

City of Lincoln Council advertising policy

Background and general principles

City of Lincoln Council welcomes the opportunity to publicise information and products that may be of interest to its residents.

The council will generally accept paid-for advertising which does not conflict with our residents' living safe, healthy and economically independent lifestyles, and whose association will not bring City of Lincoln Council into disrepute.

Our basic principle is we will offer advertising opportunities through our available channels, such as residents' magazine, to generate income for the authority aimed at achieving best value for our residents.

A maximum level of advertising will be set for each channel and all income raised will be used to help the council achieve its savings targets.

As a local authority with specific duties and responsibilities we will always consider the type and nature of the advertising that is acceptable.

We will identify advertising clearly when and where it occurs, and make sure there is no suggestion City of Lincoln Council endorses the products or services advertised or that the advertiser can claim any special relationship with the council.

A maximum level of advertising will be set for each channel and intrusive advertising will be avoided.

All corporate advertising channels will be centrally managed, and all approaches for paid-for advertising should be made through the Communications Manager

This policy provides guidelines for the acceptance of all forms of advertising, both print and electronic.

Advertising opportunities and restrictions

The council is keen to maximise revenue from advertising, and so rather than define all specific permitted advertising we work on the basis that advertising

is permitted unless it falls into a number of prohibited categories: see following section – Acceptable products, services and advertisers

NB: Some forms of advertising may be acceptable at certain times but not at others e.g. organisations with current planning applications/contractors bidding for current tenders, organisations in financial conflict with the council or those businesses which the council may be prosecuting or seeking to prosecute.

Advertising will be subject to the Local Government Publicity Code with specific regard to advertising which is acceptable in the run-up to local or national elections, and to the Financial Services Authority.

All advertising presented must fall within the rules and guidelines laid down by the Advertising Standards Authority and comply with the British Code of Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing (full details to be found at www.asa.org.uk)

Some areas of the council accept free advertising from charities, partners and community groups. This may appear, for example, in community centres or neighbourhood newsletters. The staff responsible for these buildings / publications should work to this policy's terms and decisions on acceptable advertising.

Acceptable products, services and advertisers

City of Lincoln Council will generally accept advertising which does not conflict with our residents' living safe, healthy and economically independent lifestyles, and whose association will not bring the council into disrepute.

Furthermore, the council will not accept advertising where the product(s) advertised are viewed to be in direct competition with any of the council's charged services. This, for example, would include, but not be limited to, companies offering parking services in the city.

The council will ensure that advertising most clearly and closely associated with our activities seeks to complement our aims and objectives, and those of our key partners, and does not create confused, conflicting messages.

Advertising of foods and drink will be restricted to products and services that either support or are related to healthy behaviours. Healthy behaviours will be determined using current health and wellbeing guidance (www.nhs.uk).

The council reserves the right to refuse advertising for any reason. For example, goods and services we will not accept includes:

- High interest lending
- Tobacco/tobacco products
- Adult services (sex industry)
- Weapons or violence

- Gambling
- Alcohol
- Fast food

In addition we will not accept advertising which is designed to promote a particular political party, seeks to persuade residents of a particular religion or belief, or unjustifiably discriminates against specific individuals or groups.

The council will respond swiftly to any unauthorised advertising at any of its premises. For example, fly-posting is not an acceptable form of advertising and will not be permitted.

Prohibitions in this section may also include advertisers who appear to compete directly with a current council service/income stream and/or the local economy of the area.

In the event of dispute, final decisions will be made by a member of the council's Corporate Management Team (CMT). Similarly, any approaches from TV/media companies wishing to film the city council's activities must always be referred to the Communications team in the first instance and any final decision on the council's participation must be signed off collectively by CMT.

Selection and quality assurance

Local advertisers will be reviewed via trading standards consumer protection as far as this is practical.

We also reserve the right to remove advertising at short notice should the subject matter be likely to appear insensitive/cause offence, particularly but not exclusively in the light of local or national events e.g. natural disasters, missing children, etc.

Disclaimer

All advertising carried on City of Lincoln Council Lincoln websites and publications will carry the following disclaimer

"City of Lincoln Council does not guarantee the accuracy of any description or statement contained in any advertisement within this xxx, nor does it endorse any product or service advertised."

We will make reasonable efforts to ensure that only advertisements suitable for 'family viewing' appear through council channels with regard to images used or copy content. However the council does not control third party sites, content or products. Advertisers may have different use and privacy policies, for which we cannot accept responsibility.

We will display a link to this advertising policy on any page of our website which carries advertising and an email link so that customers with any concerns can raise them promptly with the council.

This policy does not extend to publications related to city council events but commercially produced by others.

Advertising opportunities available to the council will be monitored closely and this policy will be updated whenever significant new opportunities present themselves, especially in light of emerging technologies.

Advertising Rates

Advertising rates are set with regard to current market conditions and will be developed and set as part of the council's corporate annual fees and charges setting process. The advertising rates may be adjusted when and where applicable (with the approval of the relevant portfolio holder) to maximise income for the council without reducing revenue streams through becoming priced out of the local market place.