

ETHICS AND ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Wednesday, 10 November
2021**

6.00 pm

**Committee Rooms 1-2, City
Hall**

Membership: Councillors Adrianna McNulty (Chair), Liz Bushell (Vice-Chair), Thomas Dyer, Gary Hewson, Jane Loffhagen, Laura McWilliams, Ric Metcalfe, Christopher Reid and Loraine Woolley

Substitute member(s): Councillors Bill Bilton and Rebecca Longbottom

Independent Person(s): Roger Vine

Officers attending: Democratic Services and Steve Welsby

A G E N D A

SECTION A	Page(s)
1. Confirmation of Minutes - 11 January 2021	3 - 4
2. Declarations of Interest	
Please note that, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, when declaring interests members must disclose the existence and nature of the interest, and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) or personal and/or pecuniary.	
3. Social Media Policy	5 - 26
4. Work Programme	27 - 28

This page is intentionally blank.

- Present:** Councillor Adrianna McNulty (*in the Chair*)
- Councillors:** Liz Bushell, Geoff Ellis, Ric Metcalfe, Christopher Reid, Thomas Dyer and Loraine Woolley
- Independent Person(s):** Roger Vine

45. Confirmation of Minutes - 13 January 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2020 be confirmed.

46. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

47. Local Government Association Model Code of Member Conduct

Graham Watts, Democratic and Elections Manager:

- (a) Presented a report which provided the Ethics and Engagement Committee with an opportunity to consider the approved version of the Local Government Association Model Code of Member Conduct.
- (b) Reported that the Local Government Association undertook a review of the Model Code of Conduct following a report by the Committee for Standards in Public Life in 2019 which had been previously considered by the Ethics and Engagement Committee.
- (c) Explained that consultation on the new Model Code of Member Conduct had been open for ten weeks from 8 June 2020 to 17 August 2020 and that all members of the City Council had been given an opportunity to provide a response.
- (d) Reported that the City of Lincoln Council's Code of Member Conduct had recently been updated to add more clarity and better represent harrassment and bullying, aspects that had been added to the new Model Code.
- (e) Reported that guidance to support implementation of the new Model Code of Member Conduct had not yet been published, however, it was felt prudent to present the approved version to the Ethics and Engagement Committee at this stage.
- (f) Reported that initial feedback from a number of Monitoring Officers across the country was that the new Model Code of Member Conduct was not as detailed or prescriptive as the local Codes of Member Conduct they already had in place at their respective authorities.
- (g) Invited feedback from members in respect of the City Council's Code of Member Conduct and whether it required any amendments in light of the new Model Code of Member Conduct.

- (h) Invited suggestions from members as to how training on the Code of Member Conduct should be facilitated.
- (i) Invited questions and comments from members.

Councillor Thomas Dyer welcomed the review by the Local Government Association and the revised Model Code of Member Conduct. He felt that the Ethics and Engagement Committee should review the City Council's Code of Conduct on an annual basis.

Councillor Dyer reflected on reference within the Local Government Association's document to a social media policy and suggested that this should be incorporated into the City Council's Social Media Policy.

Appendix C to the Local Government Association's document made reference to best practice recommendations set out in the original report by the Committee for Standards in Public Life. Councillor Dyer suggested that work be undertaken to ensure the City Council met the standards associated with each of the best practice recommendations, and that the outcome of that piece of work be reported back to the Ethics and Engagement Committee.

In relation to remote meetings and associated conduct, Councillor Dyer asked whether procedures and protocols could be reviewed to ensure that the same standards expected at physical meetings were in place when meeting in public on a remote platform.

Councillor Ric Metcalfe agreed with Councillor Dyer's sentiments. In respect of training, he was content with annual training led by the Council's Monitoring Officer as opposed to any e-learning which may be available.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the new Local Government Association Code of Member Conduct be noted.
- (2) That no amendments to the City of Lincoln Council's Code of Member Conduct be recommended at this stage but that the Code be reviewed annually by the Ethics and Engagement Committee.
- (3) That officers be requested to undertake a review of the City Council's Code of Conduct and associated procedures against the best practice recommendations set out in Appendix C of the Local Government Association Model Code of Member Conduct.
- (4) That procedures and protocols relating to remote public meetings be reviewed to reflect the same standards as physical public meetings.
- (5) That training on the Member Code of Conduct continues to be facilitated by the Council's Monitoring Officer on an annual basis.

SUBJECT:	SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
DIRECTORATE:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
REPORT AUTHOR:	STEVEN WELSBY, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the proposed amended Social Media Policy, which incorporates aspects such as the council accounts available for use, employee wellbeing, the best use of social media, personal accounts and councillor use of social media.

2 Background

- 2.1 Following the initial draft Social Media Policy coming to committee in January 2020, and its delayed return due to the global Covid-19 pandemic, the committee’s comments (see minutes of 01/20 meeting) have been considered and incorporated where possible and appropriate.

The main changes involve the separation of the policy into three, covering general advice, advice for councillors and advice for staff, in order to be clearer as to whom each set of advice and guidance is aimed at.

In light of recent events, the advice related to personal privacy and safety has also been strengthened to provide something more directive.

- 2.2 Social media has grown at a rapid pace and has changed the way we communicate. It can enable users to interact with each other by sharing information, opinions, knowledge, and interests.

There are many social media channels and digital platforms now available which offer great opportunities to communicate council messages and enable two-way communications with residents, visitors, and businesses.

Corporate websites are often no longer the first port of call when people wish to ask a question, so we have to think beyond traditional forms of communicating online to meet the needs of residents and stakeholders.

- 2.3 Social media can help our customers get the information they need quickly which, in turn, can reduce the need for customers to call us or visit us, which can benefit us both.

Social media can enable us to work more effectively by delivering important and timely messages, seek opinions, correct misconceptions and by sharing messages across partnerships.

Messaging can be done instantly and can be far-reaching, which can bring many benefits but also a number of risks. Accounts can take a significant time to create

and manage in an effective manner.

And when social media goes wrong it can go wrong spectacularly and cause significant damage to the organisation, the brand, and our reputation.

The new Social Media Policy lays out how City of Lincoln Council will use social media, outline responsibility for channels, state our procedures and help staff and councillors manage risk.

3 Organisational Impacts

3.1 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

3.2 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

3.3 Equality & Diversity implications

The potential for any Equality and Diversity issues to arise has been considered and it is concluded that no issues relating to this, nor the Human Rights Act 1988 are relevant.

These issues have been taken into consideration in the writing of this report.

4. Strategic Priorities

Professional, High Performing Service Delivery

This underpins our ability to achieve our strategic priorities.

Let's Reduce inequality

5. Recommendation

5.1 That the new Social Media Policy be recommended to Executive for approval.

Is this a key decision?	No
Do the exempt information categories apply?	No
Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?	No
How many appendices does the report contain?	One
List of Background Papers:	None

Lead Officer: Steven Welsby, Communications Manager
Telephone (01522) 873318

This page is intentionally blank.



CITY OF
Lincoln
COUNCIL

Social Media Policy

Document Control

Organisation	City of Lincoln Council
Title	Social media policy
Author – name and title	Steven Welsby – Communications Manager
Owner – name and title	Steven Welsby – Communications Manager
Date	27/10/2022
Approval date (by Council/ Executive)	
Filename	
Version (V0.1 is draft and then to V.02 V1.0 is the final version)	V.092
Next Review Date	

Document Amendment History

Revision	Originator of change	Date of change	Change description
1	SMW	12/02/20	Incorporate comments from committee
2	SMW	19/10/20	Strengthening of personal safety messaging

In this document:

Section one: Information for all - communications governance

Section two: Information specific to councillors

Section three: Information specific to all staff

Section one: Information for all - communications governance.

Contents:

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Policy statements**
- 3. Principles**
- 4. Scope**
- 5. Communications**
- 6. Accounts**
- 7. One account**
- 8. Code of local authority publicity**
- 9. Authority**
- 10. To block or not to block**
 - a. Twitter**
 - b. Facebook**
- 11. Photography and video**
- 12. How the council will ensure the best use of its social media**
- 13. Emergency planning and business continuity**
- 14. Use of social media in the recruitment process**
- 15. Working with the communications team**

1. Introduction

Social media continues to grow at a rapid pace and has changed the way individuals and organisations communicate.

It is a broad-brush term used for online tools, websites and interactive media that enable users to interact with each other by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of social media channels and digital platforms now available which offer great opportunities to communicate council messages and enable two way communications with residents, visitors and businesses.

Corporate websites are often no longer the automatic first port of call when people wish to ask a question. This means we have to think beyond traditional forms of communicating online to meet the needs of residents and stakeholders.

Done well, social media can help our customers get the information they need quickly which, in turn, can reduce the need for customers to call us or visit us, which can benefit us both. Social media is seen as quick, easy and accessible – and can be used on the move, 24 hours a day in a matter of seconds.

Social media can enable us to work more effectively by delivering important and timely messages, seek opinions, correct misconceptions and by sharing messages across partnerships.

Messaging can be done instantly and can be far-reaching, which can bring many benefits but also a number of risks. Accounts can take a significant time to create and manage in an effective manner and should not be undertaken lightly.

Social media is also not a silver bullet, nor a quick win to deliver service objectives or priorities.

And when social media goes wrong it can go wrong spectacularly and cause significant damage to the organisation, the brand and our reputation.

This policy lays out how City Of Lincoln Council will use social media, responsibility for channels, procedures and risk management.

In addition, in sections two and three, it guides use by both councillors and staff.

2. Policy statements

City of Lincoln Council will, corporately, use social media channels only where it is relevant, as part of multimedia promotional and communications activities, where we can offer professional staffing and monitoring and where it meets council communications priorities. Social media is an integral part of the communications tool kit.

City of Lincoln Council-related social media channels and activities are only permitted with the specific agreement of the communications team and if they comply with the above criteria. To ensure no audience split there should, in the main, be only one corporate feed on each channel.

Personal accounts and postings by staff and councillors should comply with the relevant codes of conduct and the council's disciplinary policy. This consideration is even more important if they are identifiable as members of council staff or councillors whether on the same digital channel, an alternative or offline.

3. Principles

Accounts should follow these six guiding principles:

- **Be respectful** – set the tone for online conversations by being polite, open and respectful. Use familiar language, be cordial, honest and professional at all times.
- **Be credible and consistent** – be accurate, fair, thorough and transparent. Encourage constructive criticism and deliberation. Make sure that what you say online is consistent with your other communications.
- **Be honest about who you are** – it's important that any accounts or profiles that you set up are clearly and easily identifiable. Be clear about your own personal role.
- **Be responsive** – make an effort to share what you know. Offer insights where appropriate and put people in touch with someone who can help if you cannot. Respond to questions and comments in a timely manner.
- **Think twice** – think carefully about all your social media posts. Once published it will be too late to change your mind. Follow these rules and seek further guidance if you need it.
- **Be concise** – people shouldn't have to search for the main message you are sharing. Put it front and centre. Use plain English and keep sentences short, snappy and relevant.

4. Scope

This policy applies to City of Lincoln Council as a corporate body with guidance for councillors and staff also included.

5. Communications

Social media is a communications and engagement tool. After many years of using social media, the communications team is best placed to advise on what can work and what doesn't, in the same way as any other communications medium.

Staff wouldn't speak to the media without communications team advice and consent, however the reach and potential damage from a misstep with social media can be far more wide-ranging.

Social media is also now a valid source of news for traditional media outlets, which increases potential reach of any posts we issue and, in turn, placing us into the media arena where many staff are not equipped or skilled.

The communications team is uniquely placed to not only bring the expertise required to decide on whether social media is a suitable medium but also to manage channels to ensure good use, two way communication and to protect the council's reputation.

6. Accounts

The council currently has the following accounts managed and run corporately by the communications team.

These are all monitored during office hours and, where appropriate (for example, during Lincoln Christmas Market or when a particular story is 'breaking') during evenings and weekends.

Councillors and members of staff may wish to 'follow' or 'like' these accounts so that they can keep up-to-date with council business and comment or share on their own accounts where appropriate.

Twitter

- @lincolncouncil – our corporate account
- @lincolnelc – our Lincoln Christmas Market account

Facebook

- www.facebook.com/TheCOLC - our corporate account
- www.facebook.com/LincolnChristmas - our Lincoln Christmas Market account

Instagram

- @lincolncouncil – our corporate account
- @theLincolnChristmasMarket – our Lincoln Christmas Market account

LinkedIn

- City of Lincoln Council

YouTube

- City of Lincoln Council

The following accounts are run by individual officers or teams

Twitter

- @Lincoln_CC_BC – our Building Control account

Facebook

- www.facebook.com/City-Of-Lincoln-Building-Control - our Building Control account
- www.facebook.com/HartsholmeCP - the account for Hartsholme Country Park
- www.facebook.com/City-Of-Lincoln-Council-Resident-Involvement - account for our resident involvement team

Facebook groups

- www.facebook.com/groups/lincolnsocialresponsibility

7. One account

Latest expert advice from the Local Government Information Unit is that councils should have one corporate account on each major social media platform.

With this in mind, we run the aforementioned accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. However, the communications team also horizon scans and monitors trends in social media to ensure any upcoming apps and tools are considered as possible ways to engage with residents and stakeholders.

8. Code of local authority publicity

Social media communication by local authorities falls under the code of local authority publicity which, among other things, lays out regulations around how local authorities are allowed to communicate.

It also includes restrictions on local authority publicity in the run up to elections – commonly known as purdah or pre-election period – and all social media channels identifiable as related to the council must adhere to the code at all times.

Councillor and staff accounts are not bound by the same code but personal accounts and postings should comply with the relevant codes of conduct and the council's disciplinary policy.

9. Authority

As the city council, we are considered by residents and the media as an 'authority' and that when we post we have the facts correct and can legally post what we do. This means the

council may be liable if information is posted from one of its accounts which does not comply with the legal framework. Therefore postings by those who are not aware of legal ramifications of public information are particularly risky.

10. To block or not to block

On most social media channels there are options to mute or block people, or to hide or delete comments where appropriate.

When dealing with inappropriate or aggressive comments on social media, the following approaches will be taken by the city council (approach will depend on what a resident has posted and decisions will be made on a case by case basis by the communications team).

Councillors and staff should consider taking the same approach with their own accounts, to avoid becoming embroiled in matters which could reflect on them. If the matter being discussed relates to City of Lincoln Council, it would be appropriate to make the council's communications team aware of the matter.

10a. Twitter

Aggression and rudeness

- Answer the comment with a factual and professional response and request that the inappropriate behaviour ceases.

Libel or reputationally damaging comments or images about named council officers (an issue which should always be referred on to the city council's legal services department)

- Instant blocking with no warning and report to Twitter

Abuse / racism / equalities / swearing

- Hide

10b. Facebook

Low level abuse / aggression / hints of racism or equalities

- Hide
- Ignore – depending on replies from others

High abuse / libel or reputationally damaging comments or images about named council officers / repeated low level abuse

- Delete comment with no warning
- Block with no warning
- Report to Facebook

11. Photography and video

As with other communication mediums, use of good photography and video are an essential part of social media communications.

Unfortunately, as with print media, poor or inappropriate imagery can have a negative impact on the council's reputation or the reputation of individual members or members of staff.

The council will only use professional, stock or well-taken appropriate images for social media feeds – the same as any other communications activity – and only use professional or well-taken appropriate video (speak to communications, who can assist with this).

On council or councillors accounts, any staff or residents in photographs or video will be made fully aware that it is, or could be, used on social media and give permission before anything is posted. No image or video should be posted without specific verbal consent from all parties.

Written consent is required by a parent or guardian for any person under the age of 16 before photography or video can be published.

Any imagery, be it video or photo, taken in a public place, i.e. a general image of the high street, where members of the public are walking, does not need permission.

Any photo or video posted without the permission of all parties will be required to be removed.

GDPR regulations and copyright laws apply.

12. How the council will ensure the best use of its social media

To ensure the best use of the social media, the council **will**:

- have one main corporate channel for each platform
- talk to residents and customers through its channels
- be transparent and honest in social interactions
- have a personality and be human – we will keep dry, 'corporate speak' to a minimum to enable engagement
- where appropriate, answer questions quickly and honestly
- be responsible
- share appropriate and helpful content from other organisations where appropriate

- monitor accounts during usual working hours as a minimum
- use hashtags appropriately and strategically
- ask questions and seek feedback
- consider social media accounts as customer service channels
- listen to responses
- adhere to HR policies
- adhere to the code of local government publicity
- work across service areas to provide an excellent customer experience
- always have more than one person responsible for an account
- only create accounts because we should, not because we can
- investigate any issues which arise outside of traditional office hours
- ensure information is accurate, and double check prior to posting, with any mistakes rectified in a timely manner
- evaluate the outcome of posts, seeking detail on interactions and reach

The council **will not**:

- just broadcast or talk at people – social media is social and two way communication is required
- continue with poor performing accounts
- assume social media is ‘free’; social media is time consuming and officer time costs the organisation
- assume social media is ‘easy’ or will look after itself; social media requires an investment of time, enthusiasm and energy
- leave accounts unattended for more than a week
- be inappropriate in any way
- post content which would intentionally embarrass the council, councillors or members of staff
- post content which is of a purely internal matter unless expressly requested to do so
- build accounts and hope people will come – they won’t
- make derogatory comments about officers, councillors or the council as a whole

13. Emergency planning and business continuity

Social media will be the initial main form of communication with residents in case of a civil emergency or major incident in the city.

This will be through the main corporate accounts and not through any other council or personal account.

Social media will form a key part of the communications plan in case of emergencies.

14. Use of social media in the recruitment process

Unless it is in relation to finding candidates (for example, if an individual has put their details on social media websites for the purpose of attracting prospective employers), the HR department and managers will not, either themselves or through a third party, conduct searches on applicants on social media.

This is because conducting these searches during the selection process might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics (for example, sexual orientation or religious beliefs) played a part in a recruitment decision. This is in line with the organisation's equal opportunities policy.

15. Working with the communications team

Anyone who wishes to undertake work and engagement online through social media should contact the communications team for assistance and advice.

The communications team will consider all requests and advise on the most appropriate action.

The communications team can be contacted through communications@lincoln.gov.uk or by calling 01522 873318.

Section two – councillor specific information

Social media can be a useful tool for councillors. It can help you gain feedback on proposals and communicate information about your activities.

Social media is always on, so it is advised that you consider setting personal limits and establishing your own routine, and remember that you are subject to the council's code of conduct when using social media.

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and many more have all become everyday communications tools for councillors and the people they represent. The potential is huge and social media allows you to be innovative and responsive as well as providing links to useful sources of information or sign-posting to other organisations.

The following is some advice and guidance which can be used to guide your use of social media while acting in your official capacity.

1. Councillor use of social media

- In any personal online biography, it should be made clear that the views are those of the councillor in question and not necessarily the view of the council.
- Councillors should look to set out a response policy, such as "I welcome questions via email" and an engagement policy, such as "abusive content will be removed."
- For personal safety, as well as identity security, you should give serious consideration to whether or not you share personal information, images of friends and / or family.
- It is also advisable not to include details such as personal phone number, home address, details of family members and vehicle details.
- You are personally responsible for the content you publish. It is important that you are confident of the nature of the information you publish.
- If you comment about your role as councillor online you will be deemed as acting in your official capacity and any conduct will fall within the members' code of conduct.
- Social media must not be used in a way that might lead to a complaint that you have breached the city council's Code of Conduct for Councillors
- It is advisable that councillors have separate social media profiles for their role as a city councillor and for their private life
- Councillors are responsible for any content they publish on any form of social media. Publishing or allowing to be published (in the form of a comment) an untrue statement about a person which is damaging to their reputation may incur a libel action for which they would be personally liable; no indemnity from the council would be available
- Councillors must not use the city council's logo, or any other council related material on a personal account or website, nor should they refer to themselves as a councillor
- Social media sites are in the public domain, subject to privacy settings, so it is important councillors ensure they are confident of the nature of the information

they publish. Once published, content is almost impossible to control and may be manipulated without consent, used in different contexts, or further distributed

- Do not provide references for individuals on social or professional networking sites as this will create a legal liability
- Councillors should look to make use of privacy settings if they don't want their social media to be accessed by the press or public. We encourage councillors to read the terms of service of any social media site accessed and make sure they understand the confidentiality/privacy settings
- Councillors should not disclose any other persons' personal details such as home addresses and telephone numbers on social media. Any personal or sensitive information should be handled in line with the city council's Data Protection policies. Safeguarding issues are paramount because social media sites are often misused by offenders. Safeguarding is everyone's business – if councillors have any concerns about other site users, they have a responsibility to report these
- Councillors should not publish or report on meetings which are private or internal (where no members of the public are present or it is of a confidential nature) or exempt reports (which contain confidential information or matters which are exempt under the provision of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)
- Copyright laws apply online. Placing images or text from a copyrighted source (e.g. extracts from publications or photos) without permission is likely to breach copyright. Councillors should avoid publishing anything they are unsure about or seek permission from the copyright holder in advance
- Councillors should be aware of their own safety when placing information on the internet and should not publish information which could leave them vulnerable
- Do not, in your role as councillor, use social media to promote personal financial interests
- Be aware that the higher your profile as an elected member, the more likely it is that you will be seen as acting in your official capacity when commenting on social media
- Do tolerate disagreement - some comments may not align with your own. Accept this and do not get bogged down with 'difficult' users.
- Remember social media isn't always a reflection of real life and that most people on social media are nothing like that in real life!

Section three: Information specific to all staff

1. Employee wellbeing
2. Personal accounts
3. Personal use of social media at work
4. Excessive use of social media at work
5. Disciplinary action over social media use

1. Employee wellbeing

People on social media are not always nice.

The council has received abuse on social media with council staff (in general), individuals and councillors being insulted.

Insults are used, tone can be aggressive and accusations are frequent. People behave, and verbalise, online and on social media, in a way they would not necessarily do in person or on the phone.

Involvement in social media with responses like this can be demoralising, frustrating and upsetting.

The council understands the toll this can take on staff, and managers of staff regularly using social media for work purposes should ensure there are regular opportunities for staff to undertake other work offline.

Managers should also ensure that staff are appropriately trained to manage accounts professionally despite any abuse or negative feedback received, and support is in place during difficult periods as there would be if the abuse was verbal, on the phone or face-to-face. Consideration should also be given as to whether any such incident requires reporting under the Corporate Health & Safety Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

To mitigate risks to staff, no one single staff member should be responsible for any account. There should always be another member of the team who has access to and editorial rights over the channels used. This also ensures business continuity.

2. Personal accounts

Staff are welcome and encouraged to have personal accounts on social media and there are lots of positive reasons to do so, including:

- Following the council – as an employee you can find out more about what the council is up to across all departments as well as events and activities you may have missed on internal channels
- Hearing about things first – social media is often now where the news breaks first including, sometimes, council news
- Joining in with the buzz – local activities can create a real buzz online, whether about the council or not and knowing our local communities and what they are talking about online is never a bad thing
- You don't have to speak – you don't have to post your views on anything or everything, you can just listen to others by following them and reading what they have to say
- We can help set you up – if the idea of a tweet or following someone is a giant step into the unknown, the communications team is happy to offer advice
- You don't have to say you work for the council on your feed, and it is recommended that you don't to avoid any negative impacts – it is up to you.

Top tips for personal accounts:

- Use your common sense - don't write anything you wouldn't say to your friends or post pictures you wouldn't want your friends and family to see
- Consider your privacy settings carefully so as to avoid any negative impacts on you from the wider general public
- Don't be rude, abusive, bullying or anything else which could bring the council, or you personally into disrepute, even if heavily provoked as this could easily fall into a conduct issue
- If commenting on a council issue, keep it factual, positive and non-personal
- Block or unfollow people who are rude, abusive, bullying or otherwise insulting
- Don't use the council's logo or an image including the council's logo as a profile image – you will look like an official council spokesperson and could get quoted by the press
- Do follow the council and retweet or repost anything you find interesting or is good news – even if you only do that for tweets related to your team it helps spread the word of all our successes
- Don't engage the trolls – trolls are exactly what they sound like and lurk on social media ready to leap on things people say. Always best to ignore them
- Choose your 'friends' carefully – if you are in a sensitive position as an employee or in a politically restricted post, best not to follow or post on political issues, especially local ones (this doesn't apply to councillors)
- Have regard to the member code of conduct and the member / officer code as detailed in the constitution
- Remember social media isn't always a reflection of real life and that most people on social media are nothing like that in real life!
- Remember and be aware of the LGA's code of publicity, especially during pre-election period – this can be found on City People and government websites
- Please consider the implications of stating who your employer is on your social media profile as doing could potentially result in abuse and comments you make may be deemed to be coming direct from the council itself.

- Do not use your own social media account(s) for any council business at all. Your personal life must be kept separate from your work. This is for your own safety and wellbeing. You must comply with the Council's Regulatory of Investigatory Powers Act Policy and the Guidance on Using Social Media which can be found on Netconsent.
- This sets out when it might be appropriate to use the council's social media accounts to investigate potential legal proceedings, and how to do it. If you have any questions about this, please contact the legal services or communications team.
- Any approach relating to the council or council work on personal social media accounts should be referred to the communications team who can advise on appropriateness of any response.

3. Personal use of social media at work

Employees are allowed to access social media from the organisation's computers or devices at certain times, if the sites are enabled. Employees who are not responsible for a council social media account must limit their use of social media to their official rest breaks such as their lunch break.

The organisation understands that employees may also wish to use their own computers or devices to access social media while they are at work. Again employees must limit their use of social media on their own equipment to their official rest breaks.

4. Excessive use of social media at work

Employees should not spend an excessive amount of time while at work using social media.

They should ensure that use of social media does not interfere with their other duties. This is likely to have a detrimental effect on employees' productivity.

5. Disciplinary action over social media use

All employees are required to adhere to the social media policy.

Employees should note that any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

Serious breaches of this policy, for example incidents of bullying of colleagues or social media activity causing serious damage to the council, may constitute gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal.

Ethics and Engagement Committee Work Programme 2021/22

10 November 2021

Topic	Matter for Consideration	Outcome
Social Media Policy	To consider the proposed amended Social Media Policy, which incorporates aspects such as the council accounts available for use, employee wellbeing, the best use of social media, personal accounts and councillor use of social media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider the proposed amended Social Media Policy and to consider whether to recommend it to the Executive for approval.
Work Programme	The Committee's work programme is agreed on an ongoing basis in consultation with the Chair and the Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To agree the work programme. ▪ To consider the arrangements for the next meeting.

10 January 2022

Topic	Matter for Consideration	Outcome
Code of Conduct: Cases Review	To examine national developments of relevance to the Members' Code of Conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To note the issues raised and consider a suitable response if required.
Member Induction Programme	A member induction programme will be developed for any newly elected members following the City Council elections in May 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider the proposed content of the member induction programme
Work Programme	The Committee's work programme is agreed on an ongoing basis in consultation with the Chair and the Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To agree the work programme. ▪ To consider the arrangements for the next meeting.

28 February 2022

Topic	Matter for Consideration	Outcome
Code of Conduct: Cases Review	To examine national developments of relevance to the Members' Code of Conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To note the issues raised and consider a suitable response if required.
Work Programme	The Committee's work programme is agreed on an ongoing basis in consultation with the Chair and the Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To agree the work programme.▪ To consider the arrangements for the next meeting.