London Borough of Havering

Advertising and Sponsorship Policy

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Document Control

Sign off and ownership details

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Owner	Marcus Chrysostomou

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Version	Change	Date	Dissemination
0.1	Throughout	April	Public Health
1.1	None	April	Mayor's Office
1.2	Comments and agreement	September	Cabinet
1.3	2.3 (vi)	November	Public
1.4	Minor updates	September 2024	Public
1.5	Minor update	October 2025	Public

Introduction

Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to give guidance on the principles and procedures relating to any advertising or sponsorship carried out by, or on behalf of, Havering Council.

As the council manages contracts covering outdoor advertising, this policy makes clear the type and nature of advertising we will consider on our managed assets.

Policy summary
The policy aims to ensure that our advertising and sponsorship activity supports the council's corporate objectives e.g. taking a whole systems approach to obesity and that our position and reputation are adequately protected in advertising and sponsorship agreements.

The policy ensures that we adopt a consistent and professional approach towards advertising and sponsorship, that best value is obtained and provided in sponsorship arrangements including any arrangements made where we receive either money or a benefit in kind.

The policy also protects councillors and individual officers from allegations of inappropriate dealings or relationships with advertisers and sponsors.

Scope
The policy covers advertising on all of the council's assets including street furniture and billboards, printed and online publications and the Council's fleet.

Timescales
The policy will be permanent but will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Aims, objectives and outcomes
The policy aims to set the standard for advertising in the borough. Advertising will need to comply with the relevant industry codes as detailed in the policy and will not be accepted if it seeks to promote:

- Weapons, violence or anti-social behaviour of any description.
- Pornography and sexually explicit services and products.
- Loans and speculative financial products.
- Gambling products, services or organisations.
- Cosmetic surgery.
- Tobacco and related products, including e-cigarettes / vaping.
- Alcohol.
- Unproven health and weight loss products e.g. weight loss pills.

- Directly or indirectly, food and non-alcoholic drink which is high in any of fat, sugar and salt ('HFSS' products), according to the Department of Health and Social Care's Nutrient Profiling Model. (See Appendix 1 for further guidance).
- Products prohibited by the World Health Organisation's International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and resolutions, namely formula milk (including infant formula, follow-on formula, growing-up or toddler milks, infant milks marketed as a food for special purposes) feeding bottles, teats, related equipment or foods marketed as suitable for infants under six months of age.

Policy

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to give guidance on the principles and procedures relating to any advertising or sponsorship carried out by or on behalf of Havering Council.

1.2 The application of the principles of Havering's advertisement and sponsorship policy are context dependent and will at times require subjective judgements. These will be communicated to advertisers and sponsors as reasonably required.

1.3 The standards and procedures contained here are consistent with Havering Council's advertising and sponsorship objectives:

i. To ensure that our advertising and sponsorship activity support the council's corporate objectives e.g. taking a whole systems approach to obesity.

ii. To ensure that our position and reputation are adequately protected in advertising and sponsorship agreements.

iii. To ensure that we adopt a consistent and professional approach towards advertising and sponsorship.

iv. To ensure best value is obtained and provided in sponsorship arrangements, including any arrangements made where we receive either money or a benefit in kind.

v. To protect members and individual officers from allegations of inappropriate dealings or relationships with advertisers and sponsors.

1.4 Advertisements

i. For the purposes of this policy, advertising is defined as the following: "an agreement between Havering Council and the advertiser where we receive money for the placing of an announcement in our publications (including any produced by the Mayor in relation to their civic, ceremonial and fundraising role), on our website, our intranet and other

physical sites (including but not limited to: billboards, hoardings, printed materials and vehicles), from an organisation or individual for the act or practice of calling public attention to one's product or service or to raise awareness."

ii. This policy clarifies the standards for approval of advertisements.

iii. The regulation of advertising in the UK is the responsibility of the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA). The ASA applies the Advertising Codes [http://www.cap.org.uk/Advertising-Codes.aspx]. Any requirements listed herein are to be regarded as in addition to those required by the ASA UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising and Direct & Promotional Marketing (CAP Code).

iv. Havering Council values advertising revenue and will work to maximise this income stream.

v. The appearance of an advertisement on any council publication is not an endorsement by Havering Council of that company, product or service. In order to make this clear all publications with advertising should carry the 'Disclaimer Notice' (Appendix 1).

1.5 Sponsorship

i. For the purposes of this policy, sponsorship is defined as the following: "an agreement between Havering Council (including in relation to the Mayor's fundraising activities) and the sponsor, where we receive either money or a benefit in kind for an event, campaign, or initiative from an organisation or individual which in turn gains publicity or other benefits."

ii. This policy sets the terms upon which sponsorship may be both sought and accepted by Havering Council.

iii. We will actively seek opportunities to work with both local and national organisations by identifying sponsorship opportunities of mutual benefit and which are in keeping with our strategic priorities and core values. We welcome all opportunities to work in partnership.

2 Standards for approval of advertisements

2.1 Advertisements carried by Havering Council will not conflict with:

i. Relevant ASA Advertising Codes.
ii. Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.
iii. Equality Act 2010.
iv. The Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority publicity. [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recommended-code-of-practice-for-local-authority-publicity]
v. The council's policies, core values or the stated aims and priorities as set out in the Borough Plan.
vi. Additional required standards as outlined below [2.2-2.3].

2.2 Advertising will not be accepted if it promotes any of the following:

i. Weapons, violence or anti-social behaviour of any description.
ii. Pornography and sexually explicit services and products.
iii. Loans and speculative financial products.
iv. Gambling products, services or organisations.
v. Cosmetic surgery.
vi. Tobacco and related products, including e-cigarettes / vaping.
vii. Alcohol.
viii. Unproven health and weight loss products e.g. weight loss pills.
ix. Directly or indirectly, food and non-alcoholic drink which is high in any of fat, sugar and salt ('HFSS' products), according to the Department of Health and Social Care's Nutrient Profiling Model. (See Appendix 1 for further guidance).
x. Products prohibited by the World Health Organisation's International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and resolutions, namely formula milk (including infant formula, follow-on formula, growing-up or toddler milks, infant milks marketed as a food for special purposes), feeding bottles, teats, related equipment or foods marketed as suitable for infants under six months of age. (See Appendix 2 for further guidance).

2.3 Advertising will not be accepted if, in Havering Council's opinion, it is reasonably objectionable on the grounds that it:

i. does not comply with the law or incites, provokes or condones someone to break the law (particularly crime, violence and antisocial behaviour).

ii. discriminates on the grounds of age, race, colour, national origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender or disability.

iii. poses a health and safety risk. For example, as a result of flickering or other visual imagery in the case of digital media.

iv. could reasonably be seen as likely to cause pressure to conform to an unhealthy body shape, or as likely to create body confidence issues, particularly among young people.

v. originates from a prohibited organisation, namely

a. Political organisations, lobby and campaign groups.
b. Manufacturers and distributors of tobacco products and / or alcohol.
c. Payday lenders.

vi. is inappropriate to display because it is of a sensitive, indecent or offensive subject matter and/or content. For example:

a. It is of a racial, religious or political nature.
b. It affects public support for a political party or a person identified with such a party.
c. It is likely to cause widespread or serious offence to reasonable members of the public on account of the nature of the product or service being advertised, the design of the advertisement, its wording or by way of inference*.
d. It in some way touches on socially contentious issues, contains messages which could be regarded as contentious or a subtext which could cause offence*.
e. It can be considered as mocking of a group or citizens.
f. It depicts adults or children in a sexual manner or displays nude or semi-nude figures in an overtly sexual context.
g. It depicts or refers to indecency or obscenity or uses obscene or distasteful language.

vii. Conflicts with Havering council in so far as it:

a. appears to compete directly with a council service or objective, income stream and/or the local economy of the area. Examples are out-of-borough further and adult education colleges, shopping centres and adoption/fostering services.
b. associates the council with organisations in financial or legal conflict with the council.
c. contains negative references to Havering Council services.

viii. is unacceptable for some other substantial reason which Havering Council will identify and explain as reasonably required.

*Advertisements which promote tolerance, discourage prejudice, and are in line with the Equality Act 2010, will not normally be disapproved on the grounds that they may cause offence or relate to socially contentious issues. Likewise neither will adverts which intend to promote the right to life, liberty or security of the person, or which reasonably promote causes which are not party political.

3. Procedures for advertisement approval

3.1 All contracts for corporate advertising will be managed centrally through the Communications Service to ensure that the best terms are negotiated, that standing orders are not breached and to ensure continuity should the person originally party to the agreement change jobs or leave.

3.2 The Communications Service will need to see and approve:

i. All advertising before any Havering Council publication goes to press or any advertisement is displayed in any part of the council or the borough
ii. The layout, content and placement of any advertising features or supplements.

3.3 For advertising placements that are sold via digital exchanges, the Communications Service will need to approve permitted advertising categories.

3.4 In all circumstances the Head of Communications retains the right to disapprove any advertisement or editorial related to advertisements in line with Section 2 of this policy.

3.5 Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement of products and service by Havering Council. In order to make this clear all publications with advertising or sponsorship should carry the 'Disclaimer Notice' (Appendix 3).

4. Standards for approval of sponsorship

4.1 Sponsors carried by Havering Council must operate within all relevant legislation and guidance including:

i. UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising and Direct & Promotional Marketing (CAP Code).
ii. Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity
iii. The Business Protection from Misleading Marketing Regulations 2008.
iv. The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.
v. Equality Act 2010.

4.2 Havering Council cannot put itself in a position where it might be said that a partnership has, might have, or may be thought to have:

i. influenced the council or its officers or members in carrying out its statutory functions in order to gain favourable terms from the council in any business or other agreement.

ii. aligned the council with any organisation which conducts itself in a manner which conflicts with our aims or values.

4.3 Havering council is not able to enter into agreements for sponsorships which:

i. are in direct conflict with the council's advertising policy.

ii. are, at the sole discretion of the Communications Service, considered inappropriate in regard to the organisation, individual or in respect of particular products.

iii. involve companies who produce or promote predominantly HFSS foods and / or drinks (according to the Nutrient Profiling Model) including sports drinks, fruit juices and smoothies.

iv. in accordance with the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes, involve companies who produce or promote infant formula, other infant milks, bottles and teats, and foods marketed as suitable before six months of age.

4.4 Sponsorship materials must:

i. not detract from Havering's strong corporate identity
ii. in their nature and content, be consistent with advertising policy as set out in Section 2

5. Procedures for sponsorship approval

5.1 Before seeking sponsorship, council officers and the Mayor must consider this policy document and follow the guidelines provided. It is recommended that all potential sponsors are referred to this policy

5.2 In accordance with our procurement policy and procedures we may advertise a sponsorship opportunity to potential sponsors.

5.3 Sponsorship agreements must be referred to Legal Services for review prior to signing. Before agreeing to any sponsorship opportunity all financial costs must be identified, including the sponsorship equivalent value of any sponsorship in kind.

5.4 All sponsorship bids shall be approved by the Head of Communications and the appropriate Cabinet member.

5.5 The Communications Service will agree with the sponsor the nature and content of the publicity and will retain the right to approve all advertising material in line with the advertising policy.

5.6 Acceptance of sponsorship does not imply endorsement of products and service by Havering Council. In order to make this clear all publications with sponsorship should carry the Disclaimer Notice in Appendix 3

Appendix 1

Guidance for decisions regarding advertising including high fat, salt or sugar food and non-alcohol drinks.

1. Definition of high fat, salt, sugar foods

1.1 Consistent with the Transport for London advertising policy effective 25 February 2019 the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) UK Nutrient Profiling Model (NPM) has been adopted by Havering Council to define high fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) foods.

1.2 Any revisions to the NPM will be reflected in the advertisement decisions made by the council.

1.3 Explanatory guidance for calculating the Nutrient Profile score for food and drink can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nutrient-profiling-model. It is the advertisers' responsibility to verify the HFSS status of any product featured in their advertisement.

2. Decision Table

Advertisement Content	Outcome	Notes
Only non-HFSS products featured	Approval	Advertisement must also meet standards for approval of advertisements; Section 2.
Only HFSS products featured	Rejection	
A range of products are featured, including some which are HFSS	Rejection	A meal or range e.g. meal deal will only be accepted if all products or food items are non-HFSS. Applies across all settings (restaurants, delivery services etc.)
No food or non-alcoholic drink is featured directly, but the advertisement is from a food and non-alcoholic drink brand.	Approval only if the advertisement promotes healthier options, with no HFSS product included.	Inclusive of ads with brand logos only, directions to a brand's physical, mobile or online presence, or promotional advertising.

Food or non-alcoholic drink is shown incidentally or implied	Probable rejection if the food or non-alcoholic drink can be reasonably considered to be HFSS	Includes cases in which the depicted food is made from non-food products.
Food and non-alcoholic drink is referenced in text or through graphical representations	Possible rejection if the advertisement can be reasonably considered to promote HFSS food	Includes cases in which references do not relate to a specific product which can be assessed for its HFSS status.
Indirect promotion of HFSS food and/or drink	Possible rejection if the product does not carry a prominent product descriptor to help differentiate it from non-compliant products	Includes cases where a product is non-HFSS but falls within a category covered by DHSC's recommendations for sugar, calorie or salt reduction. Children should not usually be shown in advertisements for products which are compliant in a category which is covered by DHSC's recommendations for sugar or calorie reduction
Portion sizes	Rejection if portion sizes displayed are not deemed to encourage healthy eating.	The NPM model is based on nutrients per 100g of a product, rather than recommended portion size. Advertisers should always ensure that they promote products in portion sizes which encourage healthy eating. For products that are non-HFSS but fall within a category covered by PHE's recommendations for sugar or calorie reduction, the product should be displayed as a single portion.

3. Interpretation of guidelines

If advertisers and agencies are unsure about how to interpret any aspect of these guidelines, we would encourage them to get in touch with Havering Council so that we can work together on a solution and avoid submitted copy requiring changes or being rejected

Appendix 2

Guidance for decisions regarding breastmilk substitutes

1. Definition

The World Health Organisation (WHO) International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent resolutions[1,2] ("Code") applies to the marketing of breastmilk substitutes and related practices. These are defined in the following guidelines:

1.1 No advertising of any breast-milk substitutes or related products

1.1.1 Breast-milk substitutes refers to "any food being marketed or otherwise presented as a partial or total replacement for breast milk, whether or not suitable for that purpose".

1.1.2 Products include:

- Infant formula
- Follow-on formula
- Growing up or toddler milks
- Formulas for infants with special medical or nutritional needs
- Baby foods marketed for infants under 6 months
- Bottles and teats

1.2 No promotion of complementary foods before they are needed

1.2.1 Complementary foods refers to "any food whether manufactured or locally prepared, suitable as a complement to breast milk or to infant formula, when either become insufficient to satisfy the nutritional requirements of the infant. Such food is also commonly called "weaning food" or "breast-milk supplement"".

1.2.2 It is recommended that babies are exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months. Advertising of complementary foods to infants under 6 months is deemed inappropriate.

1.3 No processed food and drink marketed for children under 3 years

1.3.1 Processed commercial foods and drinks marketed for young children undermine public health advice for children to have minimally processed and unprocessed foods and drinks.

2. Context

Havering Council is committed to achieving and maintaining UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative accreditation, and must therefore work within the WHO Code and resolutions.

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[1] World Health Organisation (WHO) International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes 1981 and subsequent resolutions

[2] World Health Organisation (2008). The International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes – Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix 3

Disclaimer Notice for advertisement or sponsorship

‘Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of advertisements contained in the publication, Havering Council cannot accept any liability for errors and omissions. Havering Council cannot accept any responsibility for claims made by advertisers and their inclusion in [name of publication] should not be taken as an endorsement by Havering Council.’

Applicability

The policy applies to all council officers and councillors including the Mayor.

For the purposes of this policy, sponsorship is defined as the following: “an agreement between Havering Council (including in relation to the Mayor’s fundraising activities) and the sponsor, where we receive either money or a benefit in kind for an event, campaign, or initiative from an organisation or individual which in turn gains publicity or other benefits.”

Ownership and authorisation

This policy has been developed by the communications and public health teams.

The owner is the communication service and the authorising body is Cabinet.

Implementation

The Advertising and Sponsorship Policy does not have a mandatory training requirement or any other training needs.

It does however require widespread cascade and adherence.

Monitoring and review

The policy will be monitored by the Communications Service and will be reviewed annually.

Further information

For further information contact darren.bindloss@havering.gov.uk