

# **Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council**

## **Draft Advertising and Sponsorship Policy**

### **Introduction**

There are a number of opportunities for the council to generate income from:

- Advertising on assets (e.g. refuse vehicles etc, street furniture, roundabouts, billboards)
- Advertising in communication channels (e.g. staff magazine, website, Council Tax billing information)
- Sponsorship of events or assets (e.g. Christmas lights, Rotherham Show, All Saints Fountain etc.)

### **Purpose of policy**

Rotherham Council has a policy on advertising and sponsorship in order to:

- Provide a robust framework and control measures for advertising and sponsorship activity, in support of income generation
- To ensure the Council maximises opportunities and income and secures best value for money
- In terms of advertising and sponsorship content, we will ensure there is no conflict with Council priorities, values or services.
- Establish a unified and corporate approach (including best practice) to advertising and sponsorship across the Council
- Ensure compliance with legislation, advertising industry codes and other relevant Council policies
- Support the development of commercial partnerships with the private sector
- Safeguard the image and environment of the Borough
- Support the council's reputation and corporate identity
- To protect members and officers from allegations of inappropriate dealings or relationships with advertisers or sponsors
- Maximise the use of its own advertising and promotion spending by looking to utilise internal channels before committing to spending externally.

### **Definitions**

1. Marketing promotion is a form of communication used to ensure information is communicated.
2. Sponsorship advertising messages can take a variety of forms and can be viewed via a variety of traditional and new media.
3. To sponsor something is to support an event, activity, person, or organisation financially or by providing products or services. It should be mutually beneficial. Sponsorship is a business relationship between a provider of funds, resources or services and an individual, event or organisation.

### **Guiding principles**

4. When working with an advertiser or sponsor, any agreement supports the Council's strategic vision, constitution and equality and diversity policies.
5. Advertising and / or sponsorship from companies which offer services which are in competition with Council services will not be accepted, e.g. fostering and adoption services, waste management.
6. The Council will take all possible steps to prevent situations where it could be construed that an advertiser or sponsor has:
  - Influenced Council officers or members in carrying out their roles, and decision-making

- Received preferential treatment or is able to make any undue gain from or as a result of an advertising or sponsorship arrangement
- Has values, practices or policies which would, by association, undermine the Council or bring it into disrepute

7. The Council reserves the right to refuse sponsorship offers from companies which are in dispute with the Council or where there is pending / active legal action. The Council will also not accept advertising or sponsorship from companies which are in contract negotiations concerned with the direct provision of services for the council, where this may be viewed as an endorsement of this bid.

8. The Council will uphold the [Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity](#), and abides by national guidance published by the Advertising Standards Agency.

9. The Council abides by the Town and Country Planning Act. The Control of Advertisements Regulations provides the rules on displaying advertising. The Council has the duty to ensure all advertising on council-owned assets falls within this legislation and will liaise with the Local Planning Authority to ensure planning law relating to the display of advertisements is complied with.

10. Whether advertising and / or sponsorship is a suitable method or whether external requests to use council-owned assets should be approved, will be decided on a case by case basis on the merits of each opportunity or request.

11. All adverts are subject to approval before they are placed. The Council reserves the right to refuse to promote or to remove any individual advert, which, in its opinion, is considered inappropriate. The suitability of individual advertisers may be checked with Trading Standards, Planning Enforcement, Health and Safety, Council Tax and other council services as is deemed appropriate. Designated officers will consider applications and content on a case by case basis, ensuring it adheres to the guiding principles set out in this policy.

The Council will not accept advertising of a racial, religious or political nature, any advertising which may be construed as offering services of a sexual nature, gambling organisations, manufacturers of tobacco products, or fracking companies. Neither will the Council permit advertising which it may reasonably consider objectionable.

12. The promotion of any product or service is not an official endorsement or recommendation by the Council.

13. The Council is not responsible for the quality or reliability of the product or services offered within any advert and would never knowingly run an advert that is misleading, offensive, untrue or fraudulent.

14. When dealing with sponsorship, council employees must adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct, with particular reference to Section 15 (Gifts and Payments) and 18 (Sponsorship, giving and receiving) of the code.

15. During an election period, care will be taken to ensure political neutrality and decisions taken on the suitability of advertising and sponsorship will reflect that.

16. Potential advertisers or sponsors who are currently applicants for planning or licensing permissions or any other type of agreement or contract will not be considered.

17. The lead officer for advertising and sponsorship is the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment, and the Regeneration and Environment team will deal will review the applications/offers.

18. Decisions made pursuant to this Policy which are delegated to officers, will when required by the Council's Constitution be published on the Council's website with accompanying reports. In discharging this function, the views of the relevant Cabinet Member will be sought and recorded.

19. Naming rights will not be pursued by the council.

20. The Council will pursue sponsorship where appropriate to enable nominated individuals to attend national and regional awards but will not pursue sponsorship for specific awards, rather sponsorship will be sought for events such as the Employee Recognition Awards.

21. In addition to the rules contained within this policy, all other rules and legislation pertaining to advertising will still apply.

22. This policy will be reviewed on year from its inception.

### **Advertising and sponsorship content**

Companies wishing to advertise / enter into sponsorship with the Council must adhere to the guidelines set out below. Content must:

- Be legal, decent, honest and truthful
- Not bring the Council into disrepute
- Be an appropriate subject for the Council to be associated with in the given circumstances
- Conform to the British Code of Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing ([www.asa.org.uk](http://www.asa.org.uk))
- Respect the principles of fair competition

### **Quality Design Principles**

Advertising material and signage will conform to good standards of design, in order to protect the reputation of the Council and the sponsor.

### **Adherence to Council Policy and Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules**

All applicants wishing to utilise Council owned advertising media must adhere to this policy and the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

Any organisation wishing to sponsor a Council owned product or service must adhere to this policy and the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

All sponsorship deals will be subject to a signed legal agreement between the Council and the sponsoring organisation.