

Communications policy

1. Purpose

Communications and media provide opportunities for the City of Tea Tree Gully to communicate with its community and stakeholders in a professional, timely and engaging manner.

2. Policy

Communications and media will be used in a coordinated manner, with the aim to:

- a) Inform, communicate and initiate community involvement and discussion
- b) Extend the reach of our communications and direct the community to Council information
- c) Provide a convenient, accessible and flexible form of service delivery, and
- d) Build and enhance relationships with the community and stakeholders.

2.1. Traditional media

The CEO (or delegate) is responsible for handling all proactive and reactive media enquiries.

2.1.1. Media enquiry

Elected Members are encouraged to contact the CEO, General Manager, Corporate Services, Manager Customer & Communications, Lead Marketing & Communication or Media Advisor about any media enquiries they receive.

2.2. Proactive communications

Council's CEO may invite Elected Members to be quoted in content, or to participate in media, with particular consideration to;

- a) Ward specific major projects, developments, services and events; or
- b) An initiative that a Councillor has initiated in the chamber or had significant input into.

Elected Members are requested to share proactive news opportunities with the CEO or General Manager, Corporate Services before releasing any information to media outlets.

Published media releases and latest news items are to be sent to the Elected Members and the Executive Leadership Team.

2.3. Social media

When commenting on Council content, Elected Members must identify that the comment is their personal view. This can be stated expressly, in the 'about' section of the profile or as a pinned post on the profile.

Elected members are encouraged to share and positively comment on City of Tea Tree Gully social media content. Council will tag Elected Member profiles where appropriate.

Elected Members will be provided with social media training during a council term.

2.3.1. Moderation

The City of Tea Tree Gully retains the right to remove content that does not adhere to the guidelines identified in this policy or other associated policies.

Rude, defamatory or harmful comments will be hidden or deleted during moderation. Council may block profiles that comment in this manner.

2.4. Corporate publications

The City of Tea Tree Gully produces publications to inform residents of relevant Council information. Publications may include, but are not limited to:

2.4.1. Corporate newsletter (currently Gully Grapevine)

Council's corporate newsletter is distributed to residents on a quarterly basis and is to include:

- a. A message from Council's Principal Spokesperson up to a maximum of 160 words.
- b. Photographs (see Elected Member Support and Training Policy) of each Elected Member and their contact details.
- c. Councillors may provide a column
 - i. Maximum of 160 words per ward to be agreed between the ward councillors.
 - ii. Elected Members are expected to ensure the accuracy of information contained within their column to their best endeavours.
 - iii. Staff may edit Elected Member content, in consultation with the individual Elected Member, to ensure accuracy and compliance with Council policy and position.
- d. A community noticeboard for local groups to promote their events and activities. Inclusion is subject to timing and availability. Council reserves the right to refuse any activity it considers inappropriate. Requests for inclusion must be submitted in writing by either:
 - o Online: www.cttg.sa.gov.au/publicity
 - o Email: media@cttg.sa.gov.au.

Operational matters are the responsibility of the relevant officer of Council.

2.4.2. Electronic Newsletters

Operational matters are the responsibility of the relevant officer of Council.

2.5. Authorisation

2.5.1. Spokespersons

The spokespersons for the City of Tea Tree Gully are Council's nominated principal spokesperson and the CEO (or delegate).

- a) The Principal Spokesperson is responsible for communicating political, policy matters and decisions of Council.
- b) The CEO is responsible for responding to organisational and operational matters and decisions.

The Principal Spokesperson of Council is the Mayor. In the absence of the Mayor, the Acting principal spokesperson should be nominated in the following order:

- a) Deputy Mayor, and
- b) Any other Elected Member at the discretion of the Mayor or CEO.

The Principal Spokesperson is responsible for communicating information that is consistent with the views and decisions of Council. Where the principal spokesperson's views are

counter to the views and decisions of Council, the principal spokesperson must identify that it is his/her personal view.

The CEO will be Council's Principal Spokesperson for all matters from the final declaration of a periodic election.

2.5.2. Elected Members

Elected Members may respond to media enquiries. Personal opinions must be clearly stated as personal views.

2.5.3. Caretaker period

The provision of media during caretaker period are set out in the Council's Caretaker Policy.

2.6. Records management

Records management will comply with the requirements pursuant to the *State Records Act 1997* and Council's Records Management Policy.

2.7. Monitoring and reporting

Council communication channels are monitored. Media monitoring is available to Elected Members and staff.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

CEO

Refers to the Chief Executive Officer (including their delegate) of the City of Tea Tree Gully.

Media

Media channel employees, such as reporters and editors.

Media channels

The distribution stream(s) for different media material. These can be mainstream channels (e.g. newspapers, radio and website) or social media (e.g. Facebook).

Media material

A piece of proactive information such as a media statement, news release or a video statement.

Social media

The account or profile an organisation or individual adopts on a platform.
a.

4. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

4.1. Reference to legislation

There is no legislative requirement for Council to have a policy relating to this area.

Local Government Act 1999

Section 58 under the Act specifies that the Mayor is Council's principal spokesperson, unless otherwise resolved by the Council.

Section 62(3) of the Act establishes that Elected Members are not to make improper use of information acquired by virtue of their office as members of the Council.

Section 63 of the Act states that the Code of Conduct must be observed by all Council Members.

4.2. Other references

Council's document including:

- a. Caretaker Policy
- b. Elected Member Behavioural Management Policy
- c. Elected Member Support and Training Policy
- d. Community Engagement Framework
- e. Council's Community Engagement (Public Consultation) Policy determines the nature and extent of community engagement required for this matter
- f. Information and Communications Technology Appropriate Use Principles
- g. Promote your community event or group section on Council's website
- h. Records Management Policy

External document including:

- a. Behavioural Standards for Elected Members
- b. Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935
- c. Defamation Act 2005
- d. Fair Trading Act 1997
- e. Fair Work Act 1999
- f. Freedom of Information Act 1991
- g. Local Government Act 1999
- h. Local Government (Elections) Act 1999
- i. Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- j. Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- k. Spam Act 2003 (Cth)
- l. Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- m. State Records Act 1997
- n. Civil Liability Act 1936

This policy is based on a model policy developed by the Local Government Association.

5. Strategic Plan 2030

5.1. Strategic objectives

The following strategic objectives and aspirations in Council's Strategic Plan 2030 are the most relevant to this report:

Strategic Objective	Comments
1. Our Community We create opportunities for people to connect with one another and to their local community.	Proactively engaging with the community through traditional and social media helps build and enhance Council's relationship with the community and other key stakeholders. It also assists in creating a positive perception of Council and our City.
1.1. Our programs, events and services are accessible, inclusive and adaptable to meet community needs.	Proactively engaging with the community through traditional media and social media allows council to amplify its message and deliver important information to thousands of people

1.3.	People feel a sense of belonging, inclusion and connection.	Proactively engaging the community through traditional and social media allows Council to inform, communicate and initiate community involvement and discussion.
5.	Our Leadership We are trusted to make good decisions that are in the best interest of our community.	All traditional media and social media interactions are based on honesty, integrity and transparency.
5.1.	Our service provision is sustainable and adaptable.	Proactively engaging with the community through traditional media and social media provides a convenient, accessible and flexible form of service delivery.
5.2.	We have an innovative approach to customer service that provides a positive customer experience and adapts to changing needs.	Proactively engaging with the community through traditional media and social media provides a convenient, accessible and flexible form of service delivery.
5.3.	Our engagement is meaningful and we keep our community informed about Council initiatives.	All traditional media and social media interactions are based on honesty, integrity and transparency.

5.2. Organisation Plan

Our Strategic Plan is supported by an Organisation Plan which focuses on four key pillars of customer care, trust, teamwork and growth. The pillar most relevant to this policy is Customer Care.

6. Policy Implementation

This Policy will be implemented by the Chief Executive Officer or relevant portfolio General Manager and managed in accordance with Council's scheme of delegations.

Record number	D25/81399
Responsible Manager	Manager Customer & Communication
Other key internal stakeholders	General Manager Corporate Services
Last reviewed	26 May 2026
Adoption reference	Council
Resolution number	944
Previous review dates	28/02/2023, 22/6/21, 19/01/21, 23/06/2020, 09/05/17, 08/10/13, 13/12/11
Legal requirement	Nil
Due date next review	2030
Delegations	Y