

Media Liaison Policy

Objective

The Media Policy aims to ensure communication between the City of Albany (the City) and the media is consistent, well informed, timely, appropriate and newsworthy.

The Policy establishes a framework for an effective working relationship with the media, including the identification of the City's authorised spokespersons.

Scope

This Policy applies to all City employees engaged to provide a service (which includes: employees, contractors, work experience students, trainees, and volunteers) of the City of Albany.

Policy Statement

- A.** This policy outlines the coordination of interaction between the City and external media outlets and applies to all staff 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- B.** Media contact includes; providing information via media release or statements, letters to the editor, responding to media queries over the phone or email, interviews, briefings, comments on radio, addressing a forum where media are present, and disclosing information to the media.
- C.** All media communication including requests, comments, statements, phone calls, emails or any other form of communication must be directed through the City's Communications Team who will determine the appropriate method and level of response, in consultation with the City's designated spokespersons.
- D.** The designated spokespersons for the City of Albany are the Mayor, Chief Executive Officer or Executive Director(s) unless otherwise delegated.
- E.** Employees are not permitted to make comment to the media in any capacity without the authorisation of the Chief Executive Officer or their approved delegate.
- F.** If a City employee is authorised to talk to the media, a professional approach is required acting with honesty, integrity and politeness at all times
- G.** When representing the City, authorised employees must use City information and resources appropriately, not put forward their own personal commentary or opinions.
- H.** City employees must advise the Communications Team if an event or issue is likely to gain media attention so that the City can be prepared to respond.
- I.** Proactive stories are also coordinated through the Communications Team who work with the subject experts to develop a media release, social media content, newsletter content or other collateral appropriate for the particular situation.
- J.** Depending on the nature of the media request, the CEO or Executive Director responsible for the specific directorate can nominate an alternative spokesperson or subject matter expert.

Legislative and Strategic Context

The Strategic context (Community Strategic Plan) and/or Federal or State legislation, directives, guidelines, Acts or Regulations that provide the broad framework within which the policy operates and/or with which it needs to comply:

- **Strategy: Communications and Engagement Strategy 2019 -2022**

Objectives and Priorities for Media:

- **Objective 8:** To plan and be proactive in contacting the media whenever possible and respond to media requests in a timely and appropriate way.
- **Objective 9:** To promote the City with positive and proactive media.
- **Objective 10:** To maintain awareness of the issues reported by the media and the community's response.

- **Delegated Authority:**

- Delegation: 003 – Make Official Public Statements & Information (Authority to provide statements to the media and authorise Media Releases)

Review Position and Date

This administrative policy was approved on 5 May 2021.

This policy is to be reviewed by the Document Owner every two years.

Associated Documents

The following documents that have a bearing on this policy and that may be useful reference material for users of this policy, follow:

- Communications and Engagement Strategy 2019-2022
- Social Media Policy & Guidelines

Definitions

Key terms and acronyms used in the policy, and their definitions:

- **Media Outlets** means any form of external communication that relays information to the public and can be television, radio, newspaper, online, social media, outdoor advertising or websites.
- **Media Contacts** means a group or individual that is employed by a media outlet.
- **Media Release** means written communication that reports specific and brief information about an event, circumstance, launch, issue, news or updates and is sent to media contacts to entice their interest in reporting on the matter.
- **Media Statement** means a short description, explanation or summary of an announcement, response to a question or official statement on a matter.
- **Briefing** means a collective meeting or forum where information is delivered quickly and effectively about an issue, news, events or specific situations.
- **Forum** means any situation where the public, stakeholders, agencies, government organisations or business are present for an opportunity to listen, be heard or have a say on a matter.
- **Personal Commentary** means vocalising an individual's personal views, opinions or ideas on a matter.
- **Media Attention** means when a particular person, issue, event or situation attracts the media to run a story or ask for more information.
- **Proactive Stories** means stories that are created by the City for distribution before the media have an opportunity to report on it.
- **Spokesperson** means the official representative that is able to speak to the media on a particular subject or issue.

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