

1. Purpose

This policy provides for the control of expenditure on advertisements placed by Council in various media. The *Local Government Regulation 2012* outlines requirements that must be adhered to in relation to advertising expenditure. The policy also supports Council's commitment to spend public money in an open, accountable and responsible way.

2. Scope and applications

This policy applies to any advertisement or notice in any media, to promote goods, services and facilities provided by Council.

3. Principles

Council is committed to the local government principles in the *Local Government Act 2009* which includes having good governance, transparent and effective processes and decision making in the public interest, and ethical and legal behaviour of Councillors and local government employees.

In addition to upholding the principles outlined above, Council is committed to upholding the obligations within the *Human Rights Act 2019* by considering the provisions of the Act when making decisions relevant to this policy.

4. Content

1. Reasonable expenditure on advertising is in the public interest as it is used to inform and educate. Acceptable uses of Council money for advertising are:
 - a. To advertise, promote and increase public awareness of a new, changed or continuing policy, service or facility provided by the Council.
 - b. To increase the use of a service or facility provided by the Council.
 - c. To change the behaviour of people in Council's area for the benefit of all or some of the community or to achieve the objectives of the Council.
 - d. To advise the public of the time, place and content of scheduled meetings of Council.
 - e. To advise the public of the decisions made by Council at its meetings.
 - f. To seek feedback on proposed policies or activities of the Council.
 - g. To promote or advocate for the region.
 - h. To advertise matters required by legislation to be advertised.
 - i. Associated with the administrative conduct of a local government election by the Returning Officer.
2. Advertisements will comply with the Toowoomba Region Brand Style Guide.
3. Advertising across specific media may be subject to external organisation's approval including but not limited to:
 - a. The Broadcasting Services Act 1992 (Cwlth) where all television advertisements are required to be viewed by the FreeTV Commercials Advice (CAAd) two days prior to be classified for airing. This external service is required to ensure Council remains compliant with the CAAd Code.
 - b. Social media platforms retain the right to review or restrict content posting. Facebook, for example, requires less than 20% text to be used for all digital advertising.
4. Council will use a member of staff or independent presenter in advertising except in special circumstances where the Mayor is the designated spokesperson (subject to the Caretaker Period Protocol).

5. Where the Manager Customer, Communication and Engagement (CCE) believes that disproportionate funds are being used to promote any service, goods or policy, the matter will be escalated to the functional General Manager for determination.

5. Responsibilities/accountabilities

1. Advertising spending must be authorised in accordance with Council's financial delegations and any specific limitations applied by the Chief Executive Officer as articulated in the Register of Delegations.
2. The functional area is required to provide content to be distributed.
3. The Approving Officer approves all advertising and the appropriate medium.
4. The Approving Officer must ensure that:
 - a. The expenditure is in accordance with this policy.
 - b. The cost of the advertisement is appropriate for the number of people it is likely to inform and provides a commensurate benefit to the Council or to the public.
 - c. Funds are available for the cost of the advertising and meets the usual requirements for expenditure approvals, including but not limited to the Quote or Tender Consideration Plan for Branch Advertising.
5. CCE is responsible for determining the advertising details (selection of media, channel, dates and frequency to be advertised) having regard to the target audience, circulation demographics except in the circumstances provided in point 5.4 above.
6. CCE will prepare appropriate templates for use in advertising material.
7. The Manager CCE will ensure that a summary of advertising expenditure is included in the Annual Report in accordance with Section 197 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

6. Relevant laws

Broadcasting Services Act 1992

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

197 Advertising spending

- (1) A local government must prepare and adopt a policy about the local government's spending on advertising (an *advertising spending policy*).
- (2) A local government may spend money on advertising only—
 - (a) if—
 - (i) the advertising is to provide information or education to the public; and
 - (ii) the information or education is provided in the public interest; and
 - (b) in a way that is consistent with the local government's advertising spending policy.
- (3) *Advertising* is promoting, for the payment of a fee, an idea, goods or services to the public.

7. Related policies/documents

Members of the public can access Council policies on Council's website. If a policy listed below does not appear on the website, please contact 131 872 or email info@tr.qld.gov.au to request a copy. Staff may access policies via the [Policy Register and Review Schedule](#).

Council policies

2.24 Caretaker Period Protocol

- 2.31 Procurement Policy
- 2.35 Media Policy
- 2.64 Social Media Policy
- 5.07 Procurement Procedure

Other documents

Corporate Plan 2024 - 2029

8. Related forms

Not Applicable

9. Definitions

Advertising - Advertising is promoting, for the payment of a fee, an idea, goods or services to the public.¹

Approving Officer – Coordinator Marketing, Manager Customer, Communication and Engagement or delegate.

Medium/Channel - Commonly used media for advertising consist of traditional (magazines, newspapers, radio, television), digital (social media, adwords, remarketing, electronic direct mail), branded merchandise (hats, sunglasses, pens) and direct mail (brochures, printed newsletters, posters).

Public notices - Short-term one-off communications that include:

- Road closures
- Announcement of permanent or temporary changes to services
- Availability of grants and awards programs
- Details about public hearings, investigations, seminars, workshops and other government events
- Statutory/regulatory notices required by legislation or regulation to publicly disclose certain information or activities
- Urgent public health or safety announcements (example: non-statutory notices for emergencies).

Recruitment advertising - All advertising that promotes a specific job vacancy, or employment opportunity within the Toowoomba Regional Council.

10. Policy details

Policy category:	Council Policy	Policy version number²:	4.00
Date adopted/approved:	10 December 2024	Effective date:	10 December 2024
Approval authority:	Council		
Policy Owner:	Customer, Communication and Engagement		
Contact officer:	Manager Customer, Communication and Engagement		

¹ Local Government Regulation 2012

² Printed copies are uncontrolled. It is the user's responsibility to ensure that any copies of policy documents are the current issue. Any delegations should be verified via the relevant Delegation Register as it takes precedence if there is a conflict. The Chief Executive Officer will, if necessary, be the sole arbiter in resolving any issues of conflict

Review date:	December 2027
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11. Revision history

Policy version	Approval date	DM Reference
1.00	16 February 2010	3492683 v1C
1.01	27 October 2010	3968882v1
2.00	17 October 2016	6615490v2
3.00	14 September 2020	7839454v2
4.00	10 December 2024	10900725v2