific residences; All of town; Whole of Council area. 	Residents are aware of the message Council needs to convey.
1.15 Public Input into Budget Preparation	To advertise for comments from the public around April/May of each year in relation to issues to be addressed in the forthcoming budget/ business plan.	Whole Council area.	Better fit of residents' needs with strategies and allocations included in Annual Business Plan and Budget.
1.16 Public Display of Council Supported Projects and Events	To publicise the support Council provides to community groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All residents and visitors. Banners to be displayed at all Council funded/supported events. Council logo placed on advertisements. 	Residents and visitors are aware of Council supported events and programmes.
1.17 Community Consultation	To provide specific information on Council projects and activities.	All residents/affected residents	Residents are aware of Council's projects and activities.

lifestyle location of choice