



**CENTRAL
GOLDFIELDS
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

POLICY

POLICY TITLE	MEDIA POLICY
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DELEGATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COUNCIL <input type="checkbox"/> ORGANISATIONAL

22 NOLAN STREET
MARYBOROUGH VIC 3465



DOCUMENT CONTROL

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1. Purpose

This Media Policy guides our relationship with the media and provides a clear framework for internal procedures for dealing with media requests, including who is authorised to respond to media enquiries on what issues.

The local media is an important platform for Central Goldfields Shire Council in the promotion of projects, decisions and events. It's important that we use it effectively to ensure our messages are consistent and to promote positive engagement with residents and stakeholders.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all Central Goldfields Shire Council Councillors, Executive Team, staff, contractors, sub-contractors and volunteers when interacting with the media.

The term 'media' refers to all external news channels, including television, radio, newspapers, magazine and online news services. It also includes journalism students. It does not refer to social media – refer to the Online Communications Policy.

3. Policy

The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure that clear and relevant information is provided to the community. The policy has been established to ensure Councillors and staff understand and respect the role of the media, and who has responsibility to communicate with the Media, ensuring timely, accurate and newsworthy information is provided.

This policy provides a clearly defined process for Central Goldfields Shire Council to manage, monitor and coordinate dealings with the media.

3.1 Media enquiries

The Communications Officer is the primary liaison point between the media and the organisation.

3.1.1. Staff

All media enquiries must be referred to the Communications Officer. If staff are contacted directly by a journalist they should ask the journalist to contact the Communications Officer.

The Communications Officer will research the enquiry by making contact with either the CEO or General Manager.

A response will be provided to the journalist in one of two formats:

- A written response attributed to the appropriate spokesperson; or,
- A verbal response by the appropriate spokesperson



The Communications Officer can provide journalists with background information but are not spokespeople in the first instance.

All responses must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

If the Communications Officer is unavailable, the journalist must contact the CEO's office. The CEO's Executive Assistant will take the call and liaise with the CEO regarding the response.

3.1.2 Councillors

As elected community representatives it is expected that the media will contact Councillors directly at times to provide comment on issues.

If a Councillor is contacted about an issue that is the subject of a pending Council decision or pending policy, the Councillor must be careful in not stating a position prior to the Council meeting.

Councillors are encouraged to inform the Mayor, CEO or Communications Officer for advice on key messages or issues prior to responding to media enquiries, where possible.

It is preferable that Councillors distinguish between their personal views and Council decisions or positions if there is a difference. It is also preferable that all comments to the media portray the Mayor and Councillors a united team working for the betterment of the municipality.

3.1.3 Approaching the media

The Communications Officer is responsible for issuing media releases, organising photo opportunities, media briefings, pitching stories and contacting journalists about potential issues.

This includes information from Go Goldfields, Maryborough Regional Library, Visitor Information Centre, Central Goldfields Art Gallery and Goldfields Family Centre.

The Communications Officer identifies and plans media relations activities. This is based on information provided to them by Council staff as well as the Council Meeting agenda.

Staff are encouraged to contact the Communications Officer to advise of potential media stories.

All media releases must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer prior to their release.

The Councillors and the CEO are the only people to be quoted in a media release. All photo opportunities should include a Councillor, where possible.

Staff can provide factual information at a photo opportunity and should only be quoted if approved by the Communications Officer.



4 Responsibility/Accountability

4.1 Councillors

- Understand and comply with the provisions in the this policy
- Seek advice from the Communications Officer or CEO on media relations
- Seek training and development for media relations
- Seek advice from the CEO or Communications Officer if unsure about applying the provisions of this policy

4.2 Executive Team

- Understand and comply with the provisions of this policy
- Promotion of adherence to this policy to staff
- Seek advice from the Communications Officer or CEO on media relations
- Seek training and development for media relations

4.3 Staff, Contractors, Sub-contractors and Volunteers

- Understand and comply with the provisions of this policy

4.4. Communications Officer

- Protect the reputation and image of Council
- Provide advice on media relations and media training
- Educate Councillors and staff about this policy and their responsibilities in undertaking media relations
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with the media