

1. Policy Statement

This advertising policy is to ensure that expenditure on advertising is appropriate and in the interest of the public in line with section 197 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

2. Scope

Applies to all Council employees who conduct advertising.

3. Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer and Executive Management are responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to by all staff.

4. Definitions

Advertising is promoting an idea, goods or services to the public for which a fee is paid.

Caretaker period is the period during an election for the local government that starts on the day when public notice of the holding of the election is given under the *Local Government Electoral Act 2011* and ends at the conclusion the election. There is no caretaker period during a by-election or fresh election.

Election material is anything able to, or intended to influence an elector about voting at an election or; affect the result of an election.

5. Policy

5.1. Hinchinbrook Shire Council may spend money only if the advertising is to provide information or education to the public; and the information or education is in the public interest.

5.2. Council deems that the following types of advertisements meet this criteria

- to advise the public about new or existing services, programs and facilities
- to advise the public about changes to existing services, programs and facilities
- to increase the use of a service, program or facility
- to achieve Council's plans, goals and objectives
- to advise the public of Council meetings, outcomes, legislation and proposed policies
- to request public feedback or comment on Council's business
- to recruit staff; acquire or dispose of property, plant and equipment; tenders and expressions of interest
- to promote the economic development and sustainability of the region

5.3. Council must not, during a caretaker period for the local government, publish or distribute election material in accordance with section 90D (1) of the *Local Government Act 2009*. During this time Council must not:

- place advertisements relating to future plans unless, and only to the extent that, those plans have been formally adopted by the council;
- advertise the activities of the council otherwise than in the manner and form it is customary for the council to advertise its activities;
- place advertisements which seek to influence support for particular candidates, groups of candidates or potential candidates in the election;

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- bear the cost of advertisements featuring one or more councillors or containing quotations attributed to individual councillors. Note: this does not preclude councillors appearing in unpaid publicity or other publicity where the cost is not borne by the council.
- 5.4. All advertising must be approved by the relevant Manager before sent to the Media and Communications Officer. The Media and Communications Officer will monitor the appropriateness and cost effectiveness of advertising undertaken and report such to the Chief Executive Officer.

The relevant Manager must ensure that:

- the expenditure is in accordance with this policy
- the cost of the advertisement is appropriate for the number of people it is intended to inform and provides a commensurate benefit to the council or to the public
- the cost is available in the relevant budget item and meets the usual requirements for expenditure approvals
- the material presented is factual, well written and appropriate in tone

6. Legal Parameters

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

7. Associated Documents

Nil

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