




DISTRICT COUNCIL OF KAROONDA EAST MURRAY

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Policy Number:	34
Version Number:	V2.0
Release Date:	08/05/2013
Next Review Date:	August 2023
Review Frequency	Every 2 years
Approved By:	Council
Signature:	

1. INTRODUCTION

The District Council of Karoonda East Murray recognises that social media provides new opportunities for dynamic and interactive two-way communications which can complement existing communication and further improve information, access and delivery of key services. The Council also recognises the value of social media for:

- Networking;
- Recruitment;
- Continuing professional development;
- Employee engagement; and
- Innovation.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVE

The intent of this policy is to provide understanding and guidance for the appropriate use of social media platforms and tools by Elected Members, Council employees, volunteers and contractors for the purpose of conducting Council business.

3. SCOPE

3.1 This policy applies to all Elected Members, employees, contractors, agents and volunteers of the District Council of Karoonda East Murray who purport to use social media on behalf of Council. This policy will also apply to agencies and individuals who provide services to the District Council of Karoonda East Murray. and will be included in all external supplier contracts. The policy outlines requirements for compliance with confidentiality, governance, legal, privacy and regulatory parameters when using social media to conduct Council business. It aims to:

- Inform appropriate use of social media tools for the District Council of Karoonda East Murray
- Promote effective and productive community engagement through social media
- Minimise miscommunication or mischievous communications
- Help the District Council of Karoonda East Murray manage the inherent challenges of speed and immediacy

3.2 The policy applies to those digital spaces where people may comment, contribute, create, forward, post, upload and share content, including:

- Blogs
- Bulletin boards
- Citizen journalism and news sites which facilitate public comment
- Forums and discussion boards
- Instant messaging facilities
- Microblogging sites (e.g. Twitter)
- Online encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia)
- Podcasts
- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, MySpace, Google+, Friendster, LinkedIn)
- Video and photo sharing sites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube)
- Video podcasts
- Wikis
- Any other websites that allow individual to use simple publishing tools or new technologies emerging from the digital environment.

As it is not possible to expressly refer to or list the specific sites or kinds of social media outlets, the absence of a reference to a particular site or kind of social media activity does not limit to application of the policy.

3.3 This policy is not intended to cover personal use of social media where:

- The author publishes information in their personal capacity and not on behalf of, or in association with the District Council of Karoonda East Murray; and
- No reference is made to the District Council of Karoonda East Murray, its Councillors, staff, policies and services, suppliers or the other stakeholders or Council related issues.

4. Legislative and policy framework

Council Members and staff of the District Council of Karoonda East Murray are expected to demonstrate standards of conduct and behaviour that are consistent with relevant legislation, regulations and policies. A list of relevant legislation which may be used as a guide is included in Annexure A. Council policies and guideline provisions which must be adhered to in relation to the use of social media include the following:

- Code of Conduct for Elected Members
- Code of Conduct – Employees and Volunteers
- District Council of Karoonda East Murray Records Management Policy
- District Council of Karoonda East Murray employment contracts
- District Council of Karoonda East Murray Media Policy
- District Council of Karoonda East Murray Public Consultation Policy
- District Council of Karoonda East Murray Caretaker Policy

5. Authorised Representatives

5.1 The Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer are the principal spokespersons for the Council and media comment will be directed to the either in the first instance. The role of spokesperson may be delegated in writing to another elected member or an officer on a case by case basis. Staff members may be authorised or otherwise delegated to make comment via social media. When using social media Elected Members, employees, volunteers and contractors are expected to:

- Seek prior authorisation from the CEO
- Adhere to the District Council of Karoonda East Murray codes of conduct, policies and procedures
- Behave with the caution, courtesy, honesty and respect
- Comply with relevant laws and regulations
- Reinforce the integrity, reputation and values of the District Council of Karoonda East Murray

5.2 The following content is not permitted under any circumstances. This will also be moderated out of public responses to council communications:

- Abusive, profane or sexual language
- Content not relating to the subject matter of that blog, board, forum or site
- Content which is false or misleading

- Confidential information about Council or third parties
- Copyright or Trademark protected materials
- Discriminatory material in relation to a person group based on age, colour, creed, disability, family status, gender, nationality, marital status, political opinion/affiliation, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, race or social origin, religious beliefs/activity, responsibilities, sex or sexual orientation
- Illegal material or materials designed to encourage law breaking
- Materials that could compromise Council, employee or system safety
- Materials which could breach applicable laws (defamation, privacy, trade practices, financial rules and regulations, fair use, trademarks)
- Material that would offend contemporary standards of taste and decency
- Materials which would bring the Council into disrepute
- Personal details or references to Elected Members, Council employees, volunteers or third parties, which may be inconsistent with Council Private Policy
- Spam, meaning the distribution of unsolicited bulk electronic messages
- Statements which may be considered to be bullying or harassment

5.3 If you have any doubt about applying the provisions of this policy, check with the CEO before using social media to communicate. Depending upon the nature of the issue and potential risk, it may also be appropriate to consider seeking legal advice.

6. General Guidelines for Communications

6.1 The following topics should be used as a guide when responding to media requests or when using social media;

- **Authorisation** - Ensure appropriate authorisation has been obtained before using social media including but not limited to uploading content and acting as a spokesperson on behalf of Council.
- **Release of Information** - Do not issue statements or make announcements through social media channels unless authorised. Do not respond directly if approached by media for comment through social media. Refer the inquiry to the Chief Executive Officer as per Council's Media Policy.
- **Expertise** - Do not comment outside your area of expertise. Do not commit Council to actions or undertakings.
- **Disclosure** - Only discuss publicly available information. Do not disclose confidential information, internal discussions or decisions of Council, employees or third parties. This includes publishing confidential, personal or private information where there is sufficient detail for the potential identification of Councillors, Council staff or third parties.
- **Accuracy** - Be accurate, constructive, helpful and informative. Correct any errors as soon as practicable. Do not publish information or make statements which you know to be false or may reasonably be taken to be misleading or deceptive.
- **Identity** - Be clear about professional identity, or any vested interests. Do not use fictitious names or identities that deliberately intend to deceive, mislead or lie. Do not participate anonymously or covertly via a third party or agency.
- **Opinion** - Council staff should not express or publish a personal opinion on Council generally about Council business via social media.

- **General duty under the Local Government Act 1999** - Elected Members and staff must be aware of their respective duties under sections 62 and 109 of the *Local Government Act 1999* at all times and ensure that their use of social media is not contrary to these requirements.
- **Privacy** - Be sensitive to the privacy of others. Seek permission from anyone who appears in any photographs, video or other footage before sharing these via any form of social media. If asked to remove materials do so as soon as practicable.
- **Intellectual Property** - Seek permission from the creator or copyright owner, to use or reproduce copyright materials including applications, sound recordings (speeches, songs), footage (video), graphics, (graphs, charts and logos), images, artwork, photographs, publication or music. Also seek permission before publishing or uploading material in which the intellectual property rights, such as Trademarks, are owned by a third party e.g. company logos. Seek permissions from the website's owner wherever possible before linking to another site (including a social media application).
- **Defamation** - Do not comment, contribute, create, forward, post, upload or share content that is malicious or defamatory. This includes statements which may negatively impact the reputation of another.
- **Reward** - Do not publish content in exchange for reward of any kind.
- **Transparency** - Do not seek to buy or recompense favourable social media commentary. Encourage online publishers to be open and transparent in how they engage with, or review Council personnel, services or wares.
- **Political bias** - Do not endorse any political affinity or allegiance.
- **Respect** - Always be courteous, patient and respectful of others' opinions, including detractors.
- **Discrimination** - Be mindful of anti-discrimination laws and do not publish statement or information which may be discriminatory.
- **Language** - Be mindful of language and expression.
- **State of Mind** - Do not use social media when inebriated, irritated, upset or tired.
- **Be Safe** - Protect your personal privacy and guard against identity theft.
- **Modification** - Ensure that any social media sites create or contributed to can be readily edited, improved or removed and appropriately moderated.
- **Access** - Be mindful of the requisite government web standards for accessibility. Information made available via non complaint platforms should be made accessible in another form where practical.
- **Be Responsive** - Specify the type of comment and feedback that will receive a response and clearly communicate a target response time. Make it easy for audiences to reach Council via other methods by publishing Council's phone number, generic email, Facebook, Skype and Twitter accounts.
- **Monitoring** - The Council reserves the right, for legal compliance purposes, to monitor social media usage on its systems with advance notice and consistent with any applicable state, federal or international laws. The Council may be legally required to produce logs, diaries and archives of social media uses to judicial, law enforcement and regulatory agencies and will comply with any relevant requests.
- **Moderation** – The Chief Executive Officer of their delegate will be responsible for the moderation of any content.

- 6.2 Elected Members should be mindful of Council's Code of Conduct when discussing or commenting on Council matters. Generally, Elected Members should not express personal opinions on Council decisions or Council business nor be critical of the Council. If it is not possible to separate official Council positions from personal opinions, Elected Members should consider using a formal disclaimer to separate interests.

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Council Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek advice from the Chief Executive Officer, on using social media • Seek approval for Council branding of social media • Understand and comply with the provisions in this policy • Seek training and development for using social media • Seek advice from using Legal Communications Department if unsure about applying the provisions of this policy
Staff and Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek approval from relevant manager for business strategy incorporating social media • Seek advice from the Chief Executive Officer, or Manager, Corporate Services on using social media and developing a communications plan to support business strategy • Seek approval for Council branding of social media • Register social media accounts/tools/sites with the Chief Executive Officer or Deputy CEO. • Seek training and development for using social media • Understand and comply with the provisions in this policy • Maintain records of email addresses, comments, 'friends', follows and printed copies or electronic 'screen grabs' when using externally hosted sites to the extent practicable • Seek advice from the Chief Executive Officer or Manager, Corporate Services if unsure about applying the provisions of this policy. • Ensure contractors are provided with a copy of this policy • Familiarise self with the End User Licence Agreements of any external social media tools being purposes
Directors/ Managers/ Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve business strategy incorporating use of social media • Ensure staff obtain authorisation from the Chief Executive Officer or the Deputy CEO on their planned use of social media • Ensure contractors are provided with a copy of the social media policy • Offer training for staff using social media • Advise IT (MCS) and Records Management staff of approval to access social media for business purposes
Corporate and Community Services Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT staff (MCS) facilitate secure access to support delivery of Council business via social media • IT (MCS) regularly back up and archive internally hosted social media sites.

CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorise use of social media tools conducting Council business
Directors/ Managers/ Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice and assist with the development of communication plans using social media • Educate Councillors, staff and contractors about this policy and their responsibilities when using social media • Advise appropriate precautions e.g. disclaimers • Maintain a register of social media being used for conducting Council business including records business case for using social media, it's strategic imperative, the intended administrator, URL, login, passwords and audience • Assist staff to retain some record explaining the context or purpose of social media, and a sample of posts where it is impractical to retain large volumes of screen grabs • Ensure that appropriate records management procedures are in place to ensure compliance with State records Act, 1997 • Monitor social media accounts/tools/sites registered for conducting Council business • Monitor references to the District Council of Karoonda East Murray • Seek legal advice as appropriate where an issue is likely to be contentious or may create legal risk to Council.

7. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Author (to whom changes are to be recommended)			
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Position		Incumbent	
LGA Model Policy			
Reviewed by			
Position		Incumbent	Review Date
CEO		Martin Borgas	30/07/2021
Approved by			
Position		Incumbent	Approval Date
Council			10/08/2021
History			
Date	Author	Revision	Nature of Change
08/05/2013		V1.1	Adapted LGA Model Policy
27-11-18	Council	V2.0	Approved by Council
30/07/2021	Martin Borgas	V3.0	- Reformatted into new document -Inclusion of CEO as moderator
Publication			
This policy is available for inspection at Council's office at 11 Railway Terrace, Karoonda or via the Council website, www.dckem.sa.gov.au .			

SCHEDULE 1

Relevant Information

- Copyright Act 1968 (Cwlth)
- Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 (SA)
- Defamation Act 2005 (SA)
- Fair Trading Act 1997 (SA)
- Fair Work Act 1994 (SA)
- Freedom of Information Act 1991 (SA)
- Local Government Act 1999 (SA)
- Local Government (Elections) Act 1999 (SA)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)
- Spam Act 2003 (Cwlth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth)
- State Records Act 1997 (SA)
- Civil Liability Act 1936 (SA)