

## MEDIA POLICY (ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY)

### 1 Scope:

This policy applies to media relation activities undertaken by Councillors and employees of Rockhampton Regional Council.

The policy does not apply to media generated by or personally responded to by individual Councillors.

### 2 Purpose:

To ensure a consistent, streamlined approach to media relation activities managed by Rockhampton Regional Council.

### 3 Related Documents:

#### Primary

Nil

#### Secondary

Code of Conduct (Employees)  
Discipline Procedure

### 4 Definitions:

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

CEO	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i> A person who holds an appointment under section 194 of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> . This includes a person acting in this position.
Council	Rockhampton Regional Council
Councillor/s	The Mayor and Councillors of Rockhampton Regional Council, within the meaning of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
Employee	<i>Local government employee:</i> (a) The chief executive officer; or (b) A person holding an appointment under section 196 of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
Mayor	The Mayor is an elected member of Rockhampton Regional Council, also referred to as a Councillor, with additional responsibilities as outline in section 12(4) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
Media	Media relation activities include media releases, community notices, media alerts, media responses, photo opportunities and unpaid editorials (which are linked to paid advertising).

#### Corporate Improvement and Strategy use only

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## 5 Policy Statement:

Media relation activities help Council deliver information to the public. Media activities may be generated proactively by Council or may be produced in response to an enquiry or request from a media organisation or stakeholder.

Council does not pay for media relations activities; they are cost-free unlike print or broadcast advertising or advertorials. Because of this, it is at the discretion of the media outlet as to whether they publish information or messages from the media relations activities.

Council resources should not be used to promote personal achievements or plans of individual Councillors or groups of Councillors, which does not directly relate to formal Council resolutions. In particular, media of a political nature must not be used to influence the voters in an election.

### 5.1 Spokespersons

#### 5.1.1 Councillors

The Mayor is the primary spokesperson for key Council messages and can speak on all Council matters.

Committee chairs will be expected to comment on committee meeting decisions.

Portfolio Councillors will be expected to comment on their portfolio area.

#### 5.1.2 Employees

The CEO will be the spokesperson for organisational and employee related matters, however will not provide comment on policy matters.

Media officers in the Communications unit have delegated authority, by the CEO, to provide responses and briefing notes on behalf of Council as spokesperson to media organisations.

No employee (with the exception of the above spokespersons) will participate in media interviews or provide information to the media.

The CEO may approve an exception to this policy to provide the media with an alternative spokesperson. Council employees may, from time to time, be called upon by the Council's media officers to provide technical information to the media.

Employees may not discuss policy issues with the media as this will remain the responsibility of Councillors.

### 5.2 Guidelines:

Employees must refer media enquiries direct to the Communications unit for response. Employees are not to make any comments to the media and should they do so, may be subject to disciplinary action.

Requests from the CEO or Communication unit for employees to provide information for the collation of a media response, must be given a high priority. Ideally, these requests should be answered within four hours.

The Communications unit will provide same day responses to the media for requests received prior to 11.00am, subject to the response being suitable to meet Council's communications needs. If a response is not possible, the media will be advised, or an alternative timeframe will be negotiated for provision of the requested information.

In media generated by Council, in particular media releases, Councillors will be quoted where possible.

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**6 Review Timelines:**

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

- 6.1. The related information is amended or replaced; or
- 6.2. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the Council.

**7 Responsibilities:**

Sponsor	Chief Executive Officer
Business Owner	Chief Executive Officer
Policy Owner	Manager Governance Support
Policy Quality Control	Corporate Improvement and Strategy

**EVAN PARDON  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

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