



Gladstone Regional Council

Council Policy

Title	MEDIA POLICY
Policy Number	P-2019-22
Business Unit/s	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND EVENTS
Date of Adoption	
Resolution Number	
Review Date	
Date Repealed	

1.0 PURPOSE:

To provide guidance 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:

This policy applies to all situations where our people and Councillors interact with the media or the community in regard to Council business matters. This includes use of social media, responding to a media enquiry or initiating contact on behalf of Council.

3.0 RELATED LEGISLATION:

Copyright Act 1968
Defamation Act 2006
Information Privacy Act 2009
Local Government Act 2009
Public Records Act 2002
Racial Discrimination Act 1975

4.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- Community Engagement Policy
- Councillor Code of Conduct Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Information Privacy Policy
- Media Guidelines Corporate Standard
- Records Management Policy
- Disaster Management Communication Response Strategy
- A Guide for Elected Council Members in Queensland
- Queensland Councillor Social Media Community Guideline – Office of the Independent Assessor / LGAQ

5.0 DEFINITIONS:

To assist in interpretation of this policy the following definitions apply:

“Councillor” means an elected member of Gladstone Regional Council.

“Emergency Situation” means when the Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC) is activated (such as: fires, floods, disease outbreaks and others).

“Facility Pages” means Facebook pages or other social media channels relating to the business’s facilities or specific services in addition to the business's endorsed corporate Facebook page and other social media.

“Media” means all media, including newspaper, radio, TV and social media (see definition below).

“Our People” – means any person undertaking work on behalf of Council and includes employees, volunteers, contractors (and their employees), consultants, vacation employment students and work experience students of Gladstone Regional Council.

“Public Record” means any record (message, email, document, letter) created or received while addressing Council business. Public records are connected to Council’s statutory, administrative or other public responsibilities.

“Social Media” means the range of technology tools that readily allow people to engage in communication and to share information and resources via the internet or peer to peer electronic services. Examples of social media include but are not limited to: Podcasts; blogs; wikis; tagging; online photograph and video sharing; forums; message boards; answer services; presentation sharing; social bookmarking; social reviews; social networking sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn).

“Social Media Administrator” means one of our people who has been given permission in writing from the Brand and Communications team to use or manage social media on behalf of their facility pages or section of the organisation.

“Spokesperson and Spokespeople” means the Mayor of Gladstone Regional Council, a Councillor, or Council employee, who have been delegated to speak on behalf of the Council by the Mayor.

6.0 POLICY STATEMENT:

The Mayor (or acting Mayor) is Council's official spokesperson and has primary responsibility for communicating decisions of Council or its position on a particular issue.

All editorial media enquiries and requests for media comment should be directed to the business’s Media Advisor in the first instance, where the Mayor will be offered the first opportunity to respond.

Only spokespeople delegated by the Mayor may provide media statements on behalf of Gladstone Regional Council for the purpose of marketing, communicating and engaging with the community.

These statements shall be restricted to the topic at hand and undertaken in accord with relevant guidelines and protocols established within the business.

Video resources' approvals shall follow the same steps outlined above.

6.1 Social Media use on Council's behalf restricted

Gladstone Regional Council's official social media channels are managed by approved social media administrators within the business. Only social media administrators may establish, manage or use social media on behalf of Gladstone Regional Council. Social media use by social media administrators shall be restricted to their area of expertise and undertaken in accord with relevant guidelines and protocols established within the business.

Councillors may manage their own official social media accounts. Where a Councillor has established an official social media account, they must publish or have a link to the Queensland Councillor Social Media Community Guideline.

6.2 Recordkeeping

Our people or a Councillor who receives or creates media must ensure the public record is kept on Council's recordkeeping systems in accordance with Council's Record Management Policy.

6.3 Emerging issues and Emergency Situations

In order to ensure consistency of information to the Gladstone Regional community, when facing emerging issues or emergency situations, 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. Diligence in refraining from posting individualised emergency posts on Councillor social media channels or facility pages is to be applied with the preference to share emergency posts from Council's principal Facebook account instead.

7.0 ATTACHMENTS:

Nil.

8.0 REVIEW MECHANISM:

This policy 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 adoption.

TABLE OF AMENDMENTS			
Document History	Date	Council Resolution No.	Notes (including the prior Policy No, precise of change/s, etc)
Originally Approved	19 November 2013	G/13/1798	
Amendment 1	17 November 2015	G/15/2654	
Amendment 2			Prior P-2015/34 - Social Media Policy; amended to include all media principles.

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LEISA DOWLING
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER