

## 1. Policy intent

- 1.1 This policy is to provide for the control of expenditure on advertisements placed by Tablelands Regional Council (TRC) in third-party media.
- 1.2 The objectives of this policy are to:
  - meet the requirements of Section 197 of the Local Government Regulation 2012
  - ensure advertising provides information or education to the public
  - ensure the information or education is provided in the public interest.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 The policy applies to any paid or in-kind advertisement and notice in any third-party media to promote events, facilities, career or engagement opportunities, tenders and services provided by TRC. This includes advertising in, but not limited to, newspapers, magazines, other publications, radio, television, social media and online.
- 2.2 The policy does not apply to articles in the media where no payment is made or communication products produced in-house.

## 3. Background/supporting information

Advertising should be used where the purpose of TRC or the public interest is advanced. TRC advertising should promote services, events and activities, increase awareness of career and tender opportunities, meet legislative requirements or showcase the region. It should not be used to promote the particular achievements or plans of particular Councillors or groups of Councillors. In particular, advertising that is paid for by TRC should not be used to influence voters in an election or be used for any purpose intended to provide material personal gain for a Councillor or TRC staff member.

## 4. Policy statement

The Local Government Regulation 2012 defines advertising as 'promoting, for the payment of a fee, an idea, goods or services to the public'.

### 4.1 Advertising expenditure

- 4.1.1 TRC may incur expenditure for advertising only if the:
  - a. advertising is providing information or education to the public
  - b. information or education is provided in the public interest
  - c. advertising falls into one of these categories, to:
    - i. advise the public of a new or continuing service, program or facility provided by TRC
    - ii. advise the public about changes to an existing TRC service, program or facility

- iii. increase the use of a commercial TRC service, program or facility with a view to profit
- iv. change the behaviour of some or all of the community to achieve TRC's objectives
- v. advise the public of the time, place and content of TRC meetings
- vi. advise the public of the decisions made at TRC meetings
- vii. advise the public of due dates for payments of rates and charges and renewal of licences and permits
- viii. advise the public on proposed community events, progress on services and projects, and other matters of public interest
- ix. request comment on proposed policies or activities of TRC
- x. advertise matters as required by legislation
- xi. promote the region from a tourism and economic development perspective.

4.1 Advertising must comply with the TRC Caretaker Period Policy (when enacted), not feature one or more Councillors or contain quotations attributed to individual Councillors.

## 4.2 Authorising advertising

4.2.1 The decision to advertise lies with the Strategic Communications Advisor (SCA) and/or Coordinator Communication and Engagement (CCE). The SCA and CCE must ensure the:

- a. expenditure is in accordance with this Policy
- b. cost of the advertisement is appropriate for the number of people it is intended to inform and provides a commensurate benefit to TRC and the community
- c. cost is available in the relevant budget item and meets the usual requirements for expenditure approvals.

4.2.2 Tender advertising can be placed in accordance with approved templates and processes without involvement of the SCA, CCE or approval from a General Manager (GM) or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

4.2.3 Positions vacant advertising can be placed by third party contractors without involvement of the SCA and CCE, or approval from a GM or CEO.

4.2.4 Positions vacant advertising placed by TRC must be placed by the SCA or CCE, and approved by Manager People and Culture.

4.2.5 Social media advertising must be placed by the SCA or CCE.

4.2.6 All other advertising must be approved by a GM. The CEO must approve advertising that bears their name, or if a GM indicates it requires CEO approval. This advertising must be placed by the SCA or CCE.

## 4.3 Controls

Where it is considered by a member of the public, a Councillor or a TRC staff member that the provisions of this Policy have been breached and that TRC-funded advertisements have been used

for individual political purposes or financial gain or for a purpose that is not in the interests of TRC and the community, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the TRC Complaints Policy.

#### **4.4 Responsibility**

Council is responsible for the adoption, amendment and repeal of the policy and the CEO is responsible for the development and amendment of any associated procedures relevant to the policy.

### **5. Review**

It is the responsibility of the SCA to monitor the adequacy of this policy and recommend appropriate changes. This policy will be formally reviewed every three years or as required, and is to remain in force until otherwise amended/repealed.

This policy repeals the former TRC policy 'Advertising Spending' adopted 25 June 2020.