

**REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL****SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AND PROCEDURE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider the introduction of a social media policy and procedure at Nottinghamshire County Council.

**Information and Advice**

2. Currently there is a range of social media activity across the Council and this has witnessed significant increase in the number of followers over the past 18 months.
3. The Council uses a range of social media platforms to communicate its own messages and campaigns, including:
  - @NottsCC, @NottsZone, @Nottslibraries, and @GertrudeSavile on Twitter
  - Nottinghamshire, Libraries, A453 Campaign, Visit Sherwood , Rufford Country Park, and Registration Services on Facebook
  - A dedicated Council YouTube channel
  - Flickr photo sharing for events (such as the beacon celebration).
4. Most of these are managed by Communications and Marketing. Where services are managing social media, Communications and Marketing have joint access.
5. In the last 12 months the followers of the Council's main twitter account has risen from 2,800 to over 7,000. The Council has a total of just over 9,600 followers across its twitter accounts. The Council managed Facebook pages have just over 4,000 fans.
6. There is currently a lack of control and consistency in the Council's approach to social media. Without coordination and a centralised process, the Council is left at risk of complaints and legal challenge. This leaves the Council exposed and its reputation and corporate identity are also at risk.
7. The introduction of a policy would resolve these issues.
8. A social media policy and procedure would have the following benefits for the Council:
  - Uphold the Council's reputation and corporate identity
  - Further the Council's strategic vision and support its priorities (by facilitating communication messages)

- Provide a framework and control measures
  - Establish a corporate approach and standards (including best practice)
  - Ensure compliance with legislation, industry codes and other Council policies (e.g. Corporate Identity Policy)
  - Safeguard the image and environment of the county
10. A draft social media policy is included as **Appendix 1** and a social media protocol is included as **Appendix 2** for consideration. This would be supported by the following documents (see background papers):
- A social media risk assessment
  - The code of conduct
  - The E-mail and internet policy

### **Other Options Considered**

12. The following Council services have been consulted as part of the development of the draft policy: Policy; Legal Services; HR, and ICT. All are supportive of the need to establish a framework for social media.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

13. To secure control, consistency and co-ordinating.
15. To mitigate the risk of complaints or legal challenge.
16. To safeguard the Council's reputation and corporate identity.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

17. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) It is recommended that Policy Committee approves the introduction of a policy for social media.
- 2) It is recommended that Policy Committee notes the importance of social media as highlighted in the presentation.
- 3) It is recommended that the Council's Communication and Marketing service will provide a six-monthly report to Policy Committee on social media usage

### **Councillor Kay Cutts**

### **Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council**

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## **Constitutional Comments (SG 27/11/2012)**

The Committee is the appropriate body to decide the issues set out in this Report. Under the Terms of Reference the Committee has responsibility for the implementation of all codes of conduct and practice of the County Council and for determining policies not reserved to the Full Council.

## **Financial Comments**

1. There are no specific financial implications arising from the report.

## **Background Papers**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Social Media Risk Assessment  
Email and Internet Policy  
Code of Conduct

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All