



# Cloncurry Shire Council

**POLICY  
NO.**

CD 0002

## MEDIA POLICY

### 1. Objectives

The purpose of the Media Policy (the Policy) is to provide Cloncurry Shire Council (Council) with guidelines when undertaking media engagement.

The aim of the Policy is to be transparent and accountable through the provision of accurate and timely information to the media.

### 2. Scope

The Policy applies to all Cloncurry Shire Council employees, Councillors, contractors employed by Council, consultants and volunteers.

### 3. Policy Statement of Principles

The Policy has been established to:

- Formalise the roles Council employees and Councillors have in media communications.
- Maintain positive, quality and timely communications with the media.
- Ensure Council activities are fairly and accurately reported.
- Maintain consistent communication with the media in line with Council's strategic direction and the communication strategy.

The Policy will assist Council employees and Councillors in the correct communication processes when handling media enquiries, identifying the spokesperson for interview and preparing media statements.

### 4. Definitions

<b>Communication</b>	<i>The act of imparting or exchanging information by speaking, writing or using some other medium.</i>
<b>Communication channel</b>	<i>The medium that is used in the transmission of a message from one party to another. For example, print media or broadcast media.</i>
<b>Media &amp; Public Relations Officer</b>	<i>An individual who has received formal training in communication, public relations, marketing or journalism.</i>
<b>Media</b>	<i>The main means of mass communication and includes television, radio and newspaper. 'Media' is regarded collectively.</i>
<b>Media release</b>	<i>A written notice sent to media providing information (who, what, when, where and why) on timely news.</i>
<b>Spokesperson</b>	<i>A person who has been assigned to speak on behalf of an organisation.</i>

**5. Roles and Responsibilities** The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring the Policy is understood and adhered to by Council staff, the Mayor and Councillors.

## **6. Policy**

The Mayor, Councillors and the Chief Executive Officer are accountable for presenting and explaining Council services and programs to the public.

The Mayor, as civic leader, is the principal spokesperson for Council specifically relating to announcements, decisions of Council and civic responsibilities.

The Mayor may request media advice and assistance regarding such matters.

When the Mayor is on leave, the Deputy Mayor will be the official spokesperson. This does not refer to operational matters which should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer.

Subject to any direction by the Mayor, the Chief Executive Officer will be the Designated Spokesperson for matters concerning Council staff and contractors, and for the operational activities of Council. The Chief Executive Officer may determine if a matter is an operational matter. The Chief Executive Officer may choose to delegate their Designated Spokesperson role on a particular matter.

### **Code of Conduct for Councillors**

Councillors must not communicate with the public on behalf of Council, through the media or otherwise, unless authorised to do so by the Mayor.

When communicating to the public, through the media or otherwise, Councillors must make it clear whether they are speaking on behalf of Council or are expressing a personal opinion.

#### **Authorised spokespeople include:**

- Mayor
- Chief Executive Officer
- Councillors
- Directors (only relating to matters in their department)
- Media and Public Relations Officer

The Chief Executive Officer may assign other people to speak in an official capacity on issues or subjects for which that Supervisor, Director or Officer has responsibility and expertise.

All media enquiries should be directed to the Media and Public Relations Officer to:

- Ensure streamlined communication with the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer.
- Identify appropriate spokespersons with the knowledge and technical expertise to provide input into media responses.
- Liaise with other Departments if a media issue has ramifications for other Departments.
- If the **Media & Public Relations Officer** is away then all media enquiries should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer.
- The **Media & Public Relations Officer** should be advised of any comments made to the media.



Should a Council employee who is not an authorised officer be approached by the media they are required to direct the reporter to the **Media & Public Relations Officer**. If a Council employee is approached by the media to get a photo, they must immediately contact the **Media & Public Relations Officer** prior to the photo being taken. Staff should ensure they have the correct uniform and any personal protective equipment if required for site.

This policy in no way prevents Council employees or volunteers from speaking to the media in a personal capacity, as long as they are clear they are not representing Council.

Prior to distribution, all media releases are to be approved by the Chief Executive Officer, Mayor, Media and Public Relations Officer, Director of relevant department and any persons who have provided comments that are included in the release.

### **External Facing Communications**

Cloncurry Shire Council offers external communication through their two newsletters, in both physical and digital format. These newsletters are designed to provide updates on Council's operations and community news. The newsletter facilitation and distribution is undertaken by the Media and Public Relations Officer, in consultation with the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer. The Media and Public Relations Officer and the Chief Executive Officer reserve the right to decide what content is shared in these newsletters.

The printed newsletter, Council Catch Up, is printed four times per year and is posted to all residents in the Shire with a registered mailbox. The newsletter can also be found on Council's website.

The digital e-newsletter, What's On In Cloncurry, is published each month and emailed to subscribers. The e-newsletter can also be found on Council's website.

Council departments are responsible for creating and updating an extensive range of public facing communications, in consultation with the Media and Public Relations Officer. These communications include:

- Operational information on Council websites
- Content for digital media accounts
- Marketing and tourism publications
- Flyers, newsletters and other materials that promote Council services, activities or initiatives
- Community consultation activities

Content approval for external facing communications needs to be sought through the Chief Executive Officer, via the Media and Public Relations Officer or Executive Support Officers. Authorisation for publishing and updating public facing communications is to be sought from the Chief Executive Officer, via the Media and Public Relations Officer or Executive Support Officers.

## **7. Accountability and Reporting**

Council must:

- Maintain a current, comprehensive and well-structured identification or classification records system that provides an effective means for organising, locating and retrieving published information, utilising our corporate record keeping software.
- Ensure all publications feature:
  - Contact details so questions, comments, feedback and requests for further information or complaints can be received and dealt with promptly.

- Title of the publication.
- The date of the publication.

This policy supersedes the previously adopted Communication Policy CD 0002 version 2.

## References

Kingborough Shire Council. (2011). Communication Policy. Retrieved 19 May 2014 from [http://www.kingborough.tas.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Communications\\_Policy\\_Jan\\_2011\\_2\\_.pdf](http://www.kingborough.tas.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Communications_Policy_Jan_2011_2_.pdf).

Local Government Association. (2011). Draft Model Council Communications Plan and Guide. Retrieved 19 May 2014 from [https://www.lga.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/LGA-76781\(1\).pdf](https://www.lga.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/LGA-76781(1).pdf).

Parkes Shire Council. (2007). Communication Policy. Retrieved 19 May 2014 from <http://www.parkes.nsw.gov.au/images/documents/parkes/mig/7177-comspolicy.pdf>.

Tasmanian Government. (2010). Communications Policy Edition Three. Retrieved 19 May 2014 from <http://www.communications.tas.gov.au/policy>.

Howard, A.E. (2012). *Connecting with Communities: How Local Government is Using Social Media to Engage with Citizens*, ANZOG Institute for Governance at the University of Canberra and Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government.

City of Ipswich. (2022) Media and Corporate Communications Policy. Retrieved 17 October 2022 from [Media-and-Corporate-Communications-Policy.pdf \(ipswich.qld.gov.au\)](#).

## Related Documents

Community Engagement Policy  
 Code of Conduct - Employees Policy  
 Code of Conduct for Councillors Governance Policy  
 Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland Policy  
*Local Government Act 2009*  
*Local Government Regulation 2012*

## Adopted by Council Resolution

## POLICY VERSION AND REVISION INFORMATION

Version No.	Date Adopted	Review Date
3	15 November 2022	October 2024

*Policy Authorised by: Philip Keirle*



*Title: Chief Executive Officer*

Document No. CD 0002  
 Authorised by Director Community and Economic Development  
 Document maintained by Corporate Governance

Version No.3  
 Initial Date of Adoption: 15.07.2014  
 Current Version Adopted: 15.11.2022  
 Next review date: 10/2024