



Social Media Policy

Context

Introduction

1. Social media is the term commonly given to online tools which allow people to interact and engage with each other and organisations in some way – by sharing opinions, knowledge, content or interests.
2. Increasing numbers of people are using social networking and content sharing sites such as Facebook Twitter, LinkedIn, Yammer, Flickr, YouTube and Instagram (this is not an exhaustive list). Facebook alone has 38 million users in the UK (as of March 2012)

Purpose

3. The purpose of this policy is to:
 - Respond to the increasing public use of social media as a way to communicate
 - Establish a corporate approach, standards and guidance on the use of social media
 - Further the Council's strategic vision, including promotion of key campaigns, projects and events
 - Oversee how the Council communicate messages to the public, while maintaining its public duties
 - Uphold the reputation of the Council and enhance the image of Nottinghamshire

Scope of this policy

4. This policy is designed to cover Nottinghamshire County Council's use of social media where the content, information, or services are being provided by, or on behalf of, the Council.
5. It also extends to participation on social media sites not managed by the Council where:
 - Contributions are posted directly in a professional capacity (such as contributing to a professional forum)
 - a contribution is by someone who identifies themselves as an employee, Elected Member or any other person employed or contracted either directly or indirectly by the Council or working on the Council's behalf
6. Contributions covered by this policy include, but are not limited to, text, photographs and video.
7. This policy does not cover personal use of social media by employees, Councillors, or other representatives of the council. These are covered in the code of conduct (section D35, appendix 1 paragraphs 31 and 42), or the Members code of conduct. Using personal social media accounts on Council equipment is covered by the Council's email and internet policy (section 5.5)

Principles and Commitments

8. The Council will use social media in a safe, appropriate, and purposefully way to engage and interact with the public, stakeholders, opinion formers, the media and employees in support of the Council's strategic vision and key policy objectives.

9. The Council will abide by any relevant or applicable laws, terms, and conditions, so that the County Council is not exposed to risks.
10. Council use of social media must be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Social Media Protocol, IT Security Policy and Equality and Diversity Policy
11. Use of social media sites will at all times be consistent with the County Council's duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults, in accordance with relevant statutory requirements and service specific protocols.
12. During the course of their work, employees using social media sites for business purposes must maintain political neutrality and not indicate individual political opinions.
13. The reputation and / or business of the County Council, service users, partners or others connected with the County Council must not be brought into disrepute through use of social media sites.
14. Council social media accounts will only be authorised by the Council's Communication and Marketing service with approval from the relevant Corporate Director.
15. The Council will accept no liability for an individuals' participation on social media sites, whether in a professional or personal capacity. Participants are personally accountable for any contributions they make.

Key actions to meet the commitments set out in the policy

16. The Council's Communications and Marketing service will maintain the Social Media Policy
17. The Council's Communication and Marketing service will promote and maintain the Social Media Protocol.
18. The Council's Communication and Marketing service will maintain a register of all authorised social media accounts.
19. The Council's Communication and Marketing service will manage Council-wide social media accounts on the most popular social media sites.
20. The Council's Communication and Marketing service will provide a six-monthly report to Policy Committee on social media usage