# CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL –SPONSORSHIP & ADVERTISING POLICY

## 1.0 Introduction

**1.1** Cheshire West and Chester Council ("the Council") 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. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for members and officers of the Council as well as prospective advertisers and sponsors as to the types of arrangement and the nature of advertising and sponsorship which will be acceptable to the Council 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 (ASA) and the British Code of Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing (The CAP Code). 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.

The policy aims to reflect the recommended code of practice laid out for local authorities. (link below)

Furthermore, the policy will be reviewed by Information Governance and Legal Services to ensure it is in compliance with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Recommended code of practice for local authority publicity

2.2 The Council also considers the requirements of the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008, which seek to protect consumers from unfair, misleading or aggressive marketing practices and requires all advertisers to comply absolutely with the letter and the spirit of these regulations.

## 3.0 Cheshire West and Chester Council's Approach

3.1 The Council are committed to maximising revenue from advertising and wherever possible will permit advertising and sponsorship on the Council's assets (including land or in or on buildings owned, controlled or managed by the Council) together with

advertisements on the Council's website. Therefore, rather than define specific permitted advertising, the Council will work on the basis that advertising is permitted unless it falls into a number of prohibited categories (see sections 5 to 6).

## 4.0 Appropriate Advertising

4.1 Appropriate advertising includes products or services that are in keeping with the delivery of the Council Plan and do not conflict with other parts of this policy.

4.2 We will welcome the opportunity to work with both local and national organisations provided that they comply with the terms of this policy and the Council's principles.

4.3 The adverts will support the local economy and provide opportunities for local businesses or other organisations to market their goods and services thus contributing to the growth and wellbeing of the Borough.

4.4 The Council will not permit advertising that conflicts with the core values or policies of the Council in any way. The Council reserves the right to determine whether an issue is or is not contentious and whether the proposed advertising may or may not be permitted .

## 5.0 Inappropriate or Prohibited Advertising

**Prohibited Organisations**

- Political organisations, including temporary or single-issue lobbying organisations;
- Manufacturers of tobacco products and related items (e.g. vaping paraphernalia);
- Manufacturers of alcohol products;
- Manufacturers of fossil fuel products;
- Manufacturers of weapons;
- Lenders of speculative financial products;
- Advertising from any organisation associated with 'adult industries' will not be permitted;
- Any content or advertising which has an overtly sexual 'tone' will also be excluded.

## 6.0 Types of Prohibited Products and Services

Advertising **must not** promote any of the following:

- Pornography, adult services or industries, or companies involved in sexual exploitation of adults and/or children;
- Alcoholic drinks;
- Gambling;
- Payday loans, high interest loans and similarly speculative financial products;
- Tobacco and related products;

- Food and beverages that are considered to the detriment of public health; more specifically foods and drinks that are classed as 'junk food' and are high in fat, sugar or salt;
- Weapons, violence or anti-social behaviour of any description;
- Those that give undue publicity to inappropriate behaviour or lifestyles;
- Discrimination.

## 7.0 Content of Advertising

7.1 The Council, as a secular body, has to exercise careful judgement on whether to permit religious advertising. As the ASA states: "Religion and belief are potentially extremely sensitive subjects. References to religion in marketing communications, even humorous ones, have the capacity to cause serious offence."

7.2 The default position, therefore, is to remain neutral on matters of faith and belief and not accept advertising which contains specifically religious content. A distinction is drawn between religious advertising and adverts which may reference, for example, a religious festival, but is widely recognised as being celebrated by people of all faiths and none such as Christmas.

## 8.0 Style and Content

8.1 The Council is bound by duties and legal requirements pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, Highways Act 1980, Traffic Management Act 2004, the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) England Regulations 2007 and other legislation and applicable regulations currently in force.

## 9.0 Due Diligence

9.1 As a public body, the Council are committed to conducting business with honesty and integrity. As a publicly funded organisation and the residents of the Borough expect the highest standards. The reputation of the Council is of critical importance in establishing and maintaining trust and confidence within the local communities.

9.2 The Council therefore must exercise due caution about which businesses and organisations are worked with. Before a location is considered, there will be a period of due diligence to ensure the association with the businesses, organisations and individuals will not harm the reputation of the Council. The Council reserve the right not to sell space to businesses, organisations and individuals who we feel, after a process of due diligence, would harm our reputation through association.

9.3 Should any issue come to light after the advert has started to be displayed, we also reserve the right to terminate the relationship and require the advert to be withdrawn. Before doing so, we will speak to those concerned to investigate the issue and then make a decision.

9.4 The ultimate decision on whether to accept advertising or not rests with the Council and we reserve the right to decline offering advertising space to any company or organisation should we feel it necessary.

## 10.0 Disclaimer

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

**10.2** The Council will display a link to this advertising and sponsorship policy on any page of the website which carries advertising and an email link to ensure that customers with any concerns can raise them promptly and easily with the Council. The Council will respond in accordance with the complaints procedure, unless the issue requires urgent action to remove unsuitable content.

**10.3** The feedback captured from the advertising experiences will be used to review the policy as necessary.