



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The objective of this policy is to provide Councillors and officers an overview of social media and outline the Council's position on various aspects of their use.

Social media is a term for websites based on user participation and user-generated content. They include social networking sites and other sites and has the following characteristics: -

- Covers a wide variety of formats, including text, video, photographs, audio.
- Allows messages to flow between many different types of devices, PCs, phones and tablets.
- Involves different levels of engagement.
- Allows communication take place in real time or intermittently.
- This policy applies to the staff who operate social media on behalf of the Council such as Facebook and Twitter. Individual Councillors are not permitted to have control over the or social media pages.

Some pitfalls of social media are that information shared can travel quickly and be viewed by anyone in the world. Responses can be sent instantly which can result in unintentionally inflaming a situation.

Social media allows the Council the opportunity to communicate with a wider audience and sometimes the harder to reach groups.

The Parish Clerk is the designated Council owner of the Council Social Media channels and only the Clerk and other authorised officers can disseminate information. The Facebook pages are attached to the Staffs' personal Facebook page, so they are, therefore, authorised to access the page during working hours when necessary.

If any bad language or inappropriate personal comments are placed on the Facebook page, then these should be removed as soon as possible.

Staff are given delegated powers to operate the pages on behalf of the Parish Council and to only use them, at all times, for the benefit of the Council in: -

- communicating with the residents
- providing updates of what the Council is engaged in
- to advertise Parish Councillor vacancies
- to advertise community events taking place in the Parish and surrounding areas
- If posting information generates any contact from the press the Clerk is authorised to respond to them, providing factual information.

- Ensure that any personal or sensitive information is handled in line with the Data Protection Act.
- Start discussions and ask questions to encourage interaction.
- Upload images and videos

Staff must never: -

- use the page in a way that would bring the Council into disrepute.
- put their own personal views on issues.
- give out people's personal details such as home addresses and telephone numbers.

Councillors must not: -

- use the Facebook page for canvassing purposes
- use their own facebook page in a Councillor capacity although they can comment with a disclaimer ensuring it is clear it is their own personal opinion and not necessarily the Councils.
- Must not test or insult other members of the Council

The Council reserve the right to remove comments received on Facebook that: -

- Contain abusive, obscene, indecent, or offensive language, or link to obscene or offensive material.
- Contain swear words or other sorts of profanity.
- Are completely removed from the topic of conversation or are not relevant to the item posted on the wall.
- Constitute spam or promote or advertise products, except where it is for an event, publication or similar item that has direct relevance to the subject of discussion.
- For serious and/or persistent breaches of the moderation policy, the Clerk has the right to prevent users from posting further comments.