

Strategic Policy

Advertising Expenditure Policy

Corporate Plan reference:	<p>An outstanding organisation</p> <p><i>A high performing, customer focused organisation marked by great people, good governance and regional leadership</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information, systems and process underpin quality decisions and enhance the customer experience
Endorsed by Council on:	16 July 2009 (OM09/199)
Manager responsible for policy:	Group Executive Business Performance

Policy purpose

This policy has been prepared to comply with the *Local Government Regulation 2012 (LGR)* under the *Local Government Act 2009 (LGA)*.

The LGR requires local governments to accurately record and consider the approval process for, and the appropriate use of, Council funds for advertising expenditure.

Advertising is described as promoting to the public an idea, goods or services by using a medium commonly used for such purposes and for which a fee is paid. This may include magazines, newspaper, radio, television, newsletter and brochures. It may also include merchandise to promote contact details.

Council aims to provide open, transparent and accessible information to its community beyond its obligation to advertise certain activities according to guidelines and criteria as listed under various pieces of legislation including the *Local Government Act 2009*.

This policy aims to provide not only a framework for ensuring council's advertising expenditure meets the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012* and also the information needs of the community it serves and represents.

Policy scope

The policy applies to elected members and council officers.

The policy applies to any advertisement or notice to promote goods or services (including facilities) provided, or required, by the council to the general public, including advertising for employees, acquisition or disposal of property, plant and equipment, contracting activities of interest under the *Local Government Act 2009*.

The policy does not apply to reports published in the media where no payment is made for the report.

Policy statement

1. The guiding principles are:

- (a) Advertising is accessible, timely, targeted and easily understood.
- (b) Expenditure is incurred only in accordance with Clause 3 below.
- (c) Promotion of the particular achievements or plans of individual councillors or groups of councillors is prohibited¹.
- (d) Appropriate restrictions and conditions are placed on expenditure in the three month period immediately before a local government election.

2. Expenditure must comply with Council's purchasing and procurement policies and be authorized/approved in accordance with relevant financial delegations. In addition advertising must be part of an overarching communications, marketing or business plan except where it is for:

- (a) employees;
- (b) acquisition or disposal of property, plant and equipment;
- (c) contracting activities;
- (d) statutory public notices;

3. The Council may incur expenditure for advertising only if:

- (a) the advertising is for providing information or education to the public; and
- (b) the information or education is provided in the public interest; and
- (c) the advertising falls into one of the following categories:
 - o To advise the public of a new or continuing service, facility or event provided by the Council.
 - o To advise the public about changes to an existing service, facility or event provided by the Council.
 - o To increase the use of a service, facility or event provided by the Council on a commercial basis with a view to profit.
 - o To change the behaviour of people in the Council's area for the benefit of all or some of the community or to achieve the objectives of the Council.
 - o To advise the public of the time, place and content of scheduled meetings of the Council.
 - o To advise the public of the decisions made by the Council at its meetings.
 - o To request comment on proposed policies or activities of the Council; or
 - o To advertise matters required by legislation to be advertised.

4. In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Regulation 2012, the Council must not during the period of three months preceding an election of the local government other than a by-election; or during the period after the date of a by-election is advertised until the day of the election:

- (a) Place advertisements relating to future plans unless, and only to the extent that those plans have been formally adopted by the Council.

¹ Elected members are not restricted from such action if pursued and funded directly by the individual Councillor or Councillors

- (b) Advertise the activities of the Council otherwise than in the manner and form it is customary for the Council to advertise its activities.
- (c) Place advertisements which seek to influence support for particular candidates, groups of candidates or potential candidates in the election; or
- (d) Bear the cost of advertisements featuring one or more councillors or containing quotations attributed to individual councillors. Note: This does not preclude councillors appearing in unpaid publicity or other publicity where the cost is not borne by the Council.

5. The Local Government Regulation 2012 requires a summary of advertising expenditure to be included in Council's Annual Report. To facilitate this all advertising will be coded to Advertising and Promotion. (Refer to Council's Chart of Accounts for sub- categories).

Definitions

"Advertising" – informing and/or educating the public about an idea, goods or services by using an appropriate communication tool.

"Communication tools" – may include but not be limited to magazine, newspaper, radio, television, fact sheet, brochure, poster, gift and giveaway, the internet, signage, educative tours.

"Public interest" – means the creation and maintenance of public confidence and trust in the credibility, integrity and stability of council's operations.

"Council" – means the Sunshine Coast Regional Council.

Related policies and legislation

Local Government Regulation 2012

Local Government Act 2009

Employment Code of Conduct

Procurement Policy

Financial Delegations

Version control:

Version	Reason/ Trigger	Change (Y/N)	Endorsed/ Reviewed by	Date
1.0	New Policy	N	Council	16/09/2009
1.1	Updated department names and re-branding	N	Corporate Governance	6/1/2017
1.2	Updates as per new Organisational Structure			21/11/2017

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