

## **Media Relations Policy**

### **1. ABOUT THIS POLICY**

- 1.1 Using the media appropriately can play an important role in helping Community Action Isle of Wight to achieve its charitable objectives.
- 1.2 Our Media Relations and Communications Policy is intended to promote effective communication and working practices. This policy outlines the standards you must observe when communicating with the media and the action we will take if you breach these standards.
- 1.3 Breach of this policy may be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure and, in serious cases, may be treated as gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

### **2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- 2.1 Community Action Isle of Wight will strive to build and maintain dialogue with the relevant media.
- 2.2 All communications with the media will be carried out in a courteous and professional manner. In the expectation that journalists will demonstrate a similar level of professionalism and courtesy in their dealings with Community Action Isle of Wight, staff will confirm journalists' deadlines, and respond by deadline where feasible. Journalists will be advised if this is not possible. All calls from the media will be returned promptly.
- 2.3 Community Action Isle of Wight will take advantage of appropriate opportunities to manage the presentation of stories or news, particularly where major issues, consultations or announcements are involved. Media planning will be included in Community Action Isle of Wight's strategic and operational plans where appropriate, to ensure that the Board and management work together to present news or features to the media strategically and effectively. Community Action Isle of Wight acknowledges, however, that individual editorial policies and processes may affect the published outcome.
- 2.4 Media training may be provided for identified spokespeople. Community Action Isle of Wight's Communications lead will be the main point of contact for press

enquiries and media relations, who will also maintain and develop a database of relevant media contacts, enquiries, releases, plans and outcomes. It is important therefore that any member of staff who takes a call from the media or has contact with the media informs the Communications lead in accordance with the protocol below.

### **3. TYPES OF MEDIA**

3.1 The following media have been identified as relevant to Community Action Isle of Wight's activities.:

- (a) local newspapers and radio, local social media sites

### **4. TARGET AUDIENCES**

4.1 A range of external audiences may have an interest in media coverage about Community Action Isle of Wight, including:

4.2 Local Authority officers and members, NHS partner bodies, Town and Parish Councils, members and broader voluntary and community sector partners, funding bodies.

### **5. AUTHORISATION**

5.1 The Chief Executive Officer and Chair are authorised to speak to the media as a matter of course and lead officers for projects/services are authorised to speak to the media with regard to their specific project.

5.2 Any staff unsure of the content they are considering providing to the media, they are asked to please check with the Chief Executive Officer or the Manager responsible for the specific project, to which the query relates.

### **6. PROTOCOL FOR HANDLING MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

6.1 The Chief Executive Officer is the main point of contact for all media relations. Staff who are not authorised to speak with the media direct should pass all media calls to the Chief Executive Officer or the Manager in charge for the specific project the call relates to.

6.2 Staff authorised to speak with the media direct are not obliged to speak with the media but are expected to brief the Chief Executive Officer following any media approach or contact. Staff are strongly advised to resist giving answers on the spot and are advised to establish what questions the journalist is asking,

what the article or feature is about, who else, if anyone, has been contacted, what their deadline is - and arrange to call them back. This allows time for consideration and to take advice from colleagues.

## **7. RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

7.1 Information about Community Action Isle of Wight operations that is in the public domain will be made available to the media on request.

7.2 Information about Community Action Isle of Wight operations that involves contractual arrangements, or that is subject to individual negotiation with external bodies or institutions, will not be made available to the media without the agreement of all parties concerned.

## **8. CONTACTING THE MEDIA**

8.1 Depending on what Community Action Isle of Wight wishes to say, and what outcome it hopes will result from its communication with the media, there are a number of ways in which Community Action Isle of Wight can provide news or information to the media:

- (a) News Releases;
- (b) Press Briefings; and
- (c) Individual Briefings