

Waltham Parish Council Social Media Policy

1. Introduction

Waltham Parish Council recognizes the importance of social media as a means of engaging with the community, sharing information, and promoting transparency. This policy outlines the principles and guidelines for the use of social media by the Council, its members, and employees.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that social media is used responsibly, respectfully, and effectively to enhance communication between the Parish Council and the residents of Waltham.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors, employees, and any individuals authorised to post on behalf of Waltham Parish Council on official social media accounts, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other relevant platforms.

4. Official Accounts

- The Council will maintain official social media accounts for sharing updates, announcements, and relevant community information.
- Only designated administrators approved by the Council may post on official accounts.
- Comments and direct messages will be monitored, and inappropriate content will be addressed accordingly.

5. Acceptable Use

- Posts should be factual, informative, and relevant to the Council's work and the local community.
- Respectful engagement is required; offensive, discriminatory, or defamatory content will not be tolerated.
- The Council will not engage in political debates or support any political party via social media.

6. Councillor and Staff Use of Personal Social Media

- Councillors and staff should ensure that personal social media use does not bring the Council into disrepute.
- When discussing Council matters, it must be made clear that views expressed are personal and do not represent the official stance of the Council.
- Confidential information must not be shared.

7. Public Interaction and Moderation

- Constructive feedback and discussions are encouraged; however, abusive, misleading, or inappropriate comments will be removed.
- The Council reserves the right to block users who persistently violate guidelines.

- Complaints or official matters should be directed through the proper Council channels rather than social media.

8. Data Protection and Privacy

- Personal data must not be shared without consent.
- Social media administrators must comply with GDPR regulations and Council data protection policies.

9. Breach of Policy

- Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action for employees or review under the Councillor Code of Conduct.
- Any misuse of official accounts will be investigated and appropriate action taken.

10. Review and Amendments This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to reflect changes in social media trends and Council requirements.

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Approving committee: Full Council

Date of meeting: 6 May 2025

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Supersedes: Facebook Policy 2016

Policy effective from: 5 May 2026

Date for next review: May 2027