

Wem Town Council  
Social Media Management Policy

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## 1. Social Media Policy

Wem Town Council realise that social media and networking websites have become a regular part of everyday life and that many people enjoy membership to sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

## 2. Why are the Town Council using social media?

The Town Council's aim is to inform members of the community and the wider local area, through as many communication channels as possible, about what is happening within the Town and local area and share important news and information. Social Media forms part of the Town Council's Community Engagement Strategy.

- The Town Council's social media channels supplement the information published on their website.
- The Town Council can remind people of important events and alert followers instantly to breaking news.
- The Town Council can link to interesting and useful information about the Town and local area published by other people.
- The Town Council can better communicate with those using mobile devices.

## 3. Use of Official Accounts

Wem Town Council will operate Facebook and Twitter accounts for the promotion of activities and events and as a communication and broadcast tool.

### Examples of acceptable corporate content are:

- Marketing campaigns
- Consultation documents
- News feed & emergency information
- Event listings
- Key dates
- Short debates & quick comments on hot topics and relevant news (discussion board)
- Polls and information gathering
- Useful links

### The following outlines the limits of their use:

- An official account on any other form of social media may only be set-up with consent from the Town Council.
- Once approved, each account will be set up by the Town Clerk.
- Only authorised staff may use these accounts to post online and access to the account is strictly limited. The Town Council's social media accounts are managed and monitored daily by the Town Clerk. Only the Clerk is allowed to post links to the corporate website, partner websites, 'Useful' links for example local transport sites etc, links to other Facebook pages, local media e.g. Shropshire Star, National organisations
- All information published on the internet must comply with the Town Council's confidentiality and data protection policies.
- Social media accounts will primarily be used to promote the 'good news' and information, supplementing content already published on the Town Council's website.

- Any employee, Councillor or member of the public who becomes aware of social networking activity that would be deemed distasteful should make the Town Clerk aware as soon as possible.

## **Facebook**

The Town Council's Facebook page is managed by the Town Clerk.

Facebook pages are used to highlight news, make announcements, engage with the community and share information.

Comments posted on and messages received on the Facebook page are views of individuals and do not represent the views of the Town Council.

If you would like to request for something to be posted on the Town Council's Facebook page, please contact the Town Clerk.

## **Social media moderation policy**

The Town Council's Facebook page is reactively moderated. We cannot accept responsibility for the content of any comment.

We reserve the right to remove comments received on Facebook that:

- Contain abusive, obscene, indecent or offensive language, or link to obscene or offensive material
- Contain swear words or other sorts of profanity.
- Are completely removed from the topic of conversation or are not relevant to the item posted on the wall.
- Contain abusive language towards an individual involved in the thread, other organisations or the page administrator.
- Constitute spam or promote or advertise products, except where it is for an event, publication or similar item that has direct relevance to the subject of discussion. Information about locating and sharing knowledge and expertise is welcomed, but within the specific discussion.
- Are designed to cause nuisance to the page administrator or other users.

For serious and/or persistent breaches of the moderation policy, we reserve the right to prevent users from posting further comments.

## **Twitter**

The Town Council's Twitter account is managed by the Town Clerk.

If you follow the Town Council on Twitter you can expect regular tweets covering:

- News and press releases
- Statements
- Photos
- Retweets of notable announcements
- Information forwarded on from Shropshire Council

If the Town Council follows a Twitter account it does not imply any kind of endorsement.

## **@ messages and direct messages**

The Town Clerk will review all @ messages daily and re-tweet where we feel applicable.

The Town Council also will not normally reply to direct messages. The limitations of Twitter's format means that we would not be able to give you a full and useful reply. We, therefore, ask that in these instances you contact the Town Council using the contact form on the website.

All tweets must be:

- Timely and appropriate
- Mindful of the audience
- Accurate without any spelling mistakes or typos
- Factually correct and without personal opinion
- Concise and not designed to promote a discussion
- In line with data protection

Any complaints/issued raised on Twitter should be reported to the Town Clerk.

### **Use of Photos and Video**

Only The Town Clerk has permission to upload photos and videos. The appropriate permissions must be obtained for all imagery

### **Personal Accounts on Social Media**

Staff need to use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the terms of their contract of employment. The absence of, or lack of, explicit reference to a specific website or service does not limit the extent of the application of this policy. Where no policy or guidelines exist, employees should use their professional judgment and take the most prudent action possible. If the Town Council is referred to in a way that is deemed defamatory or confidential information is disclosed, we reserve the right to report the comment and request that it be removed.

## **4. Purdah**

In the six week run up to an election – local, general or European – councils have to very careful not to do or say anything that could viewed in any way to support any political party or candidate. The period is known as purdah. We will continue to publish important service announcements using social media but will monitor and potentially have to remove responses if they are overtly party political.

## **5. Will the Town Council respond to direct messages posted on social networking sites?**

If appropriate, the Clerk will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible to all questions received via social networking sites. We do, however, still ask that all formal requests, comments, enquiries or complaints be emailed to the Town Council using the contact form on the website.

The Town Council may monitor forums and blogs to gain indirect feedback. The Town Council may post replies on forums or blogs to answer queries or address factual corrections, but would generally take a cautious approach before getting involved in contentious issues.

The Town Council reserves the right to take any necessary steps to protect members of the Town community and will delete any comments referencing the Town Council, which are deemed abusive or offensive in anyway.

Social Networking Accounts are monitored between 8.00am – 4.00pm Monday – Friday.