

1. Purpose

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

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Council employees who conduct advertising and must be read in conjunction with the Purchasing Policy and procedures.

This policy applies to all of Council's activities, relating to any paid advertisement or notice in any media to promote goods or services (including facilities) provided by the Council.

This policy applies to all Council Officers including Procurement Officers who advertise tenders and recruitment Officers who advertise job vacancies for Council.

3. Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for ensuring that this policy is understood and 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.

Council refers to Hinchinbrook Shire Council

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

Medium is commonly used media for advertising – can consist of magazines, newspapers, billboards, electronic media/signs, websites, social media, radio, television and products such as magnets, marketing materials and brochures

5. Policy

5.1. Spend

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. Advertising Criteria

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, facility or venue;
- 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.
- to effectively engage with the Community as part of Council's Community Engagement Policy
- to promote the region; and
- to comply with applicable legislation.

5.3. Caretaker Period

In accordance with section 90D of the *Local Government Act 2009*, Council must not, during a caretaker period for the local government, publish or distribute election material. 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;
- 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. Authorisations

All advertising content and authorisation of expenditure must be approved by the relevant SLT member before being sent to the Media and Communications Team in the Office of the CEO. The Strategic Communications Coordinator will monitor the appropriateness and cost effectiveness of advertising undertaken and report such to the CEO.

All Officers incurring and authorising advertising expenditure shall do so in accordance with relevant financial delegations and Council's Procurement Policy, and must ensure that::

- it is for official purposes and falls generally within the type of expenditure 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;
- it is properly documented with the purpose identified;
- the documentation is available for scrutiny by both internal and external audits; and
- it appears appropriate and reasonable and can withstand the 'public defensibility test'.

6. Legal Parameters

- *Local Government Act 2009*; and
- *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

7. Associated Documents

- Adopted Budget;
- Caretaker Period Policy;
- Community Engagement Policy;
- Procurement Policy; and
- Procurement Procedure.

DOCUMENT HISTORY AND STATUS					
Action	Name		Position	Signed	Date
Approved by Council	Mary- Anne Uren		CEO		30/07/2025
Policy Version	3	Initial Version Adopted	05/08/2010	Current Version Adopted	29/07/2025
Maintained By	Media and Communications			Next Review Date	29/07/2026
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