
Council/Public Communications

Date of Approval by Council: 03/27/2012

Resolution No.: 162/2012

Lead Role: Mayor, Council, Chief Commissioner

Replaces: n/a

Last Review Date: June 17, 2015

Next Review Date: 06/2018

Administrative Responsibility: Chief Commissioner

Special Notes: Respecting communications protocols is a key government function pursuant to Policy GOV-001-029: Organizational Roles and Responsibilities. That Policy sets out broad principles and general roles and responsibilities for Council, the Mayor, the Chief Commissioner and Administration. Policy GOV-002-028: Social Media is incorporated hereto by reference, except as otherwise provided by this Policy.

Policy Statement

Strathcona County Council seeks to inform its residents, businesses and visitors by engaging in a proactive communications program. This program recognizes that one of the most effective and quickest ways to communicate County policies and activities to citizens is by working in partnership with the media.

Guidelines

The roles and responsibilities as set out in this Policy apply to all Council/Public Communications, regardless of media. Council hereby adopts Policy GOV-002-028: Social Media to apply in relation to Council Communication activities through social media except where otherwise provided for by this Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Mayor is the official spokesperson for Strathcona County and conveys the official Council position on issues of general impact or significance or situations that are of a particularly controversial or sensitive nature, unless Council determines otherwise.
2. Council may, by majority vote, determine that the Mayor is to be the only spokesperson for Strathcona County on certain issues. Where Council has so determined, no Councillor may speak on that issue without Council approval.
3. Depending on the specific circumstances, the Mayor may designate another elected official to serve as spokesperson on a particular issue. When so designated, an elected official will represent official Council policies or positions.
4. In cases of critical significance to the municipality, the Mayor will work with Council, the Chief Commissioner and the Director of Communications to develop a communications plan to detail the known facts of the situation and summarize the County's position.

5. In the event of a crisis or emergency situation, the Mayor (or Deputy Mayor, Acting Mayor or designate as the case may be), the Director of Emergency Management and the Director of Communications will handle all contacts with the media, and will coordinate the information flow from the County to the public. In such situations, all departments should refer calls from the media to the Director of Communications.

Social Media

1. Strathcona County elected officials are responsible to follow and support this Policy and the Social Media Policy in their use of social media.
2. Views represented on any official County Social Media sites which directly reference Council policy or decisions shall be official views.
3. Elected officials are individually responsible to conduct and manage their use of social media.

Official Functions and Invitations

1. The Mayor or the Mayor's designate is the authorized representative of the County to extend invitations for official functions of Strathcona County and to attend all formal invitations extended to Strathcona County.
2. Council Members are authorized representatives to attend functions and events in their respective wards.