



Dorset Councils Partnership

Sponsorship Policy

The Dorset Councils Partnership serving North Dorset District Council, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council are operating in a challenging financial environment. This policy document forms part of the Partnership's commercialisation strategy in response to these challenges; and sets out the definition of "sponsorship" and the terms upon which sponsorship may be both sought and accepted by each of the sovereign Councils.

1. Definition

For the purposes of this policy, sponsorship is defined as: "an agreement between the Council and the sponsor, where the Council receives either money or a benefit in kind in support of an event, activity, campaign, facility, asset or initiative from an organisation or individual which in turn gains publicity or other benefits".

2. Objectives

- 2.1 To ensure that the Councils maximise opportunities to obtain commercial sponsorship for appropriate events, activities, campaigns, facilities, assets or initiatives whilst also offering sponsors attractive packages; providing value for money for both parties.
- 2.2 To ensure that the Councils' position and reputation are adequately protected in sponsorship agreements.
- 2.3 To ensure that the Councils adopt a consistent and professional approach towards sponsorship.
- 2.4 To ensure best value is obtained and provided in sponsorship arrangements.
- 2.5 To protect Members and Officers from allegations of inappropriate dealings or relationships with sponsors.

3. General Principles

- 3.1 Each Council will actively seek opportunities to work with local, regional, national and international organisations by identifying sponsorship opportunities of mutual benefit and which are in keeping with Corporate Visions, Values and /or Strategic Priorities.

- 3.2 Each Council will welcome all opportunities to work in such 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:
- (a) Influenced the Council or its Officers in carrying out its statutory functions.
 - (b) Been entered into in order to gain favourable terms from the Council in any business or other agreements.
 - (c) Aligned the Council with any organisation which conducted itself in a manner which conflicted with the Council's Corporate Vision or Values.
- 3.3 The Councils will retain the right to decline sponsorship from any organisation or individual or in respect of particular products that the Councils at their sole discretion consider inappropriate, offensive or is incompatible with the Councils' ethics.
- 3.4 Consideration for sponsorship will generally take the form of an opportunity for publicity and advertising, therefore raising the profile of the sponsor within the locality of each Council. The appropriate Council will agree with the sponsor the nature and content of the publicity and will retain the right to approve all advertising material. Each Council has a strong corporate identity and materials must not detract from this branding.
- 3.5 The Councils will at all times comply with its Contract Procedural Rules that form part of the Financial Regulations. New, innovative sponsorship proposals or those where there is only one possible supplier due to the type and circumstances of the opportunity may be given a contract for a period of up to 2 years at which point the Council may consider testing the market to gain best value.
- 3.6 All sponsors will operate within such legislation as the Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Equality Act.

4. Procedures

- 4.1 Details of sponsorship opportunities will be available via the Dorset for You Web site.
- 4.2 Before seeking sponsorship, Council Officers must consider the Sponsorship policy document and follow the Guidelines.
- 4.3 The Councils maintain contracts registers on the Dorset for you website. It is the responsibility of the Sponsorship negotiating Officer to ensure that the Partnerships Procurement Officer receives a copy of the completed agreement for publishing on this register.
- 4.4 Sponsorship bids and the associated undertakings shall be approved by the relevant Head of Service, Service Manager, Director or Portfolio /Brief holder (Where appropriate).
- 4.5 Sponsorship agreements must be referred to Legal and Financial Services for review prior to signing.
- 4.6 It is recommended that all potential sponsors are referred to this Policy.

5. Financial Procedures

- 5.1 Payment should be made in full prior to the commencement of the agreed sponsorship activities. Phased payments can be determined depending on the nature of the sponsorship package, value and length of the agreement. In this case, the first payment is to be of a higher proportionate amount.
- 5.2 It is the responsibility of the Sponsorship negotiating Officer to follow the respective Councils financial regulations. Should sponsorship be received in terms of goods or equipment, the agreement for such is also to be included on the contracts register. In instances where the value of the individual item is of £10,000 or above and is to be retained in Council ownership it is to be declared to Financial Services each year by 31st March so that it may be included in the Council's balance sheet.

6. Marketing and media relations

- 6.1 Media relations for all sponsorship agreements will be undertaken by the Partnerships Communications Team, unless otherwise agreed.
- 6.2 All media and publicity produced by the sponsor must be approved by the Communications Team before circulation.
- 6.3 The use of sponsors' logos and other branding must not interfere or conflict with the Council's own corporate identity.
- 6.4 The use of the Council's corporate identity on any sponsors' publicity must be discussed with and approved by the Communications Team.

7. Disclaimer

- 7.1 Acceptance of advertising or sponsorship does not imply endorsement of products or services by each or any of the Councils.
- 7.2 Any sponsorship accepted by the Councils 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 respective Council/s liable to prosecution or civil proceedings. The sponsor must fully and effectually indemnify the Council/s from and against all claims, costs or demands arising from the sponsor's activities.

8. Conflict of Interest

- 8.1 Council officers and members are required to declare in advance if they have any personal interests, involvement or conflicts of interest with any potential sponsors. In the event of a conflict of interest, that officer or member will take no part in the consideration of sponsorship with that particular organisation.

9. Policy Review

- 9.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

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