

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

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