Policy No: 11-2150-022

Website Maintenance and Requests for Separate Websites

Head of Power

Local Government Act 2009

Objective

The objective of this Policy is to establish a protocol for dealing with both requests to establish new websites and the maintenance of Council's web pages. That Protocol is aimed at:

- promoting the authenticity and authority of Moreton Bay Regional Council websites;
- optimising the accessibility of information and services;
- ensuring Council's corporate identity and branding remain consistent; and
- ensuring all of Council's websites comply with best practice and legislative requirements for usability and accessibility.

Application/Definitions:

Application:

This policy applies to Council's existing web environment as well as all requests for separate websites for various departments of Council and those organisations directly funded or coordinated through Council.

Definitions:

"Website Domain Name" - a recognisable and unique name forming part of, and used to identify, a website address. The website domain name forms part of the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) and tells a Domain Name Server where to forward a request for a web page, e.g. www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au

"Website" - a related collection of web pages, viewable using a web browser

"Sub-site" - a collection of web pages within a larger site and those pages have a common style and a shared navigation mechanism, e.g. a website that has different goals but needs to have the same design elements.

"Alias" - a "shortcut" facility that allows the user to go to a specific area of the website by entering a unique locator at the end of the address bar. It also enables a marketing campaign to be developed around a simple url, e.g. www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/christmas

"Social Media" - based largely of user-generated content, social media comprises primarily internet and mobile-based tools used for sharing and discussing information, e.g. MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, Slideshare, Blogs, Wikis, Twitter, LinkedIn

Policy Statement

It is Council's adopted policy position that all information relating to its core businesses should be provided through its official internet site. Further, the importance of Council's website and social media channels should not be diluted by the unnecessary removal of content to create ancillary websites/channels and Council's adopted "brand" should remain consistent at all times. Any proposal to depart from this adopted policy position would need to clearly demonstrate an overriding need in the interests of both Council and the community.

1.0 Creating a Separate Website and Registering a Website Domain Name

Council prefers the use of an alias and/or sub-sites to the creation of new websites.

However, if a new website is able to be justified, the request is to be forwarded to the Co-ordinator Online Services and must be supported by a complete business case. The Co-ordinator Online Services will compile and endorse each business case prior to submitting the business case to the Executive Management Team (EMT) for approval. Commissioning of new websites cannot commence until EMT approval of the business case has been received.

It is important to note that costs associated with registration of domain names, site forwarding and site development, if applicable, are the responsibility of the department requesting its creation.

2.0 Decommissioning a website domain name

It is Council's adopted practice to review all of its websites on an annual basis for viability, resourcing and cost effectiveness. That review is to be undertaken by the Information Management Manager in consultation with the Manager, Communications.

Council authorises the Co-ordinator Online Services in consultation with the Information Management Manager and Manager Communications to decommission websites in those instances where the annual review has indicated that the website is no longer relevant, accurate, viable or cost-effective.

Decommissioned websites are to be detailed and sent to EMT for noting on a quarterly basis.

3.0 Social Media

If a new social media channel is proposed, the request is to be forwarded to the Co-ordinator Online Services for consideration. Such a proposal is only to be progressed if it is supported by an appropriate business case that clearly demonstrates an overriding need in the interests of both Council and the community. The Co-ordinator Online Services will collate and endorse the business case and submit to EMT for approval.

Council's corporate website or other existing online channels are to remain the robust central hub for information exchange with social media viewed as ancillary spokes.

4.0 Content and Accessibility

Council is committed to making all of its web environments accessible from a diverse range of devices and operating environments and to all people including those with a disability. This is to be achieved through adhering to the W3C (World Wide Web Consortium) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines where possible and practical.

All content on the website and intranet must be reviewed for relevance, accuracy, viability, resourcing and cost effectiveness annually at a minimum.

Review Triggers

This Policy is reviewed internally for applicability, continuing effect and consistency with related documents and other legislative provisions when any of the following occurs:

(1) The related documents are amended.
(2) The related documents are replaced by new documents.
(3) Amendments which affect the allowable scope and effect of a Policy of this nature are made to the head of power.
(4) Other circumstances as determined from time to time by a resolution of Council.

Notwithstanding the above, this Policy is to be reviewed at least once every two years for relevance and to ensure that its effectiveness is maintained.

Responsibility

This Policy is to be:

(1) implemented by all officers and Councillors; and
(2) reviewed and amended in accordance with the "Review Triggers" by the Co-ordinator Online Services in consultation with the Information Management Manager and the Manager Communications.

Version Control

Council Resolution number	M/P 11-2541-2	Date	22.11.11

Related Links:
- Australian Government Information Management Office Web Publishing Guide
- Policy Directive - Creating or Decommissioning Council Maintained Websites – 11-2160-005