



SHIRE COUNCIL
Blayney

Media Spokesperson

Policy	2B
Officer Responsible	Director Corporate Services
Last Review Date	16/04/2018

Strategic Policy

1. Purpose

The Media Spokesperson Policy details the respective roles that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors, General Manager and delegated staff have in relation to providing media comment for the Blayney Shire Council.

2. General Principles

While being representatives of the community and being responsive to community views, Councillors will need to communicate the decisions or policy for the Council. There will be occasions where a Councillor as an individual, disagrees with a majority decision of the Council and wishes for the community to be made aware of this.

Councillors need to acknowledge that:

- as a member of the Council there is respect for the decision-making processes of the Council which are based on a decision of the majority;
- they provide an overriding balance in matters that are communicated and striving to achieve an outcome that presents the Council as well-informed and effective;
- effective media communication of a Council decision or policy is best achieved by adherence to the spokesperson role detailed below;
 - information of a confidential nature must not be communicated until such time it is no longer required to be treated as confidential;
 - where the official spokesperson disagrees with a particular decision, they may nominate an appropriate alternative spokesperson to accurately communicate the decision without unnecessary personal bias; and
 - information concerning adopted policies, procedures and decisions of the Council is conveyed accurately.

Councillors are entitled to speak to the media on any topic but are not acting as an authorised official spokesperson for Blayney Shire Council except in circumstances as outlined in the media spokesperson policy. Councillors will not express personal views when acting as an authorised spokesperson for the Council

As a courtesy and to ensure 'no surprises' for Council staff, Councillors should inform the General Manager of their media comments in advance of publication/ broadcast to provide adequate advance warning of when comments will be publicised. This will enable Blayney Shire Council to prepare key messages, responses and positions to manage potential reputation risk.

Overall, Councillors and the Blayney Shire Council will ensure a coordinated, consistent and aligned organisational approach to media

relations and external communications to proactively build media and stakeholder relationships.

3. Role of Mayor

The Mayor:

- is the primary spokesperson for Blayney Shire Council and may speak on behalf of Blayney Shire Council on any issue, other than administrative and management issues;
- may ask another Councillor to act as a spokesperson; and
- will be the primary spokesperson on major issues, such as major Government announcements, significant Council projects, events and highly controversial and high profile issues.

4. Role of Deputy Mayor

In line with the Mayoral role the Acting Mayor, the Deputy Mayor may be the spokesperson on any issues in the absence or at the request of the Mayor.

5. Role of Councillors as Committee Chairs

A Committee Chair will, having regard to the above guidelines, be the authorised spokesperson on issues concerning the operations, deliberations and decisions of that Committee based on the agreed areas of portfolio responsibility. This will generally involve announcements or the issuing of statements following a Committee meeting about decisions or recommendations of that Committee. The Committee Chair will be asked to act as the spokesperson in relation to media enquiries on a committee matter.

6. Role of General Manager

The General Manager may act as the authorised spokesperson in appropriate circumstances and for all administrative and management issues. The General Manager may authorise a nominated member of management to speak on matters on a case-by-case basis.

Where there is a dispute as to the appropriate spokesperson, the matter shall be referred to the General Manager or Mayor for a decision.

End of Policy

	Date	Minute
Adopted:	12/08/1996	655
Last Reviewed:	16/11/2009	0911/007
	12/11/2012	1211/014
	16/04/2018	1804/010
Next Review:	15/03/2022	