

Essex County Council

Advertising and Sponsorship Policy (Highways and Transport)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the terms upon which advertising or sponsorship may be secured or agreed by Essex County Council's Highways and Transport function to enable the generation of new and additional income to support its core activities.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, advertising and sponsorship is defined as *“an arrangement between the Council and a sponsor, where the Council receives money or a benefit in kind in support for an event, activity, campaign, facility, asset or initiative from an organisation or individual, which in turn gains publicity or other benefits for them”*.

3. Objectives

This policy supports the Council's Strategic Priorities within the Council's Organisation Strategy, specifically to transform the council to achieve more with less.

Objectives the policy seeks to meet are:

- Maximising opportunities to obtain commercial advertising and sponsorship for events, activities, campaigns, facilities, assets or initiatives;
- To offer advertisers and/or sponsors attractive packages, which provide value for money for all parties;
- To implement and manage a consistent, professional approach towards advertising and sponsorship;
- To protect the Council's reputation throughout all advertising and sponsorship agreements;
- To protect Members and Officers from allegations of inappropriate dealings or relationships with sponsors;
- To provide internal skills development to ensure consistency and secure best value from all current and future advertising and sponsorship arrangements

4. Principles

The Council will actively seek opportunities to work with all forms of organisations to identify opportunities for advertising and sponsorship; which are in keeping with its Strategic Priorities and Organisation Strategy. It is keen to encourage and support advertising and sponsorship.

The Council reserves the right to evaluate the suitability of all advertisements or sponsorship before including them on/through its channels and all advertisements or sponsorships are accepted at the Council's absolute discretion.

The Council reserves the right to refuse to publish an advertisement or accept sponsorship or to withdraw a published advertisement without notice and it may cancel or withdraw any advertisement or sponsorship at any time. For specificity, an advertisement will not be approved, or permitted to remain if, in the Council's reasonable opinion, the advertisement does not comply with the law, does not comply with the UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing (or any relevant CAP code), is otherwise not appropriate, or is inconsistent with the Council's obligations under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010

5. Standards

All advertisements and sponsorship must adhere to the standards laid down by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA). It is expected that current and prospective advertisers keep up-to-date with changes and new standards released by the ASA and take note of its rulings.

It is important for potential advertisers and sponsors to recognise that because of the Council's responsibility as a Local Authority, there are some restrictions on the adverts that will not be accepted. These are outlined below:

- Political organisations and messaging, including any adverts related to elections, referendums or similar
- Payday lenders
- Tobacco products, including Vaping
- Alcoholic beverages
- Pornography
- Any advert that is likely to damage the reputation of Essex County Council

The Council welcomes all opportunities to work in partnerships. It will not, however, put itself in a position where it might be said that such a partnership has, or might have, or may be thought to have:

- Influenced the Council or its Officers in carrying out its statutory functions.
- Been entered into, in order to gain favourable terms from the Council in any business or other agreements.
- Aligned the Council with any organisation which conducted itself in a manner which conflicted with the Council's Corporate Vision or Values.

The Council will agree with the sponsor the nature and content of the publicity and will retain the right to approve all advertising material.

Where the Essex County Council brand is used in any form of advertising or sponsorship; the advertiser or sponsor will adhere to the Council's Brand Guidelines.

All advertising and sponsorship opportunities will be subject to the Council's Procurement Policy and Procedure Rules and comply with any relevant legislation, such as the Public Regulations 2015 and the Equality Act 2010.

6. Procedures

All and any enquiries about Highways and Transport advertising or sponsorship opportunities must be directed to advertising@essex.gov.uk in the first instance for consideration and review. The Council recognises that other organisations may have insight or opportunities that they consider suitable for advertising or sponsorship that the Council has not considered to date and welcomes proposals.

Current advertising and sponsorship opportunities will be made available via the Essex County Council website, for transparency and ease of access by other organisations.

Where a potential opportunity or proposal would result in more than £10,000 of income to the Council, additional steps may be taken to advertise the opportunity to secure best value for the Council. The Council will set up a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) platform to assist with getting the highest income for advertising or sponsorship opportunities.

It is expected that evidence-based evaluation will be obtained to assist with establishing value-for-money, return-on-investment and/or future contract decisions.

7. Marketing and media relations

All media information produced by an advertiser or sponsor must comply with regulations, be of suitable quality and approved before implementation.

The use of sponsors' logos and other branding must not interfere or conflict with Essex County Council's brand guidelines.

The use of the Council's brand within any advertisers or sponsors publicity must be approved by the Council's Marketing and Communications team.

8. Disclaimer

Acceptance of advertising or sponsorship by the Council does not imply endorsement of products or services by Essex County Council.

Any advertising and sponsorship accepted by the Council must not breach any contract, or infringe or violate any copyright, trademark or any other personal or proprietary right of any person or render the Council liable to prosecution or civil proceedings. The sponsor must fully and effectually indemnify the Council from and against all claims, costs or demands arising from the sponsor's activities.

9. Declaration of Interest (DOI)

Council Officers and Members are required to complete a declaration of interest if they have any personal interests, involvement or conflicts of interest with any potential sponsors or advertisers.

In the event of a conflict of interest, that Officer or Member will take no part in the decision of whether to permit of advertising and sponsorship with that particular organisation.

10. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or earlier, if legislative or statutory guidelines require it.

Policy/Governance owner and contact:

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