



**ORANGE CITY COUNCIL  
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

**ATTACHMENTS**

**ITEM 5.3  
STRATEGIC  
POLICY REVIEWS**

**21 FEBRUARY 2023**

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# Strategic Policy ST18

## Social Media

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

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## 1 OVERVIEW

### Social media and Local Government in NSW

As in the federal and state jurisdictions, social media has become an important tool in government and political discourse at the local level. In the context of NSW local government, social media has two primary functions:

- a) it is used by councils to interact and share information with their communities in an accessible and often more informal format.
- b) it enables councillors to promote their achievements and address their constituents directly about community issues and events in ways that either complement or bypass traditional news and print media.

In addition, many councils use social media as the platform through which they webcast their meetings. This increases transparency by providing visibility of council decision making in real time.

However, councils and councillors are not immune from the challenges associated with social media, which can pose a significant risk both in a legal sense, and in terms of a council's ability to operate in a unified and coordinated way. It is therefore vital that councils have the right policy settings in place so that both councils and councillors can realise the full benefits of social media whilst mitigating risk.

Clause 3.1(b) of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW* provides that council officials must not conduct themselves in a manner that is contrary to a council's policies. If adopted by a council, a breach of the policy will be a breach of the council's code of conduct.

## 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 social media engagement:

<b>Openness</b>	Our social media platforms are places where anyone can share and discuss issues that are relevant to our Council and the community we represent and serve.
<b>Relevance</b>	We will ensure our social media platforms are kept up to date with informative content about our Council and community.
<b>Accuracy</b>	The content we upload onto our social media platforms and any other social media platform will be a source of truth for our Council and community and we will prioritise the need to correct inaccuracies when they occur.
<b>Respect</b>	Our social media platforms are safe spaces. We will uphold and promote the behavioural standards contained in this policy and our Council's code of conduct when using our social media platforms and any other social media platform.



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### 3 ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR COUNCIL'S SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

#### Platforms

3.1 Council will maintain a presence (but not limited to) on the following social media platforms:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- YouTube

3.2 Council's social media platforms must specify or provide a clearly accessible link to the 'House Rules' for engaging on the platform.

#### Establishment and deletion of Council social media platforms

3.3 A new Council social media platform, or a social media platform proposed by a Council related entity (for example, a council committee), can only be established or deleted with the written approval of the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.

3.4 Where a Council social media platform is established or deleted in accordance with clause 3.3, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may amend clause 3.1 of this policy without the need for endorsement by the Council's governing body.

#### Appointment and role of the Social Media Coordinator

3.5 The Chief Executive Officer will appoint a member of Council staff to be the Council's Social Media Coordinator. The position is to be a senior and suitably qualified member of staff being the Manager Communications & Engagement.

3.6 The Chief Executive Officer may appoint more than one Social Media Coordinator.

3.7 The Manager Communications & Engagement's role is to:

- a) approve and revoke a staff member's status as an authorised user
- b) develop and/or approve the training and/or induction to be provided to authorised users

- c) maintain a register of authorised users
- d) maintain effective oversight of authorised users
- e) moderate the Council's social media platforms in accordance with Part 5 of this policy
- f) ensure the Council complies with its record keeping obligations under the *State Records Act 1998* in relation to social media (see clauses 8.1 to 8.4 of this policy)
- g) ensure the Council adheres to the rules of the social media platform(s)
- h) coordinate with the Council's Communications & Engagement team to ensure the Council's social media platforms are set up and maintained in a way that maximises user friendliness and any technical problems are resolved promptly.

3.8 The Manager Communications & Engagement may delegate their functions under paragraphs (e) and (f) of clause 3.7 to authorised users.

3.9 The Manager Communications & Engagement is an authorised user for the purposes of this policy.

#### Authorised users

3.10 Authorised users are members of Council staff who are authorised by the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement to upload content and engage on social media on the Council's behalf.

3.11 Authorised users may be members of Council staff that are responsible for managing, or have expertise in, the events, initiatives, programs or policies that are the subject of the social media content.

3.12 The Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement will appoint authorised users when required.

3.13 An authorised user must receive a copy of this policy and induction training on social media use and Council's obligations before uploading content on Council's behalf.



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- 3.14 The role of an authorised user is to:
- ensure, to the best of their ability, that the content they upload onto social media platforms is accurate
  - correct inaccuracies in Council generated content
  - engage in discussions and answer questions on Council's behalf on social media platforms
  - keep the Council's social media platforms up to date
  - where authorised to do so by the Manager Communications & Engagement :
    - moderate the Council's social media platforms in accordance with Part 5 of this policy
    - ensure the Council complies with its record keeping obligations under the *State Records Act 1998* in relation to social media (see clauses 7.1 to 7.4 of this policy)

- 3.15 When engaging on social media on Council's behalf (such as, but not limited to, on a community social media page), an authorised user must identify themselves as a member of Council staff but they are not obliged to disclose their name or position within the Council.

- 3.16 Authorised users must not use Council's social media platforms for personal reasons.

#### Administrative Tone

- 3.17 Authorised users upload content and engage on social media on the Council's behalf. Authorised users must use language consistent with that function and avoid expressing or appearing to express their personal views when undertaking their role.

- 3.18 Authorised users may use more personal, informal language when engaging on Council's social media platforms, for example when replying to comments.

#### Register of Authorised Users

- 3.19 The Manager Communications & Engagement will maintain a register of authorised users. This register is to be

reviewed annually to ensure it is fit-for-purpose.

#### Ceasing to be an Authorised User

- 3.20 The Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement may revoke a staff member's status as an authorised user, if:
- the staff member makes such a request
  - the staff member has not uploaded content onto any of the Council's social media platforms in the last six months.
  - the staff member has failed to comply with this policy
  - the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement is of the reasonable opinion that the staff member is no longer suitable to be an authorised user.

## **4 ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR COUNCILLORS' SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS**

- 4.1 For the purposes of this policy, Councillor social platforms are not Council social media platforms. Section 3 of this policy does not apply to Councillors' social media platforms.

- 4.2 Councillors are responsible for the administration and moderation of their own social media platforms (in accordance with Parts 4 and 6 of this policy), and ensuring they comply with the record keeping obligations under the *State Records Act 1998* (see clauses 8.1 to 8.4 of this policy) and Council's records management policy in relation to social media.

- 4.3 Clause 4.2 also applies to Councillors in circumstances where another person administers, moderates, or uploads content onto their social media platform.

- 4.4 Councillors must comply with the rules of the platform when engaging on social media.



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#### Induction and Training

- 4.5 Councillors who engage, or intend to engage, on social media must receive induction training on social media use. Induction training can be undertaken either as part of the Councillor's induction program or as part of their ongoing professional development program.

#### Identifying as a Councillor

- 4.6 Councillors must identify themselves on their social media platforms in the following format:  
*Councillor "First Name and Last Name".*
- 4.7 A Councillor's social media platform must include a profile photo which is a clearly identifiable image of the Councillor.
- 4.8 If a Councillor becomes or ceases to be the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, or the holder of another position (for example, chairperson of a committee), this must be clearly stated on the Councillor's social media platforms and updated within 14 days of a change in circumstances.

#### Other general requirements for Councillors' social media platforms

- 4.9 Councillor social media platforms must specify or provide a clearly accessible link to the 'House Rules' for engaging on the platform.
- 4.10 A Councillor's social media platform must include a disclaimer to the following effect:  
*"The views expressed and comments made on this social media platform are my own and not that of the Council".*
- 4.11 Despite clause 4.10, Mayoral or Councillor media releases and other content that has been authorised according to the Council's media and communications protocols may be uploaded onto a Councillor's social media platform.
- 4.12 Councillors may upload publicly available Council information onto their social media platforms.
- 4.13 Councillors may use more personal, informal language when engaging on their social media platforms.

#### Councillor queries relating to social media platforms

- 4.14 Questions from Councillors relating to their obligations under this policy, technical queries relating to the operation of their social media platforms or managing records on social media may be directed to the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement in the first instance, in accordance with Council's Councillor requests protocols.

#### Other social media platforms administered by Councillors

- 4.15 A Councillor must advise the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement of any social media platforms they administer on which content relating to the Council or Council officials is, or is expected to be, uploaded. The Councillor must do so within:
- 14 days of becoming a Councillor, or
  - 14 days of becoming the administrator.

## **5 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

- 5.1 This policy only applies to Council officials' use of social media in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a Council official. The policy does not apply to personal use of social media that is not connected with a person's role as a Council official.
- 5.2 Council officials must comply with the Council's Code of Conduct when using social media in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a Council official.
- 5.3 Council officials must not use social media to post or share comments, photos, videos, electronic recordings or other information that:
- is defamatory, offensive, humiliating, threatening or intimidating to other Council officials or members of the public
  - contains profane language or is sexual in nature





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- c) constitutes harassment and/or bullying within the meaning of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*, or is unlawfully discriminatory
  - d) is contrary to their duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and their responsibilities under any policies or procedures adopted by the Council to ensure workplace health and safety
  - e) contains content about the Council, council officials or members of the public that is misleading or deceptive
  - f) divulges confidential Council information
  - g) breaches the privacy of other council officials or members of the public
  - h) contains allegations of suspected breaches of the Council's code of conduct or information about the consideration of a matter under the *Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*
  - i) could be perceived to be an official comment on behalf of the Council where they have not been authorised to make such comment
  - j) commits the Council to any action
  - k) violates an order made by a court
  - l) breaches copyright
  - m) advertises, endorses or solicits commercial products or business
  - n) constitutes spam
  - o) is in breach of the rules of the social media platform.
- 5.4 Council officials must:**
- a) attribute work to the original author, creator or source when uploading or linking to content produced by a third party
  - b) obtain written permission from a minor's parent or legal guardian before uploading content in which the minor can be identified.
- 5.5 Council officials must exercise caution when sharing, liking, retweeting content as this can be regarded as an endorsement and/or publication of the content.**
- 5.6 Council officials must not incite or encourage other persons to act in a way that is contrary to the requirements of this Part.**
- 5.7 Councillors must uphold and accurately represent the policies and decisions of the Council's governing body but may explain why they voted on a matter in the way that they did. (see section 232(1)(f) of the *Local Government Act 1993*).**

## 6 MODERATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Note: Councils and Council officials should be aware that they may be considered a 'publisher' of any content uploaded onto a social media platform they administer, including content that:

- is uploaded by a third party; and/or
- appears on their social media platform because they have 'liked', 'shared', or 'retweeted' the content, or similar.

**6.1 Council officials who are responsible for the moderation of the Council's or Councillors' social media platforms may remove content and 'block' or ban a person from those platforms. Such actions must be undertaken in accordance with this Part.**

**6.2 For the purposes of this Part, 'social media platform' and 'platform' means both the Council's and Councillors' social media platforms.**

### House Rules

**6.3 Social media platforms must state or provide an accessible link to the 'House Rules' for engaging on the platform.**

**6.4 At a minimum, the House Rules should specify:**

- a) the principles of social media engagement referred to in clause 2.1 of this policy
- b) the type of behaviour or content that will result in that content being removed or 'hidden', or a person being blocked or banned from the platform
- c) the process by which a person can be blocked or banned from the platform and rights of review



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- d) a statement relating to privacy and personal information (see clause 8.4 of this policy)
- e) when the platform will be monitored (weekdays 9am – 5pm, during the Council's business hours)
- f) that the social media platform is not to be used for making complaints about the Council or council officials.
- g) If the Council adopts clause 6.4(f), the House Rules should include information about, or a link to, Council's complaints handling policy.
- 6.5 For the purposes of clause 6.4(b), third parties engaging on social media platforms must not post or share comments, photos, videos, electronic recordings or other information that:
- is defamatory, offensive, humiliating, threatening or intimidating to council officials or members of the public,
  - contains profane language or is sexual in nature
  - constitutes harassment and/or bullying within the meaning of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*, or is unlawfully discriminatory
  - contains content about the Council, council officials or members of the public that is misleading or deceptive
  - breaches the privacy of council officials or members of the public
  - contains allegations of suspected breaches of the Council's code of conduct or information about the consideration of a matter under the *Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*,
  - violates an order made by a court
  - breaches copyright
  - advertises, endorses or solicits commercial products or business,
  - constitutes spam
  - would be in breach of the rules of the social media platform.
- Removal or 'hiding' of Content
- 6.6 Where a person uploads content onto a social media platform that, in the reasonable opinion of the moderator, is of a kind specified under clause 6.5, the moderator may remove or 'hide' that content.
- 6.7 Prior to removing or 'hiding' the content, the moderator must make a record of it (for example, a screenshot).
- 6.8 If the moderator removes or 'hides' the content under clause 6.6, they must, where practicable, notify the person who uploaded the content that it has been removed and the reason(s) for its removal and their rights of review.
- 6.9 A person may request a review of a decision by a moderator to remove or 'hide' content under clause 6.6. The request must be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer and state the grounds on which the request is being made.
- 6.10 Where a review request is made under clause 6.9, the review is to be undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement or a member of staff nominated by the Chief Executive Officer who is suitably qualified and who was not involved in the decision to remove or 'hide' the content.
- Blocking or Banning
- 6.11 If a person uploads content that is removed or 'hidden' under clause 6.6 of this policy on 3 occasions, that person may be blocked or banned from the social media platform.
- 6.12 A person may only be blocked or banned from a Council social media platform with the approval of the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement. This clause does not apply to blocking or banning a person from a Councillor's social media platform.



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- 6.13 Prior to blocking or banning a person from a social media platform, the person must, where practicable, be advised of the intention to block or ban them from the platform and be given a chance to respond. Any submission made by the person must be considered prior to a determination being made to block or ban them.
- 6.14 The duration of the block or ban is to be determined by the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement, or in the case of a Councillor's social media platform, the Councillor.
- 6.15 Where a determination is made to block or ban a person from a social media platform or all social media platforms, the person must, where practicable, be notified in writing of the decision and the reasons for it. The written notice must also advise the person which social media platforms they are blocked or banned from and the duration of the block or ban and inform them of their rights of review.
- 6.16 Despite clauses 6.11 to 6.15, where a person uploads content of a kind referred to under clause 6.5, and the moderator is reasonably satisfied that the person's further engagement on the social media platform poses a risk to health and safety or another substantive risk (such as the uploading of defamatory content), an interim block or ban from the platform/all platforms may be imposed on the person immediately for a period no longer than 28 days.
- 6.17 A person who is blocked or banned from the platform/all platforms under clause 6.16 must, where practicable, be given a chance to respond to the interim block or ban being imposed. Any submission made by the person must be considered when determining whether the interim block or ban is to be removed or retained under clauses 6.11 to 6.15.
- 6.18 A person may request a review of a decision to block or ban them from a social media platform. The request must be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer and state the grounds on which the request is being made.
- 6.19 Where a review request is made under clause 6.18, the review is to be undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer or a member of staff nominated by the Chief Executive Officer who is suitably qualified and who was not involved in the decision to block or ban the person. Where the decision to block or ban the person was made by the Chief Executive Officer, the review must be undertaken by another senior and suitably qualified member of staff who was not involved in the decision.
- 6.20 Where a person that is the subject of a block or ban continues to engage on a social media platform(s) using an alternative social media account, profile, avatar, etc., a moderator may block or ban the person from the platform(s) immediately. In these circumstances, clauses 6.11 to 6.19 do not apply.
- ## 7 USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA DURING EMERGENCIES
- 7.1 During emergencies, such as natural disasters or public health incidents, the Manager Communications & Engagement will be responsible for the management of content on the Council's social media platforms.
- 7.2 To ensure consistent messaging both during and after an emergency, authorised users and Council officials must not upload content onto the Council's or their own social media platforms which contradicts advice issued by the agency coordinating the emergency response, or agencies supporting recovery efforts.
- 7.3 Training on social media use during emergencies should be included in training and/or induction provided to authorised users and Councillors.



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## 8 RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND PRIVACY REQUIREMENTS

### Records management

- 8.1 Social media content created, sent and received by Council officials (including Councillors) acting in their official capacity is a Council record and may constitute open access information or be subject to an information access application made under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. These records must be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998* and the Council's approved records management policies and practices.
- 8.2 You must not destroy, alter, or remove social media content unless authorised to do so. If you need to alter or remove social media content, you must do so in accordance with this policy, and consult with the Council's Manager Corporate Governance and comply with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998*.
- 8.3 When/if a Councillor's term of office concludes, the Councillor must contact the Council's Manager Communications & Engagement to manage/transfer records of social media content created during their term of office and comply with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998*.
- 8.4 In fulfilling their obligations under clauses 8.1 to 8.3, Council officials should refer to any guidance issued by the State Archives and Records Authority of NSW relating to retention requirements for Councils' and Councillors' social media content.

### Privacy considerations and requirements

- 8.5 Social media communications are in the public domain. Council officials should exercise caution about what personal information, if any, they upload onto social media.
- 8.6 The *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* applies to the use of social media platforms by the Council and

Councillors. To mitigate potential privacy risks, Council officials will:

- advise people not to provide personal information on social media platforms
- inform people if any personal information they may provide on social media platforms is to be used for official purposes
- moderate comments to ensure they do not contain any personal information
- advise people to contact the Council or Councillors through alternative channels if they have personal information they do not want to disclose in a public forum.

- 8.7 Council officials must ensure they comply with the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* when engaging on and/or moderating social media platforms. In fulfilling their obligations, Council officials should refer to any guidance issued by the Information and Privacy Commission of NSW, such as, but not limited to, the Health Privacy Principles.

## 9 PRIVATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Note: Activities on social media websites are public activities. Even though privacy settings are available, content can still be shared and accessed beyond the intended recipients.

The terms and conditions of most social media sites state that all content becomes the property of the site on which it is posted.

### What constitutes 'private' use?

- 9.1 For the purposes of this policy, a Council official's social media engagement will be considered 'private use' when the content they upload:
- is not associated with, or does not refer to, the Council, any other Council officials, contractors, related entities or any other person or organisation providing services to or on behalf of the Council in their official or professional capacities, and
  - is not related to or does not contain information acquired by virtue of their employment or role as a Council official.



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9.2 If a Council official chooses to identify themselves as a Council official, either directly or indirectly (such as in their user profile), then they will not be deemed to be acting in their private capacity for the purposes of this policy.

Use of social media during work hours

9.3 Council staff may only access and engage on social media in their private capacity while at work during breaks.

9.4 Council staff who access and engage on social media in their private capacity during work hours must ensure it does not interfere with the performance of their official duties.

## 10 CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

10.1 Concerns or complaints about the administration of a council's social media platforms should be made to the council's Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement in the first instance.

10.2 Complaints about the conduct of Council officials (including Councillors) on social media platforms may be directed to the Chief Executive Officer.

10.3 Complaints about a Chief Executive Officer's conduct on social media platforms may be directed to the Mayor.

## 11 DEFINITIONS

In this Social Media Policy, the following terms have the following meanings:

<b>authorised user</b>	members of Council staff who are authorised by the Chief Executive Officer Manager Communications & Engagement to upload content and engage on the Council's social media platforms on the Council's behalf.
<b>Council official</b>	Councillors, members of staff and delegates of the Council (including members of committees that are delegates of the council).
<b>minor</b>	for the purposes of clause 5.4(b) of this policy, is a person under the age of 18 years
<b>personal information</b>	information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database and whether or not recorded in a material form) about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion
<b>SMC</b>	is a council's social media coordinator appointed under clause 3.5 of this policy
<b>social media</b>	online platforms and applications - such as but not limited to social networking sites, wikis, blogs, microblogs, video and audio sharing sites, and message boards - that allow people to easily publish, share and discuss content. Examples of social media platforms include, but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Yammer, YouTube, Instagram, Flickr and Wikipedia

### ST18 – Strategic Policy – Social Media

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Approved By:	Minute Number:	Approval Date:



# Strategic Policy ST19

## Media

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## 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:
- 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
  - be responsible for preparing all media statements prior to their release
  - liaise with relevant staff members within the organisation where appropriate.
  - 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 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.

- 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.





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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:
- must uphold and accurately represent the policies and decisions of the Council
  - must not disclose Council information unless authorised to do so by the Chief Executive Officer or Manager Communications & Engagement, and
  - 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.



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## 5 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT WHEN ENGAGING WITH THE MEDIA

- 5.1 Council officials must comply with the Council's Code of Conduct when engaging with the media in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a Council official.
- 5.2 Council officials must not share information or make comments to the media through either direct or indirect mechanisms that:
- are defamatory, offensive, humiliating, threatening, or intimidating to other Council officials or members of the public
  - contains profane language or is sexual in nature
  - constitutes harassment and/or bullying within the meaning of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*, or is unlawfully discriminatory
  - is contrary to their duties under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and their responsibilities under any policies or procedures adopted by the Council to ensure workplace health and safety
  - contains content about the Council, Council officials or members of the public that is misleading or deceptive
  - divulges confidential Council information
  - breaches the privacy of other Council officials or members of the public
  - contains allegations of suspected breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct or information about the consideration of a matter under the *Procedures for the Administration of the Model*

*Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*

- could be perceived to be an official comment on behalf of the Council where they have not been authorised to make such comment
- commits the Council to any action
- violates an order made by a court
- breaches copyright
- advertises, endorses, or solicits commercial products or business.

## 6 USE OF MEDIA DURING EMERGENCIES

- 6.1 During emergencies, such as natural disasters or public health incidents, The Manager Communications & Engagement will be responsible for coordinating media releases and statements on behalf of the Council.
- 6.2 Councillors, Council staff and other Council officials must not provide comment or information to the media that is inconsistent with official advice issued by the Council and any other agency coordinating the emergency response.

## 7 MEDIA ENGAGEMENT IN THE LEAD UP TO ELECTIONS

- 7.1 This policy does not prevent the Mayor or Councillors who are candidates at a Council or any other election from providing comment to the media in their capacity as candidates at the election.



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- 7.2 Any media comment provided by the Mayor or Councillors who are candidates at a Council or another election must not be provided in an advertisement, newspaper column, or a radio or television broadcast paid for by the Council or produced by the Council or with Council resources.

## 8 RECORDS MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 8.1 Media content created and received by Council officials (including Councillors) acting in their official capacity is a Council record and may be subject to information access applications made under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009. These records must also be managed in accordance with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998 and the Council's approved records management policies and practices.

## 9 DEFINITIONS

In this Media Policy, the following terms have the following meanings:

<b>Council official</b>	Councillors, members of staff and delegates of the council (including members of committees that are delegates of the council)
<b>Media Coordinator</b>	means a person appointed under clause 1.3 of this policy
<b>Media</b>	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
<b>Personal information</b>	means information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database and whether or not recorded in a material form) about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion
<b>Social media</b>	means online platforms and applications, such as but not limited to social networking sites, wikis, blogs, microblogs, video and audio sharing sites, and message boards, that allow people to easily publish, share and discuss content. Examples of social media platforms include, but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Yammer, YouTube, Instagram, Flickr and Wikipedia

ST19 – Strategic Policy – Media		
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# Strategic Policy ST20

## Community Engagement

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## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This Community Engagement Policy guides a consistent approach to engaging with the community.
- 1.2 The policy provides for Council's compliance with relevant legislation and the Integrated Planning & Reporting guidelines for Local Government in NSW requiring Council's to have a strategy that sets out how they will engage with the community.
- 1.3 This Policy is based on the internationally recognised levels of community participation –Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower (see below).
- 1.4 The Policy operates in conjunction with the Operational Community Engagement procedures.

## 2 APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all areas of Orange City Council including Staff, Councillors, Contractors, Volunteers and Council Delegates.

## 3 OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Engagement assists Council to:
  - a) better meet the needs of the community
  - b) tap into local knowledge and expertise
  - c) have a more informed community
  - d) encourage and enable the community to participate in decision making
  - e) ensure Council works on behalf of the people in the community
  - f) meet the requirements of legislation, policies and procedures
  - g) to provide corporate direction and ensure the community, Councillors and staff are informed of decisions, policies, issues, events and programs of Council
  - h) to ensure that this information is provided consistently and accurately.

## 4 ENGAGEMENT

### When to engage

- 4.1 Council must consult when:
  - a) It is required by legislation
  - b) It wants to identify community issues, needs and priorities
- 4.2 Council should consult when:
  - a) Any proposed changes will impact on current users or customers of a Council service or facility
  - b) Any proposed changes which will affect the rights or entitlements of community members, including minority groups
  - c) There is potential impact on surrounding neighbours
  - d) It wants to monitor customer satisfaction with Council's services facilities
  - e) There is a level of controversy or sensitivity about a particular issue
  - f) There is conflict among community members about an issue.

### When will community engagement occur

- 4.3 Council will engage the community in the following areas:
  - a) **Strategic Planning** – This refers to the development of strategic plans and projects that inform the Delivery/Operational Plan.
  - b) **Policy Development and Implementation** - This includes any policy development that has a direct impact on the community.
  - c) **Site Specific** - This refers to any changes to a site that may have impact on the community.
  - d) **Service Planning** - This includes the development and/or improvement/changes to a service.
  - e) **Areas of Improvement** - This refers to any improvement required to increase the quality of lifestyle for the community.



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- f) **Legislative Requirements (including planning issues)** - This refers to all prescribed plans and
- g) projects under the Local Government Act (1993) and other relevant Acts.
- c) Media Releases
- d) E-News
- e) Media Briefings
- f) Report It
- g) Your Say
- h) Memos, Briefings and Meeting Notifications to Councillors
- i) Advertising
- j) Letters or Mailbox drops to residents or stakeholders
- k) Community Committees
- l) Community Interaction at Council Meetings
- m) Community Meetings and Medication outside the regular meeting structure.
- What Level of engagement will occur**
- 4.4 Council will call for different levels of engagement depending on the issue and the immediate or long term impact on the community.
- 4.5 Council's Operational Community Engagement Procedures are followed by staff to develop, deliver, monitor and evaluate community engagement campaigns for their projects and programs using the following tools:
- a) Orange City Council Website
- b) Social Media

## IAP2'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM



The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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### ST20 – Strategic Policy – Community Engagement

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# Strategic Policy ST29

## Water & Sewer Infrastructure

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## 1 PURPOSE

This policy provides an overview of Council's Water and Sewer Infrastructure including the supply of Water and Sewerage Services to the community and guidelines for working on contractors working on Council's Water & Sewer infrastructure.

## 2 APPLICABILITY

- 2.1 This policy applies to all areas of Orange City Council including Staff, Councillors, Contractors, Developers, Civil Contractors, Plumbers and Council Delegates.
- 2.2 This Policy is to be used in conjunction with Council's Operational Procedures for Water & Sewer Infrastructure.
- 2.3 This policy applies to all Water Sewer Services and Infrastructure within the Orange City Council Local Government area.

## 3 WATER SUPPLY INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

### Overview

- 3.1 Council's will provide the city with a safe, reliable and secure water supply via infrastructure that is operated and maintained in accordance with Council's adopted Water Supply Asset Management Plan.
- 3.2 Council will provide residents with a portfolio of water supply assets that are serviced and maintained to a level which reflects the community's expectations, and operates in a manner that is both functional and cost effective, but also meets industry standards.

### Procedure

- 3.3 Council staff will implement this Policy in conjunction with Council's adopted Water Supply Asset Management Plan

and Water Infrastructure Services Operational Procedures. The Operational Procedures include guidance on such things as:

- Water Quality Management
- Rainwater Tank Rebates
- Water Supply Subdivision Code
- Water Mains and Water Services
- Water Meters; and
- Dams Safety Management

### Related Water Documents

- 3.4 The following documents should be considered in conjunction with this policy:

- Asset Management Strategic Policy and Water Supply Asset Management Plan
- Water Supply Infrastructure Services Operational Procedures
- Water Supply Code of Australia – Regional New South Wales Edition
- Drinking Water Management System and Recycled Water Management System
- Dams Safety Management System
- Working on Council's Water and Sewer Infrastructure Strategic Policy

## 4 SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

### Overview

- 4.1 Council will provide the City with sustainable and efficient sewerage services via infrastructure that is operated and maintained in accordance with Council's adopted Sewer Asset Management Plan.





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- 4.2 Council will provide residents with a portfolio of sewerage assets that are serviced and maintained to a level which reflects the community's expectations, and operates in a manner that is both functional and cost effective, but also meets industry standards.

#### Procedure

Council staff will implement this policy in conjunction with Council's adopted Sewer Asset Management Plan, and the Sewerage Infrastructure Services Operational Procedures. The Operational Procedures includes guidance on such things as:

- Sewer mains and services
- Sewerage Subdivision Code
- Pressure Sewerage Systems; and
- Vacuum Sewerage Systems

#### Related Sewer Documents

- 4.3 The following documents should be considered in conjunction with this policy:
- Asset Management Strategic Policy and Sewer Asset Management Plan
  - Sewer Infrastructure Services Operational Procedure
  - Gravity Sewerage Code of Australia – Regional New South Wales Edition
  - Water Supply Code of Australia – Regional New South Wales Edition
  - WSA 04-2022 Sewage Pumping Station Code of Australia Version 3.1
  - WSA 05-2020 Conduit Inspection Reporting Code of Australia Version 4.1
  - Liquid Trade Waste Strategic Policy
  - Working on Council's Water and Sewer Infrastructure Strategic Policy

## 5 WORKING ON COUNCIL'S WATER & SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

#### Overview

- 5.1 Council will accredit Contractors who are suitably qualified, licensed, insured and experienced to work on Orange City Council's Water and Sewer infrastructure.

#### Procedure

- 5.2 Council may permit appropriately Accredited Contractors to work on its Water and Sewer Infrastructure according to Councils Procedures.
- 5.3 The term 'accredited' refers to a contractor who has been granted accreditation by Orange City Council to either:
- Extend or alter any Orange City Council sewer or water asset, or
  - Repair or replace any Orange City Council sewer or water main, either on behalf of Orange City Council or as part of an approved development.

#### Related Working on Infrastructure Documents

- 5.4 The following documents should be considered in conjunction with this policy:
- Contractors Working on Council's water and Sewer Infrastructure Procedure
  - Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005
  - Work Health and Safety Act 2011

ST29 – Strategic Policy – Water & Sewer Infrastructure		
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