

# Media Policy

Council Policy



Owner	Elected Members		
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer		
Decision Number	R-275-2025		
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## 1 Purpose

This policy aims to guide Elected Members and Team Members of Alice Springs Town Council (Council) on appropriate interaction and protocols with the media, covering both official communications and personal conduct.

## 2 Definitions

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

Term	Definition
<b>Confidential information</b>	Information prescribed as confidential under regulation 51 of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulations 2021</i> .
<b>Media</b>	Includes traditional (TV, radio, print) and digital (social media, podcasts, blogs, online forums) channels.
<b>Official capacity</b>	Fulfilling role requirements, representing Council in a volunteer or paid capacity.
<b>Official communication</b>	Communication that has been prepared to share official information from Council via broad communications channels, which may include websites, speeches, social media, newsletters, advertising, media releases, statements, and responses.
<b>Team member</b>	Council staff employed by Alice Springs Town Council, regardless of the capacity in which they are employed, and including: all temporary agency staff, all authorised representatives, all contractors whilst engaged in any capacity and all volunteers.

## 3 Policy Statement

### 3.1 Principles

**3.1.1** All official communication, including via media interactions and public appearances, made by Elected Members and Team Members in their official capacity must accurately reflect the Council's values, adopted decisions, positions, strategies, plans, and policies.

**3.1.2** Elected Members and Team Members must adhere to the relevant Codes of Conduct when interacting with the media.

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**3.1.3** Information deemed confidential must not be disclosed to the media unless it has been released from its confidential status.

**3.1.4** If Team Members engage with media in a personal capacity, they must ensure information obtained through their official roles is not used or incorporated in their response.

**3.1.5** Elected Members and Team Members must not engage with the media on any matter where an actual or perceived conflict of interest exists.

## 3.2 Council spokespersons

### 3.2.1 Official Spokesperson

The Mayor is the official spokesperson for Council on strategic and policy matters for official communications. When unavailable, this can be delegated to the Deputy Mayor. The Mayor can also request another Elected Member or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to convey Council's resolved position or policy, if required.

The CEO is the official spokesperson for Council on operational matters and this may be delegated to other Team Members where appropriate.

### 3.2.2 Caretaker Period

During the caretaker period, the CEO is the preferred spokesperson for any official communications on behalf of Council.

## 3.3 Responding to media enquiries

All media enquiries to team members in official capacity must be directed to the Marketing and Communications unit to ensure consistency, accuracy and alignment with Council's official messaging and brand. The unit will assess the nature of the enquiry and determine the appropriate response and spokesperson.

Elected Members may engage with the media at their discretion.

## 3.4 Elected Member requirements

Elected Members may issue personal statements publicly on matters related to Council business; however, they must not speak on behalf of the Council unless delegated by the Mayor.

When delegated to speak on behalf of the Council, Elected Members, where possible, should send any proposed official communication to the Marketing and Communications Team for their consultation and/or awareness.

Any public statements made by Elected Members, whether in a personal or official capacity, must:

- clearly distinguish when comments or content express their personal views.
- communicate that their views do not represent the position of the Council, when their personal view differs from official Council decisions.
- respect the Council's decision-making processes, which are based on majority decisions, and uphold the integrity of collective outcomes.
- avoid damage to the reputation of Council.

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- be lawful, including avoiding contravention of copyright, defamation, discrimination or harassment laws.
- be accurate and truthful to the best of the Elected Member's knowledge.
- not reflect adversely on the character or actions of another Elected Member or Council Team Members.
- maintain a respectful and positive tone and not use offensive or objectionable expressions in reference to any Elected Member, Team Member or community member.
- not be in contravention of the Elected Member Code of Conduct.

### 3.5 Team Member requirements

Team Members engaging with the media in an official capacity requires either delegation from the CEO as per 3.2.1 or authorisation from the Marketing and Communications Unit.

Any communications made from Team Members in their official capacity must:

- be accurate and truthful to the best of the person's knowledge.
- avoid damage to the reputation of Council.
- not reflect adversely on the character or actions of another Elected Member or Council Team Member
- adhere to 3.1.1 of this policy.

If a Team Member is asked by the media to provide comment on a matter outside of their delegation or authorisation, it is recommended to decline to comment and refer to the Marketing and Communications Unit.

### 3.6 Media releases

The Marketing and Communications Unit will prepare and issue all media releases, inclusive of responses and alerts, on behalf of Council. All media release must be reviewed and approved before distribution by the CEO, or where necessary the Mayor.

Media releases are to be distributed to media outlets, published through Council's website and email lists as appropriate, and sent to Elected Members and relevant Team Members.

When a media release involves joint communications with another organisation or agency, the Marketing and Communications Unit manages all coordination. No joint releases will be issued until all parties have provided their approval.

## 4 Responsibilities

The CEO is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

## 5 Related Legislation and Documents

- Caretaker Policy
- Code of Conduct Elected Members
- Code of Conduct CEO
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Code of Conduct – Team Members
- Conflicts of Interest Policy (Council Members and CEO)
- Delegations Registers
- Social Media Policy

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## 6 Communication and Training

Will this policy be communicated through consultation to teams?	Yes
Where will this policy be available?	Council Website
Will training needs arise from this policy? If yes, who will be responsible.	Marketing and Communications Coordinator