

# **WEST MOORS TOWN COUNCIL**



## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

**Adopted by the Council on 18.05.2017**

**Reviewed: 11.07.2019**

**Reviewed 25.05.2023**

## **Social Media Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

The aim of this policy is to set out a code of practice to provide guidance to Town Councillors and council staff in the use of online communications, collectively referred to as social media.

Social Media is a collective term used to describe methods of publishing on the internet. This Policy covers all forms of social media and social networking sites which include (but not limited to):

- The Town Council website
- Facebook, LinkedIn, Myspace, Instagram and other social networking sites
- Twitter and other microblogging sites
- YouTube and other video clip and podcast sites
- Blogs and discussion forums

### **Use of Social Media**

The use of Social Media will not replace existing forms of communication. The use of social media will be used:

- To enhance communication.
- To communicate with more people, including more young people.
- To provide information for people who can't get to the Council offices
- To promote and provide positive publicity for West Moors.
- To receive residents' views and issues.
- To provide an alternative way for residents to communicate their views, issues and questions, bearing in mind that some are more comfortable communicating online
- To promote two-way communication and consultation.
- To share information from other councils, community groups and charities.
- To use for fund raising activities for Town Council projects that enhance community facilities

### **The Policy**

The Council appoints the Clerk and the Assistant to the Clerk along with one/two named Town Councillors as administrators (where social media sites allow). They will be responsible for posting and monitoring the content ensuring it complies with the social media policy.

The administrators will have the right to remove any posts or content that includes:

- Obscene, racist or abusive content
- Personal attacks, insults or threatening language
- Potentially libellous statements
- Any material in violation of any laws including copyright
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Commercial promotions and spam

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Sending a message/post via a social media site will not be considered as contacting the council for official purposes and we will not be obliged to monitor or respond to requests for information through these channels.

Information that is published should be factual, fair, thorough and transparent.

### **Responding to comments through social media**

When working online, we will

- Monitor the social media environment during office opening hours only (10am to 1pm, Mon, Tue, Thurs and Fri)
- Not become embroiled in lengthy dialogue/discussions
- Remain corporate and professional at all times
- Provide simple directions to correct information
- Be proactive and engaging
- Remove comments/posts if they are deemed inappropriate by the administrators.

### **Responsibilities of Councillors**

When participating in social media councillors must be mindful of the Code of Conduct and its principles based on selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Councillors

- Will not be involved in 'official posting' but are encouraged to promote the pages.
- Will only publish information that is already known to be in the public domain, any other information will require prior approval of one administrator.
- Must not present personal opinions as that of the Town Council
- Must not present themselves in a way that might cause embarrassment to the Town Council
- Will not post content that is contrary to the democratic decisions of the Town Council
- Will not post controversial or potentially inflammatory comments
- Will not engage in personal attacks
- Will not use official Town Council social media sites for personal or political purposes
- Will set appropriate privacy settings for the social media site being used.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 2/3 years by the Finance and General-Purpose Committee or earlier if deemed necessary which will recommend any changes to the Council.

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