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# Media and Corporate Communications Policy

 Collaboration

 Communication

 Integrity

 Efficiency

 Leadership

<b>Version Control and Objective ID</b>	Version No: 1	Objective ID: A7976255
<b>Adopted at Council Ordinary Meeting on</b>	24 March 2022	
<b>Date of Review</b>	24 March 2026	

## 1. Statement

At Ipswich City Council we value the role print, broadcast and digital media play in sharing news of the city's events, activities and milestones. This policy confirms our ongoing commitment to provide timely, and accurate, relevant and consistent information to the community through positive working relationships with media organisations and via Council's media channels.

Ipswich City Council welcomes and encourages scrutiny from the public and from third party media organisations. As a matter of principle, this policy acknowledges that all information made public through official channels, including but not restricted to, Committee and Ordinary Council briefings, is open to media scrutiny. As a core principle, Council should be in a position to explain all publicly-available background, commentary, decisions, or other publicly-available material to the community, including through official Council media channels or via third party media organisations.

~~Ipswich City Council (Council) is committed to providing timely, accurate, relevant and consistent information to the community via Council's media channels and external media organisations.~~

## 2. Purpose and Principles

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure the community is aware of Council's Corporate Plan, strategies, policies, services, activities, and decisions.
- Ensure the timely, accurate, relevant and consistent provision of information to the community via Council's external communication networks including Council's media channels and external media organisations.
- Ensure an overall positive image and reputation of Council is maintained through our external communication networks.
- Provide clear direction on the responsibilities of Councillors, Council employees, and contractors in relation to official media comment.
- Encourage the sharing of Council's successes with the community.
- Ensure Council media resources are utilised effectively, efficiently and economically.

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- Ensure Councillors, as elected representatives of the community, are aware of emerging media issues.
- Ensure Councillors have fair and equitable opportunity to engage with the community about divisional, committee and other community matters through Council's external communication networks, recognising the citywide role and responsibilities of all Councillors under section 12 of the Local Government Act 2009.
- Provide clarity with media statements and other external communications.

**3. Strategic Plan Links**

This policy aligns with the following iFuture 2021-2026 Corporate Plan theme/s:

- A Trusted and Leading Organisation

**4. Regulatory Authority**

- *Local Government Act 2009*
- Local Government Regulation 2012
- Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Media and Communications Procedure

**5. Human Rights Commitment**

Ipswich City Council (Council) has considered the human rights protected under the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)* when adopting and/or amending this policy. When applying this policy, Council will act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights and give proper consideration to a human right relevant to the decision in accordance with the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)*.

**6. Scope**

This policy applies to all Councillors, Council staff and contractors of Ipswich City Council when responding to media enquiries or when seeking to make comment on behalf of Council or otherwise by a Councillor on a particular matter.

This policy specifies who is authorised to act as a Designated or Lead Spokespersons and the procedures to be followed for issuing of any proactive or reactive media statement or publication of any public facing document.

This policy applies to the preparation and issuing of any media statement which purports to represent a position or policy of Council.

This policy applies to all external communications undertaken by Council departments, branches and sections.

This policy enables information dissemination and discussion of topics relevant to Council's strategic and operational activities and objectives for the city.

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This policy does not preclude Councillors from making their own statements or comments which may conflict with Council's position, or on matters that are not current Council programs or initiatives. In these scenarios, Councillors must be aware of their Code of Conduct obligations by ensuring that their comments are not portrayed by them as the official view of Council.

Nothing in the policy shall be interpreted as affecting the right of individual Councillors to raise or comment on issues of public importance or significance to them and to speak about such matters as elected representatives of the local community or in some other capacity.

## **7. Media Statements**

Communications and Engagement Branch will manage proactive and reactive media statements to ensure a positive image and reputation is maintained through the Council's external communications.

During election caretaker periods, all parties must be mindful of the restrictions outlined in Section 10 of this policy.

### **7.1 Proactive Media Statements**

Proactive media statements provide Council with an opportunity to share its successes with the community and to inform the community of issues, events and activities.

The Mayor, Councillors and authorised Council staff and contractors may seek advice and assistance regarding proactive media statements from Communications and Engagement Branch.

Council staff are encouraged to consider instances where their activities and achievements, and those of their team, branch and department could be shared with the community. Staff may raise these instances through normal operational processes for consideration by Communications and Engagement Branch.

### **7.2 Reactive Media Statements**

Reactive media statements are prepared and issued in response to media enquiries or emerging community issues.

The Manager, Media, Communications and Engagement is responsible for ensuring media enquiries are responded to within a prompt timeframe.

Communications and Engagement Branch will manage the response to any media enquiry in accordance with this policy.

Communications and Engagement Branch will promptly advise the Office of the Mayor and any relevant General Managers, Committee Chairpersons, Deputy Committee Chairpersons and Councillors of all media enquiries regarding major matters.

Communications and Engagement Branch will also advise relevant Divisional Councillor(s) of any media enquiry regarding a matter in relation their division by email and SMS as soon as reasonably practicable.



































































































































































