

	MEDIA POLICY	
	CATEGORY:	GOVERNANCE
	LG ACT 2019 REF:	None
	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

1. PURPOSE

This policy outlines a framework for guiding Elected Member and employee interactions with media agencies and the use of social media to ensure consistent messaging, brand and reputation management and the appropriate use of social media.

2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to current Elected Members and Council employees for any media interaction including social media use.

3. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
Media	Various means of communication through which news, entertainment, education, data or promotional messages are disseminated. These platforms can include television, radio, newspapers and magazines, but are distinct from social media.
Personal Social Media Communications	Exchange of user generated content on social media platforms held by individuals including employees for private purposes.
Social Media	Social media may include but is not limited to social networking sites, chatrooms, media sharing sites, blogs, forum and online collaboration.

4. POLICY

Media activities assist Council in delivering information to the public. This policy outlines procedures for Elected Members and Council employees who, acting as an appointed representative of Wagait Shire Council, make public comment or provide information to the media about Council activities.

4.1 Council Media Protocol

4.1.1 The Chief Executive Officer will be, in so far as possible, the first point of contact for liaison with the media.

4.2 Staff Dealing with Media

- 4.2.1 No Wagait Shire Council employee is authorised to speak to the media on any Council issue without the prior approval of the Chief Executive Officer. This includes personal social media communications which directly relate to issues arising from operations.
- 4.2.2 Any personal use of social media should not imply the user is an authorised representative of Wagait Shire Council, contain use of a Wagait Shire Council email address, any Wagait Shire Council branding or disclose Council information that is confidential or private.
- 4.2.3 On occasions it is appropriate for staff to talk to the media instead of an Elected Members, the Chief Executive Officer will have the authority to designate Wagait Shire Council employees to become a spokesperson.
- 4.2.4 Wagait Shire Council employees must not engage in any media activity which is deemed by the Chief Executive Officer to be specifically for the personal advantage of any Elected Member.

4.3 Elected Members Dealing with Media

- 4.3.1 Pursuant to Section 43(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act*, the role of the President is to speak on behalf of Council as Council's principal member regarding Council's decisions, policies, agreed position on matters or Council endorsed events and activities.
- 4.3.2 Elected Members are entitled at any time to attract media attention for themselves. Elected Members should ensure that when they are seeking to gain media attention for themselves that they make it clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of Wagait Shire Council.
- 4.3.3 When Elected Members are approached directly by the media to comment on any issue to do with Wagait Shire Council operations, they are encouraged in the first instance to contact the Chief Executive Officer to ensure they are briefed with all relevant and accurate information before releasing any details to the media.
- 4.3.4 Elected Members are entitled to indicate that they are Elected Members of Wagait Shire Council and are encouraged to use social media to communicate with the community. To ensure distinction between personal and Council use, Elected Members are encouraged to establish pages that identify them as Elected Members separate from private accounts, however it should be clear that the opinions expressed are those of the Elected Member and not those of Council.
- 4.3.5 It is not suggested that Elected Members who post on personal pages should contact the Chief Executive Officer, however, if posts relate to operational matters or decisions of Council, it should be clear that the opinions expressed are those of the Elected Member and the comments are not being made on behalf of Council.

4.4 Media Releases

- 4.4.1 All Council media releases must only be released to the media from the Chief Executive Officer.
- 4.4.2 All media releases will be provided to Elected Members when being released to the media.
- 4.4.3 Elected Members are entitled to distribute their own media releases; however

they must clearly indicate these releases are the opinions or beliefs of the individual Elected Member and are not being made on behalf of Council.

5. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

P24 Caretaker Policy

6. REFERENCES AND LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2019 (NT)

7. REVIEW HISTORY

Date Approved: 20.06.2015	Approved By: Moved: Cr S Gamble Seconded: Cr B Irvine Vote: AIF	Resolution No. 2015/195	Date for review: Next Council Election
Date Approved: 19.11.2019	Approved By: Moved: Cr N White Seconded: Cr M Vaughan Vote: AIF	Resolution No. 2019/546	Date for review: Next Term of Council
Date Approved: 15.02.2022	Approved By: Moved: Vice President Tom Dyer Seconded: Cr Michael Vaughan Vote: AIF	Resolution No. 2022/034	Date for review: Next Term of Council