



RHAYADER TOWN COUNCIL SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION POLICY

Introduction and Scope

Social media is a blanket term applied to a range of online multimedia tools that are used for creating content and two-way communication. They can be accessed via your Smartphone, PC, Laptop, Tablet or Smart TV. Social media accounts are free of charge and can be set up quickly and easily from an Internet page.

This Policy is intended to help Councillors and employees make appropriate decisions about the use of social media such as social networking websites, forums, message boards, blogs or comments on web-articles such as X formally known as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

Used correctly they are a powerful tool and provide extensive opportunities to communicate with the community. The Council recognises the importance of the internet in shaping public perception of the Council and the services it provides within the community.

The Policy outlines the standards expected of all Councillors and employees when using social media.

Responsibility for implementation of the Policy

The Council has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this Policy. It has nominated three Councillors to control and maintain the Council's own Social media presence. Currently these councillors are: J. Stuart, R. Thomas, and C. Evans.

All Councillors and employees are expected to comply with this policy, to operate within the scope of the Code of Conduct and not take any actions that could bring the Council into disrepute. The rules and guidelines outlined in this Policy relate to the conduct of business in an official capacity, however, councillors and staff should also consider the impact any personal comments may have on the reputation of the council.

Rules and Guidelines for using social media when acting in an official capacity

When using social media acting in an official capacity, Councillors and employees are expected to abide by the following rules:

- Do not upload, post or forward a link to any abusive, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory or defamatory content.
- A post may be deleted if it perpetuates discrimination of protected characteristic, these can include but are not limited to; Religion or belief, race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marital status or gender reassignment.
- If anyone feels they have been harassed or bullied or are offended by material posted or uploaded by a colleague they should inform the nominated Councillor immediately
- Never disclose commercially sensitive, personal, private or confidential information. If unsure if the information falls within any of these categories, it should be discussed with the nominated Councillor.
- Do not upload, post or forwards any content belonging to a third party unless you have the third parties consent

- Before including a link to a third party website, check that any terms and conditions permit this
- When making use of a social media platform, read and comply with its terms of use.
- Be open and honest, but be mindful of the impact your contribution might make to peoples perceptions of the Council.
- You are personally responsible for any content you publish on social media platforms.
- Don't escalate heated discussions, try to be conciliatory, respectful and quote facts to lower the temperature and correct misrepresentations.
- Don't discuss colleagues without their prior approval
- Always consider others privacy and avoid discussing subjects that may be inflammatory for example religion or politics. Remember that although it is acceptable to make political points or canvass votes via your own social media accounts, this is not permissible if commenting on behalf of the Council.
- Do not make comments that are politically motivated

Rhayader Town Council monitors its social media pages and reserves the right to remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Policy or any applicable legislation.

Serious misuse of social media by a Councillor or employee will be investigated and if deemed to be a breach of the Code of Conduct or Gross Misconduct may lead to further action may be taken.

Social media etiquette

Social media allows people great freedom in how they communicate and express themselves. To help ensure everyone is able to equally benefit from social media sites we as a council will abide by the following principles:

- We will tell the truth
- We will write deliberately and with accuracy
- We will acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly
- We will preserve the original post, using notations to show where we have made changes so as to maintain the integrity of our publishing
- We will never delete a Council post, although an individual poster could delete their own post.
- The Council can delete to repost correct information where there is an error such as an incorrect link, providing no one has liked or commented on it
- We will not delete comments unless they do not meet the requirements of this policy
- We will reply to comments when appropriate, and do so promptly
- We will strive for high quality with every post – including basic spellchecking
- We will stay on topic
- We will, if disagreeing with other opinions, do so respectfully
- We will link to online references and original source materials directly
- We will disclose conflicts of interest
- We will keep private issues and topics separate from work issues and topics

Policy Review

This Policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation or any changes made by the Council
- Following any issues or concerns raised with the Council
- In all other circumstances, annually.

Last review August 2025