



# MEDIA RELATIONS

## 1. PURPOSE

Media relations are a significant aspect of Council's operations. The media is an important source of information and analysis for citizens of Whitehorse and a significant means of communications.

Council's media relations can be proactive or reactive, and can be initiated by Council or in response to media initiatives. In both cases the nature of the relationship has a strong influence on the media coverage. This document summarises the policies of Council with respect to media relations, and how they should be developed and conducted.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

- To develop effective media relations in the dissemination of Council information.
- To determine who will represent Council in speaking to the media.

## 3. SCOPE

All print and electronic media; local, metropolitan and national newspapers, magazines; industry newsletters; television and radio.

## 4. POLICY

The City of Whitehorse will communicate openly with the media in order to maximise the public knowledge and understanding of our policies, activities and services.

The City of Whitehorse will be consistent and clear on who will represent Council and speak on behalf of Council to the media. This minimises confusion and ensures an efficient liaison service is provided.

The media are entitled to receive all information that is public information, that is, all information which the constituents of the City of Whitehorse are entitled to receive.

All comments to the media shall be presented positively and reflect the values of the City.

## 5. PROCEDURES

The implementation of Council's policies on media relations has implications at several levels. Council has adopted the following guidelines.

### Media

To continue distributing media releases to local media outlets each week.

To continue regular meetings with journalists from the Whitehorse Leader and the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer, as appropriate, to brief journalists on key issues.

For major issues a specific media strategy will be prepared, and a spokesperson selected by the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.

All media enquiries are to be directed to the Communications Department and an appropriate spokesperson nominated to respond to questions.

### Publications

To continue to produce or review all printed material ensuring accurate, timely information is distributed to the public including all brochures, information sheets and regular publications including:

- Council Vision

- Council Plan
- Annual Budget
- Annual Report
- Rates Brochure
- Community Directory
- Annual Calendar
- Whitehorse News

#### **Advertising/Public Notices**

To continue processing Council's tender advertisements and Planning Scheme Amendments through the Purchasing & Tendering Unit and the Strategic Planning Unit. Processing of Public Notices to be placed in the Whitehorse News, The Age or the Victorian Government Gazette as required by the Local Government Act 1989. All other advertisements to be processed by the Communications Department for inclusion in Council's regular Page 6 column in the Whitehorse Leader.

#### **Civic Centre Reception**

To provide information held on display at Civic Centre reception and to maintain an accessible information stand.

#### **Internet**

To continue regularly updating Councils Internet website.

#### **Communication with Councillors**

To continue communicating with Councillors on key issues.