



LITTLE MARLOW PARISH COUNCIL

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Resolved at the Council Meeting 18th July 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

The Policy provides guidelines for the use of Social Media by Little Marlow Parish Council (“**Council**”) Members, Officers and Employees.

2. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

- 2.1. This Policy covers its use of the Council’s Web Site, bulk email, Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp Communication. No other social media platform is to be used by the Council.
- 2.2. It is the responsibility of the Clerk of the Council to maintain the Council’s Social Media presence.
- 2.3. Notwithstanding, Members may use whichever social media platform they deem useful to interact with Parishioners and other stakeholders with respect to issues within the Parish. However, they may not represent the view of the Council unless a decision has been made, when they should refer stakeholders to such decision.
- 2.4. If a Member receives specific contact intended for the Council, that Member should report this to the Clerk of the Council.
- 2.5. It is the aim of the Council’s use of Bulk email, Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp to disseminate information. Wherever possible this should link to the Council’s website which should be considered the trusted and up to date source of information.
- 2.6. Council Officers and Employees should not engage in discussion, debate, or negotiation with other Social Media users on behalf of the Council.
- 2.7. Information disseminated via social media should include the Clerk’s email address to provide for feedback directly to the Council.
- 2.8. Where social media posts and email include a reference to any documentation, a link to the document on the Website should be used. Documents should rarely be included as attachments to posts. This allows for a “master” version of the any document to exist and be referenced, and to be updated or corrected over time.

3. PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

- 3.1. The Council’s website, www.littlemarlowparishcouncil.org (the “Website”), is the only website that the Council hosts and is maintained by the Clerk, assisted by designated Members.
- 3.2. The Website hosts, among other things, information on the Council’s history, boundary, policies, Members, meetings, accounts, publications, facilities and assets as well as providing news and information on current projects, planning applications and events within the Parish.
- 3.3. The Website also acts as a portal for Parishioners and other Stakeholders to report issues such as fly tipping or graffiti and contact the Council with general queries. The Clerk should report all contact that the Clerk considers important, or where issues are unresolved, to the Council at its next meeting and handle all requests as soon as it practical.
- 3.4. The Council will endeavour to ensure that all items, material, and content on the Website are accurate and in good faith. It will maintain an up-to-date Website, with any changes to key information to be reflected as quickly as possible.

- 3.5. The Website should be considered the source of factual information for the public such as meeting agendas, minutes including decisions, formal notices, Member disclosures and other Council information that is required to be publicly shared.

4. BULK EMAIL

- 4.1. The Council does not intend to regularly disseminate email via bulk email services, but when used the Council would adhere to all relevant GDPR requirements and best practises.

5. TWITTER & FACEBOOK

- 5.1. The Council is established on the social media groups Twitter and Facebook. The accounts are to be used by the Clerk to disseminate information to users that follow the Council's account.
- 5.2. It is not expected that the Council will respond to messages and queries on each platform. The Clerk's email address should be clearly displayed for users to use to if required.
- 5.3. Where comments are provisioned for on Council posts, the reserves the right to remove posts or comments that do not meet our guidelines, as set out below.
- 5.4. The Council may undertake to follow or connect with individuals or groups present on the platforms it uses. If the Council does engage with individuals or groups via social media it does not imply that the Council necessarily endorses them or supports their activities.

6. WHATSAPP

- 6.1. The Clerk of the Council should maintain a WhatsApp account and be a member of such community based groups within the Parish that the Clerk deems useful in order to maximise the dissemination of information throughout the Parish ("Community Groups"). This may include regional groups and organisations which have approved the Council as a member.
- 6.2. The Clerk should maintain a WhatsApp group for all Members and ensure that all Members understand its use (the "Councillors' Group").
- 6.3. The Clerk should post to the Community Groups important information relating to publications, meetings, news and events. All posts should first be sent to the Councillors' Group to ensure Councillors are aware of what is being sent to their relevant communities. All posts should include the Clerk's email address.
- 6.4. The Clerk may respond to simple technical or logistical queries but should not engage in debate or negotiation with other users. The Clerk may refer users to individual Members to offer most detailed responses, or to documentation on the Website.

7. MONITORING ACCOUNTS

In the event that the Council allows for comments on its social media pages, it would expect that comments posted will:

- 7.1. be polite and relevant,
- 7.2. not be repetitive,
- 7.3. not promote political parties,
- 7.4. not publicise personal information of those posting or others,
- 7.5. not advertise specific products or services,
- 7.6. not be unlawful, libellous, threatening, obscene or offensive.