Gladstone Regional Council

Corporate Standard

Title	**MEDIA GUIDELINES**
Corporate Standard No.	**CS – 2019-16**
Business Unit/s	**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND EVENTS**
Date of Approval by CEO	**INSERT DATE THIS VERSION OF THE CORPORATE STANDARD WAS APPROVED BY CEO**
Date of Effect	**INSERT DATE CORPORATE STANDARD TAKES EFFECT (this could be different to approval date)**
Review Date	**INSERT 3 YEARS FROM DATE OF EFFECT ABOVE**
Date Repealed	**INSERT THE DATE THIS CORPORATE STANDARD IS REPEALED**

1.0 PURPOSE:

This Corporate Standard is a guide on the engagement with all forms of media (newspaper, radio, TV and social media) so that Council maintains credibility, integrity and customer confidence, and Council's corporate values and brand are reinforced.

2.0 SCOPE:

The guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the Media Policy. It provides standards of behaviour for interactions with the media, the community and social media use by our people when speaking on behalf of Gladstone Regional Council.

3.0 RELATED LEGISLATION:

- Copyright Amendment Act 1968
- Public Records Act 2002
- Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)
- Trademarks Act 1995
- Defamation Act 2006 (Qld)
- Local Government Act 2009

4.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS:
- Community Engagement Policy
- Record Management Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Information Privacy Policy
- Media Policy
- Disaster Management Communication Response Strategy
- Social Media Community Guideline

5.0 DEFINITIONS:

To assist in interpretation of this corporate standard, definitions contained in the Media Policy apply, in addition to the following definition:

"High-risk comment and high-risk topic" mean a comment or subject that has high potential to adversely impact on the reputation of Gladstone Regional Council.

6.0 CORPORATE STANDARD STATEMENT:

6.1 The Guidelines

These Guidelines apply to all types of media interactions on behalf of the business, including interviews, public commentary and social media creation, administration and posting. They specifically deal with protecting the reputational integrity of the business and provide awareness of the risks to minimise the occurrence and severity of information security breach incidents.

6.2 Approval to Become a Gladstone Regional Council Spokesperson

Council's Media Policy outlines who may be a Council spokesperson, particularly in its definitions and policy statement.

6.3 Training

Upon commencement of their role with the business all our people should undergo induction training on social media, which will establish acceptable behaviour when using personal social media accounts and/or dealing with business matters. Additional training will be provided by the Brand and Communications team as needed.

6.4 Records

Records will be kept in accordance to Council's Records Management Policy.

6.5 Disaster Management

In order to ensure consistency of information to the Gladstone Regional community, the Brand and Communications team will develop and distribute emergency communications through Gladstone Regional Council's Social Media channels when facing an emergent issue or in emergency situations.

In those circumstances, any spokesperson for Gladstone Regional Council must be briefed by the Brand and Communications team prior to any public statement.

In emergency situations, the Disaster Management Communication Response Strategy is evoked.

6.6 Social Media

All permissions to Gladstone Regional Council social media channels must be submitted in writing and approved by the business's Brand and Communications team. The written authorisation will be given to the business facility if it is considered:

a) They have the capacity to manage social media; and

b) There are clear benefits for the business, the facility and the community of having the dedicated facility-specific social media channel(s).

New campaign-specific pages on social media will otherwise not be permitted and the communication should be issued through the business's principal Facebook and/or other social media channels by contacting the Brand and Communications team.

6.6.1   Account Set Up

Once approved, accounts can be set up following the guidelines below:

a) Facebook pages are to be set up using personal accounts and must contain three administrators: the business's General Manager for Community Development and events; the business Social Media Officer; and someone from the facility/site setting up the account, with additional staff added as approved by the Brand and Communications team;
b) Facebook pages are to be set up as an organisational page and not as a 'person account' or 'Friends' page; Except for councillor accounts, which will be 'fan pages';
c) Facebook accounts should use a short URL;
d) Passwords for social media accounts should not be altered without notifying other administrators of the channels;
e) Social media accounts are to remain the property of Council and our people are to relinquish all rights to the channels upon resignation or departure from Council.

6.6.2   Managing Social Media

The business's Social Media Officer, or the facility/site administrator is responsible for the daily monitoring, upkeep, content and record-keeping of the social media material within their site.

All approved facilities/sites must meet the standards set out in all Council's relevant policies (such as the Media Policy and Record Management Policy) and the branding requirements set out in the Council's Corporate Identity Manual.

6.6.3   Protocols

In using social media:

- Commit to acting ethically by not using false or fake personas.
- Use the business's official electronic communication accounts only when addressing Council business. If any enquiries are directed to staff's personal accounts (such as personal Twitter or Facebook accounts) redirect them according to Attachment A.
- Seek approval if referencing customers, work colleagues, suppliers or sub-contractors.
- Always be respectful and uphold Council's values when posting in the business social media channels. Harassment, spamming, discriminatory posting, profanity or pornography are not part of our values.
- Our people refrain from responding directly to negative comments about Council. Posts of this type should be reported to the Brand and Communications team.
- Refer to the Flowchart on attachment A on who can make a social media comment.
- Where a mistake is made in a posting, it should be publicly corrected at the earliest opportunity.

6.6.4 Content

Users of the social media channel must be informed of the purpose of the channel.

Each channel must inform users the business reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of the Media Policy or any applicable law. Their posts may not be published/or may be deleted if they meet any of the criteria list below:

a) Electioneering or party-political statements;
b) Profane language or content;
c) Material that perpetuates or promotes discrimination of protected characteristics. Including but not limited to, race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religious belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage, civil partnership or gender reassignment;
d) Sexual content or links to sexual content;
e) Solicitation of commerce;
f) Illegal conduct or encouragement/support of illegal activities;
g) Information that compromises or may compromise the safety, privacy or security of the public or public systems; and,
h) Content that violates the legal ownership interests of any other party.

All social media channels must have the above statements displayed or made available via a link. Any content that meet these criteria must be retained as a record, in accordance to Council's Record Management Policy.

6.6.5 Posting

All social media administrators should ensure their entries comply with the following blog etiquette:

- I will tell the truth;
- I will write deliberately and with accuracy;
- I will acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly;
- I will preserve the original post, in accordance to Council's Record Management Policy;
- I will never delete my own posts. Except when the post is reposted to correct information where there is an error such as an incorrect link, providing no one has liked or commented on the original post;
- I will reply to direct messages and comments when appropriate;
- I will strive for high quality with every post – including basic spell-checking;
- When I disagree, I will disagree with other opinions respectfully;
- I will link to online references and original source materials directly;
- I will disclose conflicts of interest; and
- I will keep private issues and topics separate from work issues and topics.

6.6.6 Links to the Gladstone Regional Council website

- Wherever possible, all referenced information is to be made available on our organisational website (or sub-sites where applicable).
- Access to any service or form filling is to be made available via the principal website (or facility sub-sites where applicable).
- Where possible, there should be a link on the relevant Gladstone Regional Council web page to the relevant social media channel and vice versa.

7.0   ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Who can make a social media comment
Attachment B – Summarised media responsibilities table

8.0   REVIEW TRIGGER:

This corporate standard will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

1. The related legislation or governing documents are amended or replaced; or

2. Other circumstances as determined by resolution of Council or the CEO; or

3. Three years from date of effect.

TABLE OF AMENDMENTS		
Document History	**Date**	**Notes (including the prior CS No, precise of change/s, etc)**
Originally Approved	22/11/2013	
Amendment 1	17/11/2015	CS-23/2015 – Social Media Guidelines Corporate Standard

APPROVED:

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LEISA DOWLING
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Attachment A – Who can make a social media comment /response about Council Business – Flowchart

Are you the Mayor, someone delegated by him, CEO or part of Brand and Communications?

Yes → Have you been briefed by Brand & Comms?

No → Are you an authorised spokesperson or social media administrator?

Yes → Have you been briefed by Brand & Comms? → Yes → Is this an emergency situation?

Is this an emergency situation?
- Yes → Are you following the Disaster Communication Plan?
- No → Are you responding to a **high-risk** comment?

Have you been briefed by Brand & Comms?
- No → **Don't comment**

Are you following the Disaster Communication Plan?
- Yes → **You may comment**
- No → Are you responding to a **high-risk** comment?

Are you responding to a **high-risk** comment?
- Yes → Refer inquiry to Brand & Comms
- No → Is this a complaint or request for assistance?

Are you an authorised spokesperson or social media administrator?
- Yes → Have you been advised by Brand & Comms
- No → Refer inquiry to Brand & Comms

Have you been advised by Brand & Comms
- No → Refer inquiry to Brand & Comms
- Yes → Is this within your authorised topics?

Is this within your authorised topics?
- No → Is this a complaint or request for assistance?
- Yes → **You may comment**

Is this a complaint or request for assistance?
- Yes → Refer inquiry to Customer Solutions
- No → **You may comment**

Attachment B – Summarised Media Responsibilities Table

Responsible Person or Area	Responsibility
Our people	Unless authorised by the Mayor or the acting Mayor, refrain from commenting on Council's business
	Forward any media request for comments to the business's Media Advisor
Council's Spokesperson	Seek advice from the Brand and Communications team on how to best address the topic at hand prior to interviews
	Use the corporate templates for presentations with audio-visual component and provide a copy of your presentation to the Brand and Communications team for their information
	Restrict your comments to your approved area of expertise
	Redirect other requests for comment to the Brand and Communications Team – if a high-risk topic; or to Customer Solutions – if a complaint or request for assistance
	Responsibly manage confidential or proprietary Council information. The release of such information should follow legal standards
	Contact the Brand and Communications team at least a week in advance, when addressing a contentious business issue at an event
	Contact the Brand and Communications team as soon as possible if media representative have unexpectedly attended an event where you have given a presentation or commented about Council business
Brand and Communications Team	If required, members of the team will attend specific training upon the commencement of their employment in this role
	Advise Council Spokespeople prior to media interviews
	If necessary, provide training for the business's spokespeople
	Authorise new social media channels or pages and provide set-up support when needed
	Maintain a record of the business social media channels
	Maintain the style sheet outlining the standard for all blog posts
	Filter social media posts from the business's facilities
	Ensure relevant Social Media Channels and Gladstone Regional Council's webpage are linked
	Develop and distribute emergency communications through Gladstone Regional Council's principal Social Media channel
Brand and Communications Manager	Manage any reports of unexpected media presence at Council spokespeople presentations, lectures, and others
	Approve the blocking of users who continuously fail to oblige by the etiquette outlined on the 'About' section of the business's social media pages
Media Advisor	Receive and filter requests for official comments and interviews
	Contact the Mayor for first comment regarding media requests or enquiries
Social Media Officer	Responsible for posting information to Council's principal Facebook and social media channels
	Responsible for record keeping of the business's social media channels
	Monitor risks, trends, engagement and compliance of the business's social media channels
	Submit any requests to block social media users to Brand and Communications Manager for approval
Administrator of Social Media Channel	Request authorisation from the Brand and Communications team for any new social media or webpage
	Refer staff – administering the channel – to training with the Brand and Communications team
	Follow the business's style sheet for posting
	May respond to simple requests regarding their area of expertise (such as library working hours; where to buy tickets for an event, etc.)
	Inform users their posts may not be published/or may be deleted if they do not comply with the etiquette outlined in the "About" section of the channel
	Daily monitoring, responding, upkeep and content of the social media material within the social media page
	Keep a record of and delete any posts that harass, abuse or threaten others or fail to oblige by the etiquette outlined on the channel
	Warn users who do not comply with outlined etiquette, repeated non-compliant behaviour will result in being barred from the page
	Publicly amend any mistakes made in posting at the earliest opportunity
	Refrain from posting individualised emergency posts when the Disaster Management Communication Response Strategy is invoked
Facility Manager or Event Manager	Approve release of promotional material and advertising of routine activities/event
Business Units	Forward requests for posts on main business social media channels to the Brand and Communications team
CEO	May speak on behalf of Council without the need to seek authorisation from the Brand and Communications team
	Authorise subject matter experts to provide support to Council spokespeople