

APPENDIX C

ADVERTISING ON THE INTRANET AND WEBSITE

Background:

The Council already has advertising and sponsorship on roundabouts, car park signs and boards around the town, through an agreement with CP Media. The Council offers advertising and sponsorship opportunities across its current assets in line with a policy

<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/business/advertising-and-sponsorship-on-council-assets/corporate-advertising-and-sponsorship-framework>

This policy is designed to protect the Council and gives the Council the right to refuse advertising from brands with which it does not wish to be affiliated.

Officers have investigated the idea of advertising on the Council's intranet and website by partnering with a supplier that specialises in advertising on public sector intranets and websites, and this was discussed with members of the Commercial and Investment Working Group in October 2025.

The model is based on adding lines of code onto the Council's platforms, technology which is provided free of charge. The code then creates banners, which can be added to the top of the intranet and website and on side panels if requested. The advertising is based on cookie tracking.

There are three different types of advertising available:

- 1) **Own advertising** – The Council can place its own adverts on the intranet and website, for example for events, commercial services etc. There is no cost to the Council.
- 2) **Local advertising** – The Council can sell advertising to local businesses, at no additional cost. This can easily be packaged up with the events sponsorship that the Council offer.
- 3) **National advertising** - The Council can pick from a pool of blue-chip companies and progress with their preferred categories. It is possible to remove advertising on sensitive pages. It should be noted that if visitors to the website do not accept cookies, they do not see the external advertising. For this type of advertising, a percentage of the revenue is taken by the supplier.

Proposal:

It is proposed that in the first instance advertising can be trialled on the intranet, where it can be used as a safe space to test and gain feedback. If successful, it is recommended that advertising on the website is piloted. Intranet advertising alone is estimated to deliver a minimum level of income of £4,200 in year one, building to £8,400 per in year 2, if advertising on the website is then approved.

Risks	Mitigation
Inappropriate companies wish to advertise	As per advertising policy, the Council can refuse
Visitors to the website are not happy with being faced with external advertising	By not accepting cookies on the website, visitors can stay advertising-free
Income is lower than projected	Option to stop the advertising at any time

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the intranet advertising is piloted. Intranet advertising will then be reviewed at the Commercial and Investment Working Group in July 2026 and then, subject to Member agreement, website advertising will be implemented.