

Policy Reference Number:	1.47
Classification:	General
Last Reviewed:	14 December 2022 (Res 107/2023)
Next Review Date:	December 2026
Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Approved by:	Council Resolution
Applicable Legislation:	Local Government Act 1999
Related Policies, Procedures and Standards:	

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to promoting and responding to the media in a timely and professional manner to enhance its communication with the community on various issues of public interest.

This policy is to formalise Council's position on communicating with the media, outline who is authorised to speak to the media and ensure that all use of media, social media and online communications are professional, consistent, accurate, timely and appropriate.

2. AUTHORISED REPRESENTATIVES

Authorised Representatives are council representatives or Elected Members who have authority to communicate with the media and administer Council social media accounts.

Authorised Representatives include:

- The Mayor, who is the official Spokesperson on behalf of Council; or
- The CEO, who will:
 - Manage media enquiries that are of a politically sensitive nature;
 - Be the official spokesperson for operational matters;
 - Review media releases and respond to media enquiries; and
 - Delegate where necessary to staff members.

The Mayor or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) may make statements to the media for and on behalf of Council, including responses to media enquiries, or:

- The Mayor may authorise an Elected Member in specific circumstances; or
- The CEO may authorise a council representative in specific circumstances.

3. MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Initial media enquiries are directed to the Chief Executive Officer for co-ordination of a response. If an officer (other than the Chief Executive officer) is contacted by the media they must not make any comment and shall refer the matter to the Chief Executive Officer.

Media enquiries that are of a politically sensitive nature shall be managed by the Chief Executive Officer.

4. APPROPRIATE USE OF MEDIA AND OFFICIAL SPOKESPERSON

The Mayor is the official spokesperson on behalf of the District Council of Robe (Deputy Mayor in the Mayor's absence) and the Chief Executive Officer is the official spokesperson for all operational matters.

With the approval of the Mayor, a Council Member may be the official spokesperson on issues where there is a significant and ongoing involvement by the Council Member.

Official press statements on behalf of the Council can only be made by the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer.

A Council Member, however, may make a personal statement on any matter provided:

- He/she makes it clear to the press or other recipient that he/she is speaking as an individual and not on behalf of the Council; and
- The Behavioural Standards for Council Members is adhered to.

Council staff are not permitted to provide personal comments and/or views to the media in any circumstances.

5. MEDIA RELEASES, PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES, MEDIA BRIEFINGS

All media releases are to be approved by the Mayor and / or Chief Executive Officer.

At times the services of an external public relations / media provider could be engaged for matters that are politically sensitive or require a higher level of media advice. In these instances the liaison will be managed by the external provider with the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer.

Where there is a significant and ongoing involvement by a Council Member, with the agreement of the Mayor, the Chief Executive Officer will contact the relevant Councillor to have a statement included in the media release.

Media briefings will be arranged on an as needs basis. These briefings will also provide a forum for local journalist to provide feedback to ensure their communication needs are being met.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

This policy will be available for inspection at the Council offices listed below during ordinary business hours and available to be downloaded, free of charge, from Council's internet site: www.robe.sa.gov.au

Royal Circus, Robe SA 5276

Copies will be provided to interested parties upon request. Email council@robe.sa.gov.au

Any grievances in relation to this policy or its application should be forwarded in writing addressed to the Chief Executive Officer of Council.

7. POLICY REVIEW

This policy may be amended at any time and must be reviewed at least every four years since its adoption (or latest amendment).