



Name	COR01 Media
Policy Type	Council
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Approval Date	16/11/2021
Review Date	15/11/2025

1. Purpose

This policy outlines a framework for guiding Litchfield Council Elected Members and staffs' interactions with the media and use of social media, to ensure consistent messaging, brand and reputation management.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Litchfield Council Elected Members and staff for any media interaction and social media use.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Social Media	All online media forums, for example, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.
Written Approval	Can be in the form of email or text messages. The preferred method, in the first instance, is email. However, in the event the urgent approval is required, a text message will suffice and, when required, be confirmed via email after.

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1. Media activities assist Council in delivering information to the public. Media activities may be generated proactively by Council or may be produced in response to an enquiry or request from a media organisation or stakeholder.
- 4.2. Public comment includes public speaking engagements; speaking on radio or television, views expressed to newspapers, magazines, websites, social media, books, journals, notices or other such forum where it might be expected that the publication of the comment will be accessible to part or all of the Litchfield or Local Government community.
- 4.3. Where possible, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or delegate will be the first point of contact to liaise with media, provide information and arrange for the preparation of media releases and briefings prior to interviews.
- 4.4. In their absence the CEO or a delegated Officer should be the first point of contact.

4.5. Media Representation

- 4.5.1. The Mayor is the primary spokesperson for Litchfield Council when addressing strategic and Council policy matters.
- 4.5.2. A decision on whether the issue should be addressed by an Elected Member or staff would be made in the first instance by the CEO in conjunction with the Mayor.
- 4.5.3. The CEO is the principal spokesperson for Litchfield Council when addressing operational matters.
- 4.5.4. The CEO and Mayor may delegate this authority to make public comment to the media on specific matters relating to administration or Council activities on a case-by-case basis.

4.6. Council staff and Media

- 4.6.1. Litchfield Council employees are not authorised to speak to the media on any Council issue unless specifically authorised to do so by the CEO.
- 4.6.2. Litchfield Council employees must refer media enquiries directly to the Manager Communications and Engagement.
- 4.6.3. When responding to media enquiries it is important to respond in a timely manner. Where practical, a response by the close of business on the day of the enquiry is required. If not practical, the owner of the media request should be contacted and advised of the delay.
- 4.6.4. Media responses will be forwarded to the Elected Members and Executive Team along with the details of the media enquiry for their information.

4.7. Elected Members and Media

- 4.7.1. Elected Members are to inform the CEO, prior to making comment, if they are approached by any media to comment on Council business

4.8. Social Media

- 4.8.1. Social media is an immediate method of communicating with stakeholders, media and the general public.
- 4.8.2. Ensuring information is correct and consistent is paramount when posting on social media sites.
- 4.8.3. Litchfield Council website is the primary internet presence for the dissemination of information to stakeholders and the community. Social media use should fall into the following categories:
 - A channel for broadcasting time-sensitive information as quickly as possible (e.g. cyclone preparedness and emergency situations)
 - A medium to engage with the community

- A form of marketing to increase Council's ability to distribute messages to the widest possible audience.

4.8.4. Elected Members do not need to contact Council when posting on their personal pages; however, if the comments or posts are regarding operational matters or decisions of Council, it should be clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of Litchfield Council.

4.8.5. Litchfield Council staff must not engage in social media as a representative of Council unless prior authorisation has been sought from the CEO, however, they can express their views as a member of the community.

4.8.6. Litchfield Council staff must not post or comment on any material that might otherwise cause damage to Litchfield Council's reputation or bring it into disrepute.

4.9. Media Releases

4.9.1. All Council media releases must be signed off by the CEO.

4.9.2. Media releases will only be distributed to media outlets by the CEO or delegate.

4.9.3. All media releases will be placed on the Council website and provided to Elected Members as soon as practicable.

5. Associated Documents

HR01 Code of Conduct

EM01 Code of Conduct for Elected Members

6. References and Legislation

Northern Territory Local Government Act

7. Review History

Date Reviewed	Description of changes
17/05/2017	New policy
16/11/2021	Policy reviewed, minor amendments made.