

**Norton on Derwent Town Council**  
**Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy**

**Scope**

The use of digital and social media and electronic communication enables the Town Council to interact in a way that improves the communications between the Council and the parishioners, businesses and agencies it works with and serves.

The Council has a website, Facebook page, Twitter account and uses email to communicate. The Council will always try to use the most effective channel for its communications. The Council Facebook pages and Twitter account intends to provide information and updates regarding activities and opportunities within our town and promote our community positively.

The scope of this policy includes comments and posts to pages beyond those owned by the council, i.e. 3<sup>rd</sup> party pages.

**Criteria**

Councillors and Staff are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in all their work on behalf of the Council.

Communications from the Councillors and Staff will meet the following criteria:

Be civil, tasteful and relevant;

Not contain content that is knowingly unlawful, libelous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive;

Not contain content knowingly copied from elsewhere, for which we do not own the copyright;

Not contain any personal information, named individuals constitute a data breach under the GDPR.

If it is official Council business it will be moderated by either Mayor or the Clerk to the Council;

Social media will not be used for the dissemination of any political advertising.

Be considerate and respectful of others. Vulgarity, threats or abuse of language will not be tolerated.

Differing opinions and discussion of diverse ideas are encouraged, but personal attacks on anyone, including the Council members or staff, will not be permitted.

Share freely and be generous with official Council posts, but be aware of copyright laws; be accurate and give credit where credit is due.

Stay on topic.

Refrain from using the Council's Facebook page or Twitter site for commercial purposes or to advertise market or sell products.

Whilst not monitored 24/7 and we will not always be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received.

It is vital that all information is treated sensitively and securely.

Councillors are expected to maintain an awareness of the confidentiality of information that they have access to and not to share confidential information with anyone.

### **Right of Removal**

We retain the right to remove comments or content that includes:

Obscene or racist content.

Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language.

Potentially libelous statements.

Plagiarised material; any material in violation of any laws, including copyright.

Private, personal information published without consent.

Information or links unrelated to the content of the forum.

Commercial promotions or spam.

Alleges a breach of a Council's policy or the law.

The Council's response to any communication received not meeting the above criteria will be to either to simply remove, inform the sender of our policy or send a brief response as appropriate. This will be at the Council's discretion based on the message received. Any information posted on the Facebook page not in line with the above criteria will be removed as quickly as practically possible. Repeat offenders will be blocked from the Facebook page. The Council may post a statement that 'A post breaching the Council's Social Media Policy has been removed'. If the post alleges a breach of a Council's policy or the law the person who posted it will be asked to submit a formal complaint to the Council or report the matter to the Police as soon as possible to allow due process.

Norton on Derwent Town Council, May 2018, Minute Number 013