



Communications

Advertising Policy

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Author:	Martin Hacker
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 South Somerset District Council (SSDC) welcomes the opportunity to publicise information that is likely to be of interest to residents and is appropriate proper and lawful through its various communication channels. This policy provides guidelines for the acceptance of all forms of advertising, both in print and electronic formats.

2.0 The Principles

2.1 The policy assumes that all advertising presented falls within the rules and guidelines laid down by the **Advertising Standards Authority** and the **British Codes of Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing**. The basic principles of the codes are that advertisements should be:

- legal, decent, honest and truthful
- prepared with a sense of responsibility to consumers and society
- in line with generally accepted standards of fair competition in business and
- reflect the spirit as well as the letter of the codes

3.0 SSDC Approach

3.1 We are keen to maximise revenue from advertising and wherever possible will permit advertising and sponsorship on or via our assets. Therefore, rather than define specific permitted advertising, we will work on the basis that advertising is permitted unless it falls into a number of prohibited categories (see following section). Some forms of advertising may be accepted but excluded from certain channels/pages on our website e.g. organisations with current planning applications/contractors bidding for current tenders on our planning pages.

4.0 Appropriate advertising

4.1 SSDC will consider advertising through an agreed approval procedure which is documented within this policy.

4.2 Appropriate advertising includes products or services that are in keeping with our council plan and do not conflict with other parts of this policy.

4.3 We will welcome the opportunity to work with both local and national organisations if they comply with the advertising policy.

5.0 Inappropriate or prohibited advertising

5.1 Advertising should not promote any of the following:

- Pornography, adult services or industries, or companies involved in sexual exploitation of adults or children
- alcoholic drinks
- gambling
- loans and speculative financial products
- tobacco and related products
- weapons, violence or anti-social behaviour of any description
- those that give undue publicity to inappropriate behaviour or lifestyles
- discrimination

5.2 The council will not accept advertising that conflicts with the core values or policies of the council in any way. We reserve the right to decide whether an issue is or is not contentious and if the advertising may or may not be displayed.

6.0 Style and content

6.1 SSDC is bound by duties and requirements under the Equality Act 2010, Highways Act 1980, Traffic Management Act 2004, Planning laws and other legislation.

7.0 Approval procedures

7.1 Departments or individuals asking to enter into a formal, written advertising agreement with an external commercial company must ensure there is a clear agreement in place and in all cases, send details of the advertising proposal to the Communication Team of South Somerset District Council.

7.2 The proposal should give details of what is included or excluded including the terms, the length of the agreement, income generation, and termination arrangements.

7.3 In order to ensure a quick turnaround, the Communications Team will make advertising decisions in consultation with the Council's Advertising Group (Equalities Officer and Procurement and Risk Manager). Should conflict occur, the Chief Executive Officer will have the final decision.

7.4 A record will be kept (by the Communications Team) of all requests for advertising from discretionary advertisers, and the response given.

8.0 Disclaimer

8.1 We make reasonable efforts to ensure that only advertisements suitable for 'family viewing' appear through council channels. However the council does not control third party sites, content or products. Advertisers may have different use, styles and privacy policies, for which we cannot accept responsibility for these. The inclusion of an advert on one of our assets does not imply that the product or service is endorsed by the council.

- 8.2 We will display a link to this advertising policy on any page of our website which carries advertising and an email link so that customers with any concerns can raise them promptly with the council. We will respond in line with our complaints procedure, unless the issue requires faster action to remove unsuitable content.
- 8.3 The learning gleaned from our advertising experiences will be used to review the policy as necessary.
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