



SANDHURST TOWN COUNCIL

Press and Media Policy

The purpose of the Press & Media Policy is to provide guidance on engaging with the media and sets out roles and responsibilities for Councillors and Officers.

- Press Releases will be sent to the Executive Officer.
- The Executive Officer will seek approval for all press reports, or comments to the media, with the Chairman of the Town Council (Mayor of Sandhurst) or the Chairman of the relevant committee.
- Releases will include relevant facts and a quote from the appropriate Councillor. In certain circumstances, a quote from a Council officer will be used when the public would reasonably expect an operational viewpoint to be put forward.
- Releases will not promote the views of party-political groups or publicise the activities of individual Councillors. They will not seek to persuade the public to hold a certain political view.
- Press reports from the council, its committees or working parties are from the Executive Officer or their Deputy, or via the reporter's own attendance at a meeting in accordance with the separate 'Protocol for Reporting at Meetings'.
- Councillors should not release any articles independently. This includes articles for local magazines.
- Spokespeople will be nominated to represent the Council in interviews should the need arise. This will be decided according to experience and knowledge of the subject.
- Unless a Councillor has been authorised by the town council or a committee or sub-committee to speak to the media on a particular issue, Councillors who are asked for comment by the press should make it clear that it is a personal view and ask that it be clearly reported as their personal view.
- Unless a Councillor is absolutely certain that he/she is reporting the view of the council, they must make it clear to members of the public that they are expressing a personal view.
- Officers put forward for interview should not provide a personal opinion on a matter. As the subject matter expert their role is to provide factual knowledge in support of the Council's approved policies.
- If a complaint from a member of the public is received by Councillors or Officers, this should be dealt with under the Council's adopted complaints procedure.