

Social Media Policy

Leadership

1.2 Council communicates and engages with the community in a diverse, open and inclusive way

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1. Objectives

Wingecarribee Shire Council (Council) is committed to upholding and promoting the following principles of social media engagement:

- **Openness** – Council’s social media platforms are places where Council can share and discuss issues that are relevant to Council and the community it represents and serves.
- **Relevance** - Council will ensure its social media platforms are kept up to date with informative content about Council and community.
- **Accuracy** - The content Council uploads onto its social media platforms will be a source of truth for Council and community by ensuring accuracy and completeness at publication.
- **Respect** – Council’s social media platforms are safe spaces. Council will uphold and promote the behavioural standards contained in this Policy and Council’s Code of Conduct when using its social media platforms and any other social media platform.
- **Inform** – Council’s social media platforms will be used to provide information to the local community about Council’s services.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Administrative framework for Council’s social media platforms

Council’s social media platforms must specify or provide a clearly accessible link to the ‘House Rules’ for engaging on the platform.

Only staff authorised by the General Manager can upload content and engage on the Council’s social media platforms on the Council’s behalf in accordance with delegations, procedures and other related policies.

2.2 Administrative framework for Councillors’ social media platforms

For the purposes of this policy, Councillor social platforms are not Council social media platforms. Part 2.1 of this Policy does not apply to Councillors’ social media platforms.

Councillors are responsible for the administration and moderation of their own social media platforms

Councillors must identify themselves on their social media platforms in the following format: Councillor “First Name and Last Name”.

If a Councillor becomes or ceases to be the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, or the holder of another position (for example, chairperson of a committee), this must be clearly stated on the Councillor’s social media platforms and updated within 5 business days of a change in circumstances.

Councillor social media platforms must specify or provide a clearly accessible link to the ‘House Rules’ for engaging on the platform.

A Councillor’s social media platform must include a disclaimer to the following effect:

“The views expressed and comments made on this social media platform are my own and not that of the Council”.



2.3 Standards of Conduct on Social Media

This Policy only applies to Council officials' use of social media in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a Council official.

Council officials must comply with the Council's code of conduct, this policy, the media policy and other relevant policies and procedures when using social media in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a Council official.

Council officials must not use social media to post or share comments, photos, videos, electronic recordings or other information that breaches the Code of Conduct.

Council officials must:

- a) attribute work to the original author, creator or source when uploading or linking to content produced by a third party, where required.
- b) obtain written permission from a minor's parent or legal guardian before uploading content in which the minor can be identified.

Council officials must exercise caution when sharing, liking, or retweeting content that does not align with a Council project or initiative, as this can be regarded as an endorsement.

Councillors must uphold and accurately represent the policies and decisions of the Council's governing body but may explain why they voted on a matter in the way that they did (see section 232(1)(f) of the *Local Government Act 1993*).

2.4 Moderation of social media platforms

Council's or Councillors' social media platforms must contain information that is factual, accurate, non-defamatory and use appropriate language.

Council officials who are responsible for the moderation of the Council's or Councillors' social media platforms may remove content and 'block' or ban a person from those platforms. Such actions must be undertaken in accordance with Part 2.3.


Social media platforms must state or provide an accessible link to the 'House Rules' for engaging on the platform, any person engaging on Council's social media platforms must make themselves familiar with the 'House Rules' for that platform.

Third parties engaging on Council's social media sites or pages must not post or share comments, photos, videos, electronic recordings or other information that breaches any Commonwealth or State legislation or standards of decency, including content that is defamatory, constitutes harassment, breaches the privacy of Council officials or members of the public or breaches copyright.

2.5 Private use of social media

Council officials who engage on social media in their private capacity should maintain a separate social media account(s) for that purpose.

Council officials should ensure that:

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- a) they follow the recommendation to not identify themselves as a Council official on private social media accounts. If a Council official chooses to identify themselves as a Council official, they are deemed to be acting in an official capacity and bound by the Code of Conduct
 - b) they do not undertake any functions associated with their role as a Council official on their private social media account(s)
 - c) appropriate privacy settings are enabled on their private social media account(s).

For the purposes of this Policy, a Council official's social media engagement will be considered 'private use' when the content they upload:

- a) is not associated with, or refers to, the Council, any other Council officials, contractors, related entities or any other person or organisation providing services to or on behalf of the Council, and
- b) is not related to or does not contain information acquired by virtue of their employment or role as a Council official.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all Councillors, committee members, Council employees, contractors and volunteers.

4. Responsibilities

Responsibilities for the implementation of this Policy are shared as follows.

4.1 Councillors

Councillors shall:

- provide leadership in adhering to the requirements of this Policy.

4.2 Executive

The Executive shall:

- lead staff (either directly or through delegated authority) in their understanding of and compliance with this Policy and related documents.

4.3 Coordinator Media and Communications

The Coordinator Media and Communications shall:

- provide guidance to Councillors, Executive and other Council staff as to the content and implementation of this Policy;
- ensure the timely review of this Policy; and
- assist in investigations of alleged non-compliance with this Policy.

4.4 Group Managers and Managers

Group Manager and Managers shall:

- provide guidance to Council staff within their respective branches as to the content and implementation of this Policy, seeking guidance from the policy owner as required.



4.5 Council staff

Council staff shall:

- adhere to this Policy and the responsibilities set out in related documents.

5. Performance Measures

The success of this Policy will be measured by:

- Zero or limited incidents of non-compliance with this Policy.

6. Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy:

Authorised user	members of Council staff who are authorised by the General Manager to upload content and engage on the Council's social media platforms on the Council's behalf
Council official	Councillors, members of staff and delegates of the Council (including members of committees that are delegates of the Council)
Minor	a person under the age of 18 years
Social media	online platforms and applications - such as social networking sites, wikis, blogs, microblogs, video and audio sharing sites, and message boards - that allow people to easily publish, share and discuss content. Examples of social media platforms include, but are not limited to Facebook, Messenger, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Yammer, YouTube, Instagram, Flickr and Wikipedia

7. Related Material

7.1 Related Legislation

The following legislative materials are related to this Policy:

- *Copyright Act 1979*
- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*
- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*
- *State Records Act 1998*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

7.2 Related Documents

The following documents are related to this Policy:

- Code of Conduct
- Community Engagement Policy, 2019
- Community Engagement Strategy, 2014

- Communications Strategy, 2014
- Media Policy

8. Non-compliance with this Policy

Non-compliance with this Policy should be reported to the General Manager who will investigate and determine the appropriate course of action.

9. Document Control

9.1 Version Control

Version	Adoption Date	Notes
1.0	8 December 2021	Initial adoption of document

Approved by:

WINGECARRIBEE SHIRE COUNCIL

8 December 2021