

- Objectives:** Progressive
- Outcome:** 4.1 - A resilient, efficient and effective organisation.
- Strategy:** 4.1.2 - Maximise the Shire's brand and reputation in the community.

## Purpose

The objectives of the Media Policy are to provide for effective communication of Council affairs to the public through the media and to promote positive coverage of council affairs that is fair, accurate and reliable. This policy applies to situations where Council officials communicate with the media about Council affairs and related matters and attend public speaking engagements.

This policy also acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of Councillors as elected members as outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995*.

## Definitions

Not applicable

## Policy

The following guiding principles underline Council's interaction with the media:

1. Council will openly discuss matters of interest with the media unless disclosure of certain information contravenes Council's obligations of confidentiality or privacy, duty of care, or could infringe other laws or regulations that govern its operations.
2. The Shire President and/or the Chief Executive Officer are the official spokespersons on Council affairs.
3. As members of the community, Councillors are entitled to enter into public debate in their private capacity and make comment on Council affairs provided they clearly state that such public comment reflects their personal opinion and not that of the Council or a committee of Council.
4. The Chief Executive Officer may nominate specialist members of staff to respond to technical questions on operational matters only. The Shire President and/or Chief Executive Officer must approve of other information before it is issued or distributed to the media.
5. Council staff should support Council decisions and should refrain from using the media to make negative personal reflections on each other or comment that could be interpreted as such and which are reasonably likely to undermine public confidence in the Council or local government generally.
6. Council staff must not make political or controversial statements in or to the media relating to Council affairs, decisions and/or events, or about Elected Members which are likely to generate negatively on Council.



7. Council staff are entitled to enter into public debate and make comment on civic affairs, provided they do not give the impression they are speaking in their official position for or on behalf of Council.
8. The Communications Department is responsible for co-ordinating and distributing articles, columns and newsletters on behalf of the Shire President or the Council. In each case, the responsible officer must ensure the information contained in the document is accurate and approved by the relevant Directorate, Chief Executive Officer and Shire President, prior to release.

Incorrect Information

In the event of incorrect information or information that has a personal or corporate reputation risk being published, the Communications Department will investigate and report to the Chief Executive Officer on how the information came to be published. If necessary, the Chief Executive Officer will issue or will authorise a media release clarifying the incorrect information.

Breaches

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with *Local Government Act 1995* and Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale Code of Conduct.

**References**

<b>Name of Policy</b>	1.3.2 Media
<b>Previous Policy</b>	G016 – Media (E15/5096)
<b>Date of Adoption and Resolution Number</b>	Adopted      OCM187/09/15      29/09/2015      Ordinary Council Meeting
<b>Review dates and Resolution Numbers</b>	Modified      OCM179/12/17      18/12/2017      Ordinary Council Meeting
<b>Next review date</b>	
<b>Related documents</b>	<p><b>Acts/Regulations</b> <i>Local Government Act 1995</i></p> <p><b>Plans/Strategies</b> Strategic Community Plan 2017 - 2027</p> <p><b>Policies</b> Nil</p> <p><b>References</b> Nil</p> <p><b>Delegations</b> Nil</p> <p><b>Work Procedures</b> Nil</p>

Note: changes to references may be made without the need to take the Policy to Council for review.