

Advertising and Sponsorship Policy

Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to set out the terms upon which advertising and sponsorship may be sought and accepted by Oadby & Wigston Borough Council (the “Council”).

The Council is committed to developing appropriate advertising and sponsorship opportunities, to generate income for the council which can then be reinvested while also providing powerful marketing tools to local and national businesses and local community groups. It will encourage commercial relationships which do not conflict with the delivery of its strategic goals.

The policy aims to provide helpful advice to Council employees and Members and prospective advertisers and sponsors on what is, and is not, acceptable forms of advertising for the Council.

The policy relates to advertising and sponsorship opportunities connected to the Council’s assets, services, events and other activities that it has responsibility for.

Advertising

Advertising is defined as... “An agreement between the Council and the advertiser, whereby the Council receives money from an organisation or individual in consideration of which the advertiser gains publicity in the form of an advertisement in Council controlled print, broadcast or electronic media”.

The policy is not an exhaustive list and takes as its start point that all advertising falls within the rules and guidelines laid out by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA).

All advertising must:

- Fall within the guidelines laid out by the [Advertising Standards Authority \(ASA\)](#)
- Uphold the rules laid out in the [UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing \(CAP Code\)](#)
- Follow the [Code of recommended practice on Local Authority publicity](#)

In line with the codes referred to above, advertisements should be:

- Legal, decent, honest and truthful;
- Created with a sense of responsibility to consumers and society; and
- In line with the principles of fair competition generally accepted in business and that the codes are applied in the spirit as well as the letter.
- An advertisement will not be accepted if it, in the reasonable opinion of the Council:
 - Is inappropriate or objectionable;
 - May result in the Council being subject to prosecution;
 - Promotes gambling;
 - Promotes payday loans;
 - Refers to tobacco, vaping or similar products;
 - Promotes the misuse of alcohol or promotes the use of alcohol to children;
 - Might be deemed inappropriate for children, for example violent films, pornography and so on;
 - Appears to influence support for a political party/candidate;
 - Is from an organisation in financial or legal conflict with the Council;
 - Is from an organisation with a political purpose, including pressure groups and trade unions; and
 - Is the subject of a complaint to the Advertising Standards Authority and upheld by such Authority as a legitimate complaint.

The above list is not exhaustive, and the Council retains the right to refuse advertising on the grounds that, in the Council's opinion, it is inappropriate, or it conflicts with services already provided by the organisation. The Council reserves the right to remove advertising without reference to the advertiser. The Council reserves the right to use any advertising provided by the client in their promotional materials.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship is defined as... "An agreement between the Council and the sponsor, where the Council receives either money or a benefit in kind for an event, campaign or initiative from an organisation or individual which in turn gains publicity or other benefits".

The policy aims to:

- Maximise the opportunities to attract commercial sponsorship for appropriate events, campaigns or initiatives;
- Make sure that the Council's position and reputation is adequately protected;
- Make sure an appropriate return is generated from sponsorship agreements;
- Make sure that a consistent and professional approach is adopted to the development of sponsorship agreements; and
- Protect Councillors and officers from potential allegations of inappropriate dealings or favouritism with sponsors.
- The Council will welcome all opportunities to work with sponsors where such arrangements support its core values. However, it will not enter into a sponsorship agreement if, in the reasonable opinion of the Council, the agreement:
 - May be perceived as potentially influencing the Council or its officers in carrying out its statutory functions in order to gain favourable terms from the Council on any business or other agreement;
 - Aligns the Council with any organisation or individual which conflicts with its values and priorities.
- The Council will not therefore enter into sponsorship agreements with:
 - Organisations which do not comply with the Council's Advertising Policy (above) or the Advertising Standards Authority code of practice;
 - Organisations in financial or legal conflict with the Council; and
 - Organisations with a political purpose, including pressure groups and trade unions.

The list above is not exhaustive and the Council retains the right to decline sponsorship from any organisation or individual or in respect of particular products which the Council in its sole discretion considers inappropriate.

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

The Council has a strong corporate identity and material relating to sponsorship agreements must not conflict with, or compromise this.

Procedures

Before agreeing advertising or sponsorship, Council officers will consider the policy document and follow the guidelines provided. The overall coordination of advertising and sponsorship agreements across the Council will be the responsibility of the Communications and Marketing Team.

All potential sponsors should be referred to the policy for information and guidance.

Evaluation

Each advertising and/or sponsorship proposal must be subject to an evaluation. Whether advertising and/or sponsorship is suitable will be decided on a case-by-case basis on the merits of each opportunity or request.

This includes assessing:

- That the benefits to the organisation or business are proportionate to the level of advertising and/or sponsorship;
- That the type or form of advertising and/or sponsorship is consistent with the values, strategic objectives or requirements of the council;
- That the type or form of advertising and/or sponsorship is not at all detrimental to the local or global environment;
- Sustainable advertising and/or sponsorship that contributes to economic development, environmental protection and corporate social responsibility will be encouraged;
- That any advertising and/or sponsorship proposal does not anticipate explicit endorsement of the organisation or business's products and services, as this form of proposal is not acceptable to the council;
- No conflict of interest arises from the arrangement e.g. where the association with the organisation or business may compromise the work or reputation of the council; and
- The capacity of the council to provide adequate resources and appropriate locations to meet the terms of the proposed agreement.

Approvals

Agreements that are non-contentious and conform to this policy will be 'signed off' by Officers at the Council, who will have delegated powers to do so given by this policy. Contentious agreements that do not fully meet the policy will be agreed with Members.

Advertising and/or sponsorship agreements valued at £5,000 or under (and relating to only one financial year or event) will be agreed by the communications & marketing manager (unless there are any special circumstances which make a second authorisation desirable e.g. if the issue might be politically sensitive or the sponsor has requested unusual conditions).

Advertising and/or sponsorship agreements valued at between £5,000 and £50,000 (or covering more than one financial year with an aggregate total of between £5,000 and £50,000) must be agreed by the relevant Head of Service.

Advertising and/or sponsorship agreements valued at more than £50,000 and up to the EU threshold (or covering more than one financial year with an aggregate total of more than £50,000) must be agreed and countersigned by the relevant Head of Service and Chief Executive. The Leader and/or Deputy Leader of the Council must be informed of all deals valued at more than £50,000 and up to the EU threshold (currently c. £181k).

All agreements need to be in writing and if over £50,000 must be completed under seal.

Disclaimer

Acceptance of advertising or sponsorship does not imply endorsement of products and services by Oadby & Wigston Borough Council.

In order to make this clear all publications, or other media, with advertising or sponsorship should agree to the following disclaimer: 'Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the content of the advertisements contained in this publication, Oadby & Wigston Borough Council cannot accept any liability for errors or omissions contained in any of the advertisements provided by an advertiser.'

The Council does not accept any liability for any information or claims made by the advertisement or by the advertisers.

The Council reserves the right to refuse to place an advert or accept any sponsorship. We also reserve the right to withdraw any advert or any sponsorship at any time, which is not in accordance with this policy or the terms and conditions of advertising and sponsorship,