



**ORANGE CITY COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

ATTACHMENTS

**ITEM 5.2
STRATEGIC POLICY ADOPTION
POST EXHIBITION**

ENCLOSED ITEMS

4 APRIL 2023

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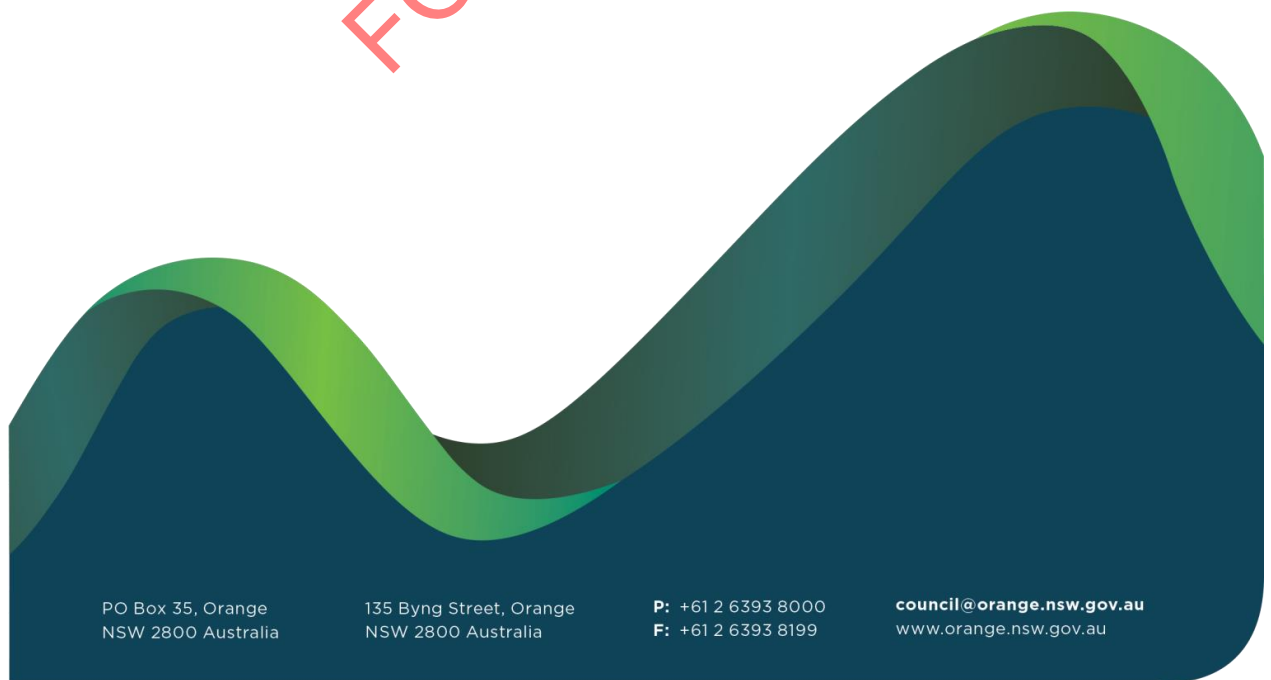
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Strategic Policy ST19

Media

FOR ADOPTION



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All policies can be reviewed or revoked by a resolution of Council, at any time.

1 OVERVIEW

- 1.1 The Model Media Policy has been developed to provide a framework to assist councils when dealing with the media and to ensure that media engagement by councillors and staff is consistent, accurate and professional and enhances the council’s reputation.
- 1.2 Effective media engagement can assist councils to keep their community informed, explain decisions and to promote community confidence in the council and its decisions.
- 1.3 The term “media” used in this policy means print, broadcast and online media used for communicating information to the public, including, but not limited to, newspapers, magazines, internet publishers, radio, and television broadcasters.

2 PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 We, the Councillors, staff, and other officials of Orange City Council, are committed to upholding and promoting the following principles of media engagement:

Openness We will ensure that we promote an open exchange of information between our council and the media.

Consistency We will ensure consistency by all councillors and staff when communicating with the media.

Accuracy The information we share with the media will be a source of truth for our council and community and we will prioritise the need to correct inaccuracies when they occur.

Timeliness We will ensure that we respond to media enquiries in a timely manner.

3 ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR ENGAGEMENT WITH MEDIA

Appointment and role of the Media Coordinator

- 3.1 The Chief Executive Officer will appoint a member of Council staff to be the Council’s Media Coordinator. The Media Coordinator should be a suitably qualified member of staff being the Manager Communications & Engagement.
- 3.2 The Chief Executive Officer may appoint more than one Media Coordinator.
- 3.3 The Media Coordinator’s role is to:
 - a) be the lead point of contact for all media enquiries, requests for interviews, requests to film or photograph Council staff, facilities or events for news and current affairs purposes
 - b) be responsible for preparing all media statements prior to their release
 - c) liaise with relevant staff members within the organisation where appropriate.
 - d) ensure that media statements are approved by the Mayor and/or Chief Executive Officer prior to their release



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- e) develop and/or approve media training and/or induction to be provided to relevant staff and/or Councillors
 - f) maintain a record of all media enquiries and responses
 - g) ensure that media organisations and their representatives are treated professionally, equally and without bias
 - h) ensure that media enquiries are dealt with promptly
 - i) provide guidance to Councillors approached by the media for comment to avoid communication of misinformation, and
 - j) ensure that all media releases are published on the Council's website.
- 4.5 The Mayor may delegate their role as spokesperson to other Councillors where appropriate, (for example, where another Councillor is best placed to comment, because the issue is of particular interest to them, or it is within their particular area of expertise).

Councillors

4.6 As a member of the governing body and as a representative of the community, councillors are free to express their personal views to the media.

4.7 When engaging with the media Councillors:

- a) must not purport to speak for the Council unless authorised to do so
- b) must clarify when speaking to the media that they are expressing their personal views as an individual Councillor and that they are not speaking for the Council (unless authorised to do so)
- c) must uphold and accurately represent the policies and decisions of the Council
- d) must not disclose Council information unless authorised to do so, and
- e) must seek information and guidance from the Chief Executive Officer/Manager Communications & Engagement where appropriate before providing comment to the media to ensure they have the most up-to-date and relevant information and have considered reputational or other risks.

4 WHO CAN ENGAGE WITH THE MEDIA

The Chief Executive Officer

- 4.1 The Chief Executive Officer is the official spokesperson for the Council on operational and administrative matters.
- 4.2 The Chief Executive Officer may delegate to other Council staff to speak on their behalf where appropriate, (for example, where the delegated staff member has professional expertise regarding the subject matter, or the Chief Executive Officer is unavailable).

The Mayor

- 4.3 The Mayor is the principal member and spokesperson of the governing body of the Council, including representing the views of the Council as to its local priorities (section 226(c) of the Local Government Act 1993).
- 4.4 If the Mayor is unavailable, the Deputy Mayor may act as the Council's spokesperson.



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- 4.8 In the interests of promoting a positive, safe and harmonious organisational culture, Councillors should endeavour to resolve personal differences privately and must not prosecute them publicly through the media
- 4.9 Where Councillors (including the Mayor) become aware of potential issues that could result in media interest, they should provide this information to the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement.
- Council Staff
- 4.10 Council staff must not speak to the media about matters relating to the Council unless authorised by the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement to do so.
- 4.11 If Council staff receive a media enquiry or they are invited to comment to the media on a matter relating to the Council, they must refer the enquiry to the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement.
- 4.12 Council staff are free to express their personal views to the media on matters that do not relate to the Council, but in doing so, must not make comments that reflect badly on the Council or that bring it into disrepute.
- 4.13 If authorised to speak to the media, Council staff:
- a) must uphold and accurately represent the policies and decisions of the Council
 - b) must not disclose Council information unless authorised to do so by the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement, and
 - c) must seek information and guidance from the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement where appropriate before providing comment to the media to ensure they have the most up-to-date and relevant information and have considered reputational or other risks
- 4.14 Where Council staff become aware of potential issues that could result in media interest, they should provide this information to the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement.
- Tone
- 4.15 All media engagement by Council officials must be conducted in a professional, timely and respectful manner.
- Induction & Training
- 4.16 The Council must provide training to Council officials who engage or are authorised to engage with the media.
- 4.17 Media engagement training will be provided to Councillors as part of their induction or refresher training or as part of their ongoing professional development program.
- Councillors' questions about media engagement
- 4.18 Councillors must direct any questions about their obligations under this policy to the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement.

