

Advertising and the Media

Effectively use the media and consider advertising for your campaign

The scope of advertising in local newspapers depends on the amount of money you can afford.

Many local papers have a levy or surcharge for items published within the first five pages, or on the right hand side of the paper, so consider this when budgeting for advertising.

Many candidates advertise their 'How to Vote' card with a photo in the local paper a week before voting.

Remember it is a competitive environment and that you may have sitting councillors who are well known to the media and the local community, which you hope to represent.

Many successful candidates have used the following formula when dealing with the media:

- Personally introduce yourself as a local candidate for the relevant ward. Make sure you leave them with the correct spelling of your name, your telephone number and your mobile telephone number, and a photo of yourself.
- Take any written information with you such as your campaign brochure and articulate your main platform. Ensure that there are only three to four key issues and be certain of your facts.
- Highlight your number one issue if you are with the journalist/editor.
- Issue media releases relating to your issues on a regular basis, BUT do not become a serial media release issuer. Pick the issues you most want to be heard on to avoid journalists regarding your media releases akin to junk mail.
- Utilise the 'Letters to the Editors' column, BUT do not become a serial letter writer, again pick your issues.
- Local radio may contact you because of articles published in the newspaper. When they telephone, you do not need to provide answers immediately. Ask them what they want to speak to you about and what their deadline is. If their deadline is within the next 30 minutes, tell them you will ring them back in 10 minutes. This gives you breathing space to think about what you are going to say.
- In all cases remember it is your interview and PLAN what you want to say!

Handy tips with press releases:

- Always introduce the person putting out the media release, never assume that the journalist will know who you are; e.g. "Candidate in the upcoming council elections for ... today said that ..."
- Once you have introduced yourself, then refer back to yourself by name; e.g., "The prospect of massive rate increases is dire," Mr Smith said.
- The opening sentence should always contain what the media release is about in one sentence if possible e.g. "Crime in Colac is still very high, despite the visible increase in police presence", John Smith said today.
- Try to answer the following questions in the first sentence of the release: Who, What, Where, When, How and Why.
- Try to answer all the questions any reasonable and inquiring person might ask. Also, try to pre-empt any claims or questions that may arise.

