

 <p>BROADSTAIRS &amp; ST. PETER'S TOWN COUNCIL</p>	<p><b>Public Relations Policy</b></p>
	<p><b>BROADSTAIRS &amp; ST. PETER'S TOWN COUNCIL</b> <b>Adopted: 5<sup>th</sup> June 2017</b></p>

## **1 Introduction**

All staff and elected Councillors have a significant part to play in establishing good working relationships with the media, both in terms of reacting to press enquiries and to maintaining a proactive stance in identifying positive media stories. It is vital that Broadstairs & St. Peter's Town Council should have a good working relationship established with the media, based on mutual understanding and co-operation.

This PR policy should be read in conjunction with the Web and Social Media Policy.

## **2 Policy Purpose:**

Public relations, or PR, is the practice of managing the flow of information between an organisation and the public. The aim of the Town Council PR policy is to deliver the correct message of the activities being undertaken by Council over a period of the year, in order to raise the positive profile of the Town Council. It will also ensure that the correct procedures are undertaken when information requests are received by external parties.

## **3 Scope of Policy:**

The policy covers all media stories that are related to the Town Council, both media releases and requests

Media includes newspapers, television, radio and specialist journals. It also includes web updates and social media posts that conform to the Web and Social Media Policy.

## **4 Procedures:**

### *4.1 Incoming requests*

It is important to develop a mechanism for channelling possible public relations stories through one person. All media enquiries must be referred to the Town Clerk in the first instance. In the absence of the Town Clerk media enquiries should be directed to the Senior Administrator.

Upon receipt of a Media enquiry, Councillors and staff should answer courteously and inform the caller that it is our policy to route all media enquiries to the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk will assess the media story and contact the Mayor/Chairman of the Council to decide which Councillor would be best suited to provide a response. In the first instance this should always be the Mayor/Chairman of the Council, but it could be another Councillor that has more knowledge about the specific media enquiry.

Interviews will only be given by the Mayor/Chairman of the Council or a person designated by the Mayor/Chairman.

The public should be dealt with in the same way as the press as the Press might approach in the guise of the public.

The Town Clerk will keep a log of all the media requests received during the civic year and information about how the Town Council responded to the request.

In case of doubt as to how to handle an issue or the interpretation of this policy, the Town Clerk should be consulted for support.

#### *4.2 Press releases*

All press releases from Broadstairs & St. Peter's Town Council will be planned, coordinated and released through the Town Clerk, in the absence of the Town Clerk, the senior administrator should undertake this role.

An annual timetable of proposed Press releases will be prepared at the beginning of each Civic Year, this will be circulated with all Councillors for their suggestions and agreed at a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

All reactive press releases should adhere to the procedures in part 4.1 of this policy and be in writing to avoid any misinterpretation of the facts.

Reactive press releases should be reported to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

All press releases should be distributed in the press release format at Appendix 1 of this document.

### **5 Media coverage**

It is important that Broadstairs Town Council monitors the media for coverage; especially following a press release story. However, all employees and Councillors should make the Town Clerk aware of radio, newspaper and television coverage relevant to the activities of Broadstairs & St. Peter's Town Council.

Where external media stories have been identified, the general public should be made aware of these stories where appropriate through the provision of 'News Items' on the Town Council website.

### **6 Verbal PR**

Councillors and staff should be aware that their comments in public gatherings could be reported to the press and therefore care should be taken.

Positive or negative stories on the organisation travel widely and quickly and affect public perception. This affects reputation, and thus creates hurdles in implementation of policies. Staff should avoid discussing any negative internal issues with the external public.

Staff members should always present Broadstairs & St. Peter's Town Council in a positive light as the local community, family and friends can be the target audience of the Town Council's Statutory functions.

### **7 Town Council Logo:**

All documents released by the Council should contain the Town Council logo.

Any external events, either sponsored or supported by Broadstairs & St. Peter's Town Council, for example through provision of a grant, should include the Town Council logo on all marketing and advertising material for the event. The website related to the event should provide a link to the Town Council website ([www.broadstairs.gov.uk](http://www.broadstairs.gov.uk)).

Any charities or organisation that receive a grant from Broadstairs & St. Peter's Town Council, and are not specifically related to an event, should state on their website that they have received a grant from Broadstairs & St. Peter's Town Council, show the logo and provide a link to the Town Council website ([www.broadstairs.gov.uk](http://www.broadstairs.gov.uk)).

### **8 Review:**

This policy will be reviewed by the Town Clerk at the end of each Civic Year. If any changes are needed these will be reported at a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Appendix 1: Press Release Form:



BROADSTAIRS & ST. PETER'S  
TOWN COUNCIL

## Press Release from Broadstairs and St. Peter's Town Council

**Release from date:**

**Subject:**

**Intro/Summary para/headline:**

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**Event:**

**Key Date(s):**

**Time:**

**Venue:**

**Fuller description/other key information:**

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**Quotes:**

.....[Name]..... **from**.....[Organisation].....**said**

'.....  
.....'

.....[Name]..... **from**.....[Organisation].....**added**

'.....  
.....'

**Contact: Town Clerk**

**Tel : 01843 868718**

**Email: [town.clerk@broadstairs.gov.uk](mailto:town.clerk@broadstairs.gov.uk)**

**Website: <http://www.broadstairs.gov.uk/>**