

THE BAROSSA COUNCIL

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY



Corporate Plan Link:	6.7 Implement strategies for the community to be actively engaged in Council decision making through sound information and communication		
Policy Owner:	Chief Executive Officer	Previous Approval Date(s):	
Document Control Officer:	Communications and Engagement Officers	Current Approval Date:	21/8/2018
HPE Content Manager Ref:	18/35510	Next Review Date:	21/8/2020

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to ensure interactions between The Barossa Council and the Media portray a consistent, accurate and positive image of Council in the community.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy sets out the responsibilities of Employees in relation to interactions with the Media. It also references the role of the Mayor as the principal spokesperson for The Barossa Council.

3. Definitions

Employee	All full-time, part-time and casual employees of The Barossa Council including trainees, apprentices, and on-hire employees.
CEO	Chief Executive Officer of The Barossa Council or someone Acting in the position of CEO.
Director	Any Employee appointed to the position of Director or Acting in the position of Director.
Media	Organisations utilising traditional and/or digital platforms for media communication.
Act	The Local Government Act 1999.
Principal Member	Mayor of The Barossa Council or in their absence the Deputy Mayor or in their absence an Elected Member appointed to the position.
Elected Member	Any person elected to a position as a Member of The Barossa Council but not the Principal Member.

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4. Policy Statement

The Barossa Council communicates and engages with our community and stakeholders utilising various digital and traditional channels. It is important to manage these to ensure Council's messaging is consistent, accurate and appropriate to the target audience, and that our corporate brand principles are upheld.

4.1 Spokespersons

- 4.1.1 The Principal Member (the Mayor), as per the Act, is the principal spokesperson, authorised to speak publicly on behalf of Council.
- 4.1.2 Where the Mayor is absent the Deputy Mayor is authorised to be the principal spokesperson, authorised to speak publicly on behalf of Council, or, the Mayor may authorise on a case by case basis another member of Council to be the principal spokesperson on that matter.
- 4.1.3 The Chief Executive Officer is authorised as a Spokesperson of Council and shall consult with the Mayor where deemed necessary.
- 4.1.4 The Directors are authorised as Spokespersons of Council on matters related to their technical expertise and directorate services, and shall consult with the Mayor or CEO where deemed necessary.
- 4.1.5 If the Mayor, CEO or Directors are contacted directly by the Media they have the authority to respond and it is recommended that the Communications and Engagement Officers are made aware of the enquiry.

4.2 Employee Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.2.1 The Communications and Engagement Officers are responsible for managing and initiating Council's media relations. All media contact should be coordinated via the Communications and Engagement Officers. This does not mean media cannot make contact directly with CEO/Directors who shall inform, or as necessary, consult with the Communications and Engagement Officers.
- 4.2.2 CEO/Directors, via the Communications and Engagement Officers, may provide and approve responses to the media as well as authorise media statements or other information releases. CEO/Directors, via the Communications and Engagement Officers, may delegate authority to comment to Employees who have specific technical or subject matter expertise where appropriate.
- 4.2.3 An Employee authorised to speak on behalf of The Barossa Council will do so in a constructive and professional manner, will not disclose information that is confidential and will not make personal comment on any issue. Where Council has reached a decision on a matter, official comments must support Council's endorsed position.

4.3 Personal Comments

Elected Members and Employees, as members of the community, have the right to state their personal views publicly. Any such comments must be acknowledged as their

personal views and should not disrespect Council, its decisions, decision-making process, Elected Members or other Employees, and not use Council resources.

4.4 Emergency Management

In the event of emergency the Chief Executive Officer or any Director is authorised to circumvent the Media and Communications Policy in the interest of community safety.

4.5 Records Management

Authorised Council commentary appearing in print or online should be managed in accordance with Council's Records Management Policy.

4.6 Policy Breaches

Breaches to the Policy will be managed in accordance with Council's Human Resource Management Policy or Elected Members Code of Conduct and related supporting processes.

5. Supporting Process

The Barossa Council Social Media Process

6. Related Policies

Social Media Policy
Human Resource Management Policy
Records Management Policy

7. Legislation and References

Section 58 of the Local Government Act 1999

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Communications and Engagement Officers in consultation with the relevant stakeholders within two years or more frequently if Council's need changes.

9. Further Information

- 9.1 This Policy is available on Council's website at www.barossa.sa.gov.au. It can also be viewed electronically at Council's principal office at 43-51 Tanunda Road, Nuriootpa and all Council branches, during ordinary business hours. A copy of this Policy can be obtained at those venues upon payment of a fixed fee.
- 9.2 Complaints regarding this Policy or its application can be made to the Customer Service team on 8563 8444 or barossa@barossa.sa.gov.au at first instance, who will refer you to the most appropriate officer according to Council's *Complaints Handling Policy* (see clause 9.1 above for availability).

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Signed: 

Dated: 21/8/18

[Mayor Bob Sloane or
Chief Executive Officer under delegation]

10. Policy Version History

Version No:	Approval Date:	Description of Change:
1.0	21/8/18	New Policy