



## **BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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### **SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING POLICY**

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#### **Summary**

Members are asked to consider a draft policy on the carrying out of sponsorship and advertising activities by the Council.

This draft policy is two-fold, covering:

- The Council as an advertiser or sponsor; and
- The Council as an owner of an advertising platform or sponsorship opportunity which an external individual, group or organisation may wish to take up.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1 The Council is keen to seek and develop commercial advertising and sponsorship opportunities that support the strategic delivery of corporate objectives both directly and indirectly. These arrangements may be made on a direct financial or non-financial basis.
- 1.2 To safeguard the reputation of the Medway Council, its Members, partners and officers and to ensure protection for service users, a set of guidelines is required for the carrying out of advertisements and sponsorship activities by the Council.
- 1.3 This policy aims to advise councillors, officers, partners and prospective advertising and sponsorship partners on what are, and are not, acceptable forms of advertising and sponsorship for the Council. The policy relates to current and prospective advertising and sponsorship opportunities connected to the Council's buildings, assets and physical resources and both new and existing products and services, including events.
- 1.4 Agreement of the policy is a matter for the Cabinet.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 At the July 2018 meeting of the Committee Members considered a Member's Item regarding the sponsorship agreement between the Council and Gillingham FC and asked for a report to be submitted to the November 2018 meeting of this Committee detailing a draft corporate sponsorship protocol. Cabinet will consider this draft policy at its meeting on 18 December 2018, together with the views of this Committee.
- 2.2 There are many benefits for the Council in entering into sponsorship and advertising opportunities. They provide the opportunity to raise the profile of the services we provide, engage better with the communities we serve, support local businesses to grow their operations, build relationships and reduce or enhance the cost of service provision for the Council.
- 2.3 Many departments of the Council already enter into individual advertising and sponsorship agreements as part of their work and this may increase as the Council becomes ever more commercial in its approach and capitalises on the wide range of assets we have to offer and opportunities to raise our profile and communicate with our residents and other stakeholders.
- 2.4 Introducing a corporate policy on advertising and sponsorship will enable us to:
- Uphold the Council's reputation and corporate identity
  - Further the Council's strategic vision and support its priorities (by facilitating communication messages)
  - Secure best value for money and maximise income
  - Provide a framework and control measures
  - Establish a corporate approach and standards
  - Ensure compliance with legislation, advertising industry codes and other council policies
  - Support development of commercial partnerships with the private sector
  - Safeguard the image and environment of Medway.
- 2.5 The objectives of the proposed policy are:
- To ensure the Council generates and maximises opportunities to generate revenue or publicity through commercial sponsorship and advertising;  
To ensure the Council's position and reputation are adequately protected in the placing of advertisements and the entering into of sponsorship agreements and in particular to ensure that:
    - the Council only deals with advertisers and sponsors which are sufficiently reputable so as not to undermine the Council's position as a public body; and
    - the nature of any advertising provided or sponsorship accepted is appropriate given the role of the Council and does not contradict or conflict with any of the Council's policies.
  - To ensure that the Council adopts and maintains a consistent and professional approach in its acceptance and provision of sponsorship and advertising;

- To ensure that best value is obtained and provided in sponsorship and advertising arrangements; and
- To protect Members and officers from allegations of inappropriate dealings or relationships with sponsors and advertisers.

### **3. Options**

3.1 The options are to:

- Support the creation of a corporate advertising and sponsorship policy which will set down a clear corporate framework governing how we undertake advertising and sponsorship activities or to
- Not support the draft policy which could provide freedom to enter into any commercial agreements we might choose

### **4. Advice and analysis**

4.1 Many councils now have advertising and sponsorship policies to guide and advise on the decisions that are made and protect them whilst enabling a more commercial approach to business and given the potential growth in this area for the Council, it would may be an approach the Council wishes to consider.

### **5. Legal implications**

5.1 The policy sets out requirements for all advertisements to comply with all relevant legislation, regulation or code of practice and must adhere to the codes of conduct laid down by the Advertising Standards Authority in both letter and spirit. Legal liability for the content of any advertisement placed will rest with the advertiser whether this is the Council or the client.

### **6. Risk management**

6.1 By not having a policy in place potentially leaves the council open to risks that would result from not achieving the objectives set out at 2.4 above. However implementing a policy could restrict the council from being able to take up different and interesting opportunities that present themselves to us and may not be covered by the policy.

### **7. Consultation**

7.1 No external consultation has been undertaken on the proposed policy. Consultation with Members will take place via the Business Support Overview & Scrutiny Committee prior to consideration by Cabinet.

### **8. Financial implications**

8.1 There are no direct financial costs from the implementation of this policy but its implementation will support the council's drive to become more commercial and increase income opportunities within a structured framework.

## **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1 Members are asked to consider proposed advertising and sponsorship policy and forward any comments to Cabinet.

### **Lead officer contact**

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### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Draft advertising and sponsorship policy.

### **Background papers**

None