


Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

Title of Report:	Sponsorship and Advertising Policy for West Suffolk	
Report No:	CAB/FH/15/018	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	31 March 2015
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Purpose of report:	The draft policy lays out the definitions, general principles and procedures for entering into agreements for sponsorship and advertising, so as to maintain propriety and transparency within the councils. This is an updated version of the previous St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC) policy, adopted in 2007. A new policy is needed because of moving forward with the shared services agenda and also because we are trying to behave more commercially in maximising the use of our assets.	
Recommendation:	It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that the Sponsorship and Advertising Policy for West Suffolk, as contained in Appendix 1 to Report No CAB/FH/15/018, be approved.	
Key Decision: (Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <u>do not</u> apply.)	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> Decisions which would result in any expenditure or reduction in expenditure of £25,000, if not specifically mentioned within the approved Revenue Budget or Capital Programme.	
<i>The key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This</i>		

<i>item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i>	
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an updated version of the previously adopted policy in SEBC produced in 2007. • There has been internal consultation with different council services on this document.
Alternative option(s):	<p>There were several options open to us:</p> <p>Do Nothing – This was not recommended as there would not be a policy covering all of West Suffolk.</p> <p>Open approach – A more open approach without safeguards is not recommended as this would risk non-compliance with the codes of conduct and advertising codes (See Appendix 1, section 2.4)</p>
Implications:	
<i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for income generation.
<i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will be managed within existing resources.
<i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will be managed within existing resources.
<i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The councils are permitted to accept appropriate sponsorship and to sell advertising space • Advertising Standards Authority standards should also be followed as noted in the new policy document and links to the appropriate guidance are referenced.
<i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken. Fairness and equality are fundamental to a sustainable society. This is reflected in the proposed policy.
Risk/opportunity assessment:	The purpose of the new policy is to highlight the income opportunity available from sponsorship and advertising. By not promoting the assets of the Councils there is a potential risk of cuts to services. On the other hand, should advertising or sponsorship be accepted in an uncontrolled manner there is the risk to reputation of the Councils.

Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
Loss of income opportunity	Medium	Transfer to commercial team and promote more rigorously	Low
Potential reputational damage	Medium	Centralise and consult prior to approval	Low
Ward(s) affected:		All Wards	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		<p>The current adopted sponsorship Policy document can be found here.</p>  <p>Adopted Sponsorship Policy 051207.doc</p> <p>The recently adopted fees and charges policy which mentions sponsorship can be found here http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Policies Strategies and Plans/upload/WSFeesAndChargesPolicy.pdf</p>	
Documents attached:		Appendix 1: Sponsorship and Advertising Policy for West Suffolk	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Current offer

- 1.1.1 The current sponsorship policy is considered outdated and is no longer fit for purpose as it takes a narrow approach. The councils' 'behaving more commercially' agenda has opened up more opportunities for sponsorship through other elements of the councils' business, which requires a broader approach. There is also no policy covering Forest Heath District Council so there is an opportunity for a revised policy to cover the whole of West Suffolk.

2. New Sponsorship and Advertising Policy

- 2.1 The new draft policy makes clear to potential advertisers and sponsors how their request will be dealt with. It will help avoid doubt and potential disagreements when dealing with future requests or approaches by either the sponsors or advertisers or by members of council staff.
- 2.2 The draft policy, attached at Appendix 1, lays out the proposed principles, definitions and procedures for adoption without which the council would be leaving itself exposed to fraud, error or loss of reputation in accepting any sponsorship and advertising. The draft policy also aims to increase transparency and accountability.
- 2.3 Attracting appropriate external funding will remain the responsibility of all frontline teams. However, the draft policy also includes a proposal to transfer central oversight and support for advertising and sponsorship activities from the councils' communications department to the commercial team, in order to seize the opportunity for income generation. Together, Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils have received around thirty thousand pounds in sponsorship income in 2014/2015 which includes notable sponsorship of benches in the parks and contributions towards the Bury St Edmunds Festival. By transferring this to the commercial team it is hoped that by highlighting the opportunities, income will increase in the year 2015/2016.
- 2.4 By taking the proposed actions, the aim is to drive a middle course between being commercial and light touch, and making sure the council staff behave impartially and as good stewards of public resources.