



GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL
MEDIA POLICY

Effective: 27 August 2024

MEDIA POLICY

Version:	3
Business Unit:	Communications & Engagement
Responsible Officer:	Manager Communications & Engagement
Adopted By:	Council on 27 August 2024
Next Review:	27 August 2026

1. PURPOSE

The Media Policy provides a framework around roles and responsibilities, authorised spokespersons, media comments and procedures for generating media coverage including all channels of communication as defined below. The Policy provides the framework and more detail can be found in the Media Procedures document.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Provide guidelines relating to the authorisation of Council spokespersons and identify their roles and responsibilities
- Ensure the media receives accurate information in a timely and accurate manner

3. SCOPE

This protocol applies to all Council staff, councillors and volunteers or committee members when representing Council in the media. This protocol also applies to verbal and written comments in the media, public speaking engagements, media releases and the use of social media.

4. DEFINITIONS

Reference term	Definition
Media	Refers to communication channels through which news, entertainment, education, data, or promotional messages are disseminated. Media includes every broadcasting and narrowcasting medium such as newspapers, magazines/publications, TV, radio, billboards, direct mail, telephone, email, EDMs, social media and internet.
The organisation or GSCC	Greater Shepparton City Council and all sub brands and their staff.

Reference term	Definition
Sub brands/ programs/ activities/ committees	Includes Aquamoves, KidsTown, Riverlinks and any other associated programs, activities and committees.

5. POLICY

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

a. Mayor and Councillors

The Mayor provides official comment to the media on behalf of Council where the matter is of a political, controversial or sensitive nature. This includes:

- State-wide political issues affecting local government
- Contentious local issues that impact the community that do not relate directly to the business of Council but to the representation of the community
- Issues pertaining to policy and Council decisions
- Issues relating to the strategic direction of the Council

The Mayor may nominate another Councillor to make official comment on behalf of the Council, where appropriate, for example, when that Councillor is a member of a Committee and has knowledge of the topic. The Deputy Mayor will act as the principal spokesperson in the absence or unavailability of the Mayor.

Councillors are entitled to express personal views through the media however such comments are to be clearly communicated as a personal view and cannot be seen to represent the position of the Council.

Where an issue is before the Council, individual Councillors can speak publicly to encourage community involvement, feedback and participation in the decision making process as long as they clearly state these views are their own and not those of Council. Councillors need to ensure they do not give the impression that a decision has been made before it goes to a Council Meeting.

b. CEO, Directors and Managers

The CEO is the spokesperson for all high-level administrative, operational, sensitive and management issues unless otherwise delegated. Directors are the spokespersons for matters relating to projects or operational issues in their respective Directorate and may delegate to Managers as required.

c. Council staff

Greater Shepparton City Council has official media spokespeople who have received media training. No other Council officer may liaise with the media without the permission of the either the CEO or their Director. Staff approached by media during or out of business hours should be aware that any comment they make in a personal capacity may reflect on the organisation. Staff should not provide comment on matters before Council but can provide factual information for media briefings or for the purpose of clarification.

d. Communications and Engagement

All media enquiries or contact with the media is to be directed through Communications and Engagement in the first instance who will coordinate and manage the process. This applies to staff, management and Councillors.

6. RELATED POLICIES

- Media Procedures
- Social Media Procedures
- Emergency Communications Plan
- Council Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Style Guidelines

7. RELATED LEGISLATION

- Nil

8. REVIEW

This Policy should be reviewed every two years by the Manager Communications & Engagement, Team Leader Marketing and Communications, and the Communications Officer.

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Version #	Date Adopted	Date Effective
1	17 May 2016	17 May 2016
2	19 July 2022	19 July 2022
3	27 August 2024	27 August 2024