

External Social Media - Council Policy

Effective Date	<i>5 February 2014</i>
Policy Owner	<i>Executive Services- Communication and Marketing Manager</i>
Link to Corporate Plan	<i>Strategic Theme 1: Effective and Inclusive Governance</i>
Review Date	<i>July 2018</i>
Related Legislation	<i>Local Government Act 2009 Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i>
Related Documents	<i>Social Media Standard Work Procedure Media Relations - Council Policy Community Engagement - Council Policy Information Privacy - Council Policy Electronic Information and Communication Systems - Organisational Policy Data Security and Storage - Organisational Policy Staff Code of Conduct Social Media Strategy</i>

Policy Version	Approval Date	Adopted/Approved
1	05/02/2014	Ordinary Meeting of Council
2	20/07/2016	Ordinary Meeting of Council

*This policy may not be current as Council regularly reviews and updates its policies. The latest controlled version can be found in the policies section of Council's intranet or Website. **A hard copy of this electronic document is uncontrolled.***

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1. PURPOSE

Online communication and social media tools are important communication channels that enable Council to engage directly with the public. This tool informs the public about services and programs allowing two-way conversations with the community.

Social media plays an important role in ensuring Council has a voice within our communities by allowing us to join conversations when and where they're happening. Unlike conventional communication channels, Social media is live and immediate which is particularly critical in the event of an emergency.

The purpose of this policy is to provide an overarching position in respect to Council's commitment to Social Media and its expectations of Council representatives to use it effectively in both an official and personal capacity.

The intention of this policy is to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity when dealing with user-generated content.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, Councillors, contractors and consultants working for Council.

3. POLICY

3.1 Purpose of Using Social Media

Council's strategic communication goals in selectively using approved social media sites are to:

- Increase Council's access to residents and improve the accessibility of Council communications;
- Support traditional media by broadening its reach and scope;
- Allow Council to be more proactive in developing strong relationships with community members;
- Reach targeted specific audiences on services, events, projects, policies and activities;
- Provide effective, fast communication channels during a crisis or emergency; and
- Expand Council's community engagement opportunities.

3.2 Policy

3.2.1 Council representatives using social media must:

- Only disclose publically available information. No comment will be made on social media sites regarding confidential, private or legal matters;
- Only use corporate imagery such as logos, official Council photographs and videos on advice from the Communications and Marketing Department;
- Ensure that no copyrighted or trademarked material is published without permission;
- Ensure that information posted online is not illegal, libellous, discriminatory, defamatory, abusive or obscene; and
- Ensure that information posted online does not infringe the mandatory Code of Conduct for staff or any other Council code or policy.

3.2.2 When using Council social media sites, authorised employees will:

- Only post content that is generally expected to be relevant and of interest to followers;
- Respond to enquiries within 24 hours (Monday to Friday);
- Keep messaging simple and engage in conversations when appropriate; and



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Link to more information on Council's website where possible. If external websites are required to be linked this must be authorised by the Communications and Marketing Department.

3.2.3 Monitoring social media:

- The Customer Contact Centre, in consultation with the Communications and Marketing Department, will monitor content posted on all official social media outlets to ensure adherence to the social media policy for appropriate use, messaging and consistency in branding. Comments from social media users will be monitored and moderated where possible.

3.2.4 Council staff use of social media:

- Council recognises that staff may wish to use social media in a private and personal capacity;
- Staff should be aware they are personally responsible for content they publish on any form of social media; and
- Staff should take measures to ensure their personal comments cannot be mistaken for the official view of Council or impact on that staff member's ability to perform their role within Council.

