



## ***Media Policy***

<b>Policy Classification</b>	Council Policy
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<b>Related Policies or Documents:</b>	Caretaker Policy Complaints Against Council Employees Policy Code of Conduct for Elected Members Procedure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018 Public Consultation Policy Records Management Policy Privacy Policy
<b>Associated Forms:</b>	NA
<b>Responsible Manager:</b>	Director Community & Development
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## **Media Policy**

### **1. Preamble**

- 1.1. Council recognises that traditional media and digital media (including social media and Council's website) provide opportunities for the Kangaroo Island Council to proactively communicate and engage with its community and stakeholders in a professional, timely and positive manner.

### **2. Purpose**

- 2.1. This policy formalises Council's position on the creation and dissemination of official content through media channels by Elected Members and employees, and applies to all traditional and digital spaces where people may comment, contribute, create, forward, post, upload and share official content on, as individuals or on behalf of the Kangaroo Island Council.
- 2.2. The policy is not intended to curtail (nor be construed as curtailing) an individual's right to free speech or the use of traditional media or digital media to publish information in their personal capacity.
- 2.3. As it is not possible to expressly refer to or list all traditional media outlets and digital media platforms, the absence of any reference does not limit the application of this policy.

### **3. Scope**

- 3.1. This policy applies to the management of commentary on matters pertaining to Kangaroo Island Council through traditional media channels; and of official Kangaroo Island Council social media sites.
- 3.2. This policy applies to Elected Members, Employees, contractors, agents and volunteers of Council who use traditional media channels or social media on behalf of Council. The Policy applies to agencies and individuals who provide contractual services to Council, and will be included in all relevant external supplier contracts only if doing work on behalf of Council.
- 3.3. The Policy is not intended to cover personal use of social media, or traditional media, by Council Employees or Elected Members where:
  - 3.3.1. No reference is made to Council, its Elected Members, Employees, policies and services, or council related issues, as well as suppliers and other stakeholders in their relationship with Council; and
  - 3.3.2. The author publishes information in their personal capacity and not on behalf of, or in association with Council.
- 3.4. This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies and procedures of Kangaroo Island Council.

#### 4. Definitions

- 4.1. **Authorised employee:** means A content creator who has been approved and trained to post on Council's Social Media sites and publish approved content on the Council's website ([www.kangarooisland.sa.gov.au](http://www.kangarooisland.sa.gov.au)) and who has been trained to liaise with traditional media on behalf of Council spokespersons.
- 4.2. **CEO:** means the Chief Executive Officer (including their delegate) of the Kangaroo Island Council.
- 4.3. **Confidential information includes any:**
- 1.1.1. document or report that has been provided to Elected Members where the CEO has indicated (pursuant to section 83(5) of the *Local Government Act 1999* that it may be considered in confidence under section 90 of the Act; or
  - 1.1.2. decision, document or discussion which the Council has resolved to treat as confidential under Section 91 of the *Local Government Act 1999*; or
  - 1.1.3. any matter deemed as confidential by the Management Team; or
  - 1.1.4. any matter that is expressly identified as confidential; or
  - 1.1.5. any information which would breach an Employee's right to confidential protection of their personal information.
- 4.4. **Communication** means all forms of communication with third parties and includes, any verbal, written and physical forms of communication (e.g., via telephone, radio, letter, memo, email, social-media or in person).
- 4.5. **Digital media:** means group term for a range of online communication platforms that enable interaction, content sharing, and collaboration. These platforms include but are not limited to:
- a) Council's website
  - b) Social networking sites (for example Facebook, and LinkedIn)
  - c) Microblogging sites (for example Twitter)
  - d) Blogs
  - e) Podcasts and video podcasts
  - f) Photo sharing sites (for example Flickr, Instagram and Pinterest)
  - g) Forums and discussion boards
  - h) Sites that facilitate public content
  - i) Wikis
- 4.6. **Elected Members** means the Mayor and Councillors.
- 4.7. **Employee** means a person that works for Council and includes employees, trainees, contractors, volunteers, work experience placements, students or any other person who has access to Council's electronic systems and services either in a permanent or temporary role.
- 4.8. **Media** means media channel employees, such as reporters and editors.

- 4.9. **Media channels** means the distribution stream(s) for different media material. These can be mainstream or traditional channels (e.g. newspapers and website) or social media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter).
- 4.10. **Media material** means a piece of proactive information such as a media statement, news release or a video statement
- 4.11. **Social media account** means the profile an organisation or individual adopts on a digital platform. There are two types of accounts that are used by Kangaroo Island Council, namely Facebook and Council's website.
- 4.12. **Spokespersons** means the Mayor or another Elected Member authorised by the Mayor or the Council – or – the CEO or another person duly delegated by the CEO.
- 4.13. **Traditional media** means any form of mass communication available before the advent of digital media. This includes television, radio, newspapers, books, and magazines.

## 5. Policy Statement

- 5.1. Council requires a professional approach when liaising with the media and the community, whether it is through traditional mechanisms or online. Traditional media and social media will be used as a coordinated medium for strategic external communications, with the aim to:
- a) inform, communicate and initiate community involvement and discussion
  - b) extend the reach of our communications and direct the community to Council information
  - c) provide a convenient, accessible and flexible form of service delivery, and
  - d) build and enhance relationships with the community and stakeholders.
- 5.2. When representing Council in traditional media or digital media, Elected Members and employees must:
- a) act with honesty, integrity and transparency
  - b) use Council information and resources appropriately
  - c) not put forward their own personal commentary or opinions, and
  - d) not present themselves as official representatives without appropriate authorisation and training.
- 5.3. Use of traditional media and digital media must not intentionally:
- a) damage Council's reputation
  - b) disclose sensitive or confidential Council information
  - c) use Council's intellectual property or copyrighted materials or otherwise reproduce material in a manner that gives rise to breach of copyright, and
  - d) communicate offensive or defamatory information or commentary – particularly about Council, employees or Elected Members.
- 5.4. Most Council decisions, except those deemed confidential, are public documents and public property which are accessible on our website ([www.kangarooisland.sa.gov.au](http://www.kangarooisland.sa.gov.au)).
- 5.5. Confidential employee matters and matters discussed in confidence or provided in an confidence manner must not be conveyed externally in any form.

5.6. Any official Kangaroo Island Council social media site must be authorised by the CEO prior to its launch.

5.7. An employee must be approved by the CEO or delegate to implement, update, monitor, moderate and respond to comment on behalf of council on official Kangaroo Island Council social media pages/sites.

#### 5.8. **Elected Members**

5.8.1. In their capacity as an individual and member of the public; Elected Members have the right to publicly state their personal view of any matter, (subject to legal restraint), in media. In doing so they are, however, obliged to state from the outset that such views are personal and not made on behalf of nor do they necessarily reflect the position or opinion of Council. Further; in issuing a personal statement to the media, the Elected Member must not use their Council based title, be that Mayor, Councillor, CEO, Director, Manager, Officer, etc.

5.8.2. Elected Members must not use Council resources, including services of Council staff, for private media purposes unless legally or properly authorised to do so.

5.8.3. When any social media conversations are about a debate held in the Council Chamber or about comments made by Elected Members in their personal capacity, authorised employees will avoid involvement and, instead, encourage participants to contact the relevant Elected Members.

#### 5.9. **Employees**

5.9.1. In their capacity as an individual and member of the public; employees have the right to publicly state their personal view of any matter, (subject to legal restraint), in media. In doing so they are, however, obliged to state from the outset that such views are personal and not made on behalf of nor do they necessarily reflect the position or opinion of Council. Further; in issuing a personal statement to the media, employees must not use their Council based title, be that, CEO, Director, Manager, Officer, etc.

5.9.2. Employees entrusted as administrators of Social Media sites must conduct themselves properly and are required to act in accordance with Council policies and procedures, with failure to do so resulting in disciplinary action being taken.

#### 5.10. **Spokespersons**

5.10.1. As legislated in the *Local Government Act (1999)* s58 (1g); the Mayor is the Principal Spokesperson of Council including all matters of policy and council decision making enquires, as well as civic occasions, community events and major Council announcements;

5.10.2. The Mayor (or the Council) may authorise other Elected Members as required;

5.10.3. Standing Committee Charis – If neither the Mayor nor Deputy Mayor is available, the spokesperson will be the Standing Committee Chair for issues concerning the deliberations and decisions made by that committee and subsequently endorsed by Council. For matters unrelated to committee decisions, the CEO will determine who the nominated spokesperson will be;

- 5.10.4. The CEO is the official spokesperson on all matters concerning Council's operations including staff, administrative, election and industrial matters, etc. additionally, the CEO may act as a spokesperson in regard to technical or legislative matters affecting Policy;
- 5.10.5. At the CEO's discretion, approving media releases or responding to enquiries on routine operational issues may be delegated to specialist Managers;
- 5.10.6. The CEO may authorise other Council employees as spokespersons as required;
- 5.10.7. Any employee authorised or delegated to speak to the Media will address the issue-in-question, only providing the Council position, and refrain from elaboration or giving any personal comment or opinion;
- 5.10.8. Council shall, upon request, provide that information to the media which is freely available to any member of the public. This information shall be provided in order to improve or clarify the Media's understanding of the issue/s;
- 5.10.9. A spokesperson retains the right not to comment on any issue;
- 5.10.10. A spokesperson will not comment on confidential information;
- 5.10.11. Official spokespeople will have support from the Director of Community Development team in the form of drafting and dissemination of media releases, arranging of photo and interview opportunities, and briefings before interviews.

## **5.11. Caretaker period**

- 5.11.1. Employees and Elected Members cannot engage in Media activity that contravenes the caretaker period requirements during periodic council elections. These requirements are set out in the Council's Caretaker Policy.

## **6. Procedure**

### **6.1. Administration**

- 6.1.1. From an operative perspective all traditional media and digital media are administered by the Community Engagement team. This ensures the Kangaroo Island Council is able to monitor and respond to issues and provide a consistent and professional message and image. Delegated members of the Customer Service team may assist the Community Engagement team with administration of media.
- 6.1.2. Traditional media and social media activity is monitored on an ongoing basis by the Community Engagement team. Relevant information is forwarded in a timely manner to the Mayor, Elected Members, CEO, appropriate directors and other relevant staff.
- 6.1.3. The only exception to this is the principal spokespersons, when they receive direct enquiries from the media.
- 6.1.4. Responses may be in the form of a news release, email, written or verbal statement.

6.1.5. Employees must also advise the Community Engagement team where an event or issue is likely to generate significant public and/or media interest. This ensures Council is prepared to respond to public and media enquiries.

## **6.2. Media and marketing**

6.2.1. Where a news story is generated by the Community Engagement team, the appropriate representative will work with the relevant people to ensure information is correct and appropriately approved.

6.2.2. The Community Engagement Team, in consultation with the relevant Director or CEO will determine whether to proceed with the opportunity, and if so, how best to engage the media. The decision will be based on:

- a. Alignment with Council's Strategic Plan
- b. Timeliness
- c. Newsworthiness
- d. Audience reach and relevance
- e. Media appeal
- f. Competing priorities

6.2.3. Official communication, using Council resources, requires the approval of the Principal Spokesperson, CEO and/or CEO Delegate prior to being issued.

6.2.4. Copies of every media release issued must be sent to the Elected Members and the Executive Leadership Team.

## **6.3. Social media**

6.3.1. Only authorised employees and Principal Spokesperson may provide information about Council via Council owned and non- Council owned Social Media platforms.

6.3.2. Social media is administered in accordance with the guidelines and procedures set out on the social media platform and Council's Code of Conduct.

6.3.3. Accounts that do not meet the needs of the community or cannot be adequately administered will be closed on instruction from the CEO or relevant Director.

6.3.4. All social media posts that are generated by Council will have the comment function disabled.

## **6.4. Content**

6.4.1. Content posted on Kangaroo Island Council's social media page/sites will be related to Council events, news, information, projects, programs, issues, statements as part of a consultation strategy or be relevant to the community.



6.4.2. Local not-for-profit organisations that have social media sites which the Kangaroo Island Council is following may have their content shared on official Kangaroo Island Council's sites if the content is:

- a. Not a core service provided by Council;
- b. A fundraising opportunity for the not-for-profit organisation;
- c. Information pertinent to the Kangaroo Island community.

6.4.3. Information of a community service nature from not-for-profit organisations outside of the Council area, may also be shared. This information may come from, but is not limited to, Federal and State Government departments and agencies.

6.4.4. Content must reflect Council's stated positions and policies and not personal opinion. Language must be conversational in style, without the use of jargon.

6.4.5. Elected Members, if sharing or commenting on official Kangaroo Island Council's social media pages/sites, should be mindful of their legislative obligations as well as the Council Members' Code of Conduct and, during an election caretaker period, the provisions of the Elections Period Caretaker Policy. In addition, other than the Mayor, Councillors, must ensure that their comments/posts clearly indicate they are not acting on behalf of or as the spokesperson for Council.

6.4.6. All content must be accurate, factually correct and comply with all relevant legislation and council policies, including the Codes of Conduct (Behavioural).

6.4.7. Content must not relate to legal matters or include material that could be considered obscene, defamatory, threatening, intimidating, harassing or portray the Council in a negative manner.

6.4.8. Content must not reveal private or financial information or breach legislation, confidentiality or any council policy or Codes of Conduct (Behavioural).

6.4.9. Information produced and displayed on Social Media sites or any Media Statements will not be used for political or lobbying purposes, with the exception of promoting or encouraging participation in Local Government Elections.

## **6.5. Moderation of social media**

6.5.1. The Kangaroo Island Council retains the right to remove content that does not adhere to the guidelines identified in this policy or other associated policies.

6.5.2. Comments will not be responded to.

6.5.3. Council's social media sites are not to be used for reporting issues or requests for services from the public. The community should report issues using the following channels:

- a) Council's website,  
<https://www.kangarooisland.sa.gov.au/council/consultations/form-contact-details10>
- b) Council's email address: [kicouncil@kicouncil.sa.gov.au](mailto:kicouncil@kicouncil.sa.gov.au)

- c) In person at Council Chambers, 43 Dauncey Street, Kingscote, SA 5223
- d) By letter, PO Box 121, Kingscote, SA 5223
- e) By telephone, (08) 8553 4500
- f) MyLocal application: Download available for smartphones

## 6.6. Records management

6.6.1. Records management will comply with the requirements pursuant to the State Records Act 1997 and Council's Records Management Policy.

6.6.2. A copy of all necessary passwords or login codes for various sites to be kept with the information systems department in case of staff absence or departure and when changes are required.

## 6.7. Third party endorsements

6.7.1. From time to time, Council may be approached for testimonials and endorsements of third-party businesses, products and services. Employees must seek approval before committing to and/or providing a third-party testimonial and endorsement.

6.7.2. Approval must be obtained from the Manager, Community Engagement and Grants, Directors or another nominated employee under delegation from the CEO.

SIGNED:



Chief Executive Officer

Date: 14 June 2022

### History:

Date Reviewed:	Version:	Reason for Amendment:
20 September 2010	Version 1	Adopted by Council. Minute Book Reference 3.6.2
July 2014	Version 2	Amendment to definition and measures, format and layout
18 August 2015	Version 3	Full review and inclusion of relevant Codes of Conduct clauses and new Council Logo.
14 August 2018	Version 4	Periodic Review. Ref# C266:2018
13 April 2021	Version 5	Template update and full review of policy Ref# C93:2021
14 June 2022	Version 6	Consolidation of Media Policy and Social Media Policy