

POLICY



Date adopted: 30/05/2017
File no: 854932-1
Minute number: 148/2017

Policy title: USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA
Directorate: INNOVATION & CITY TRANSFORMATION
Branch: MARKETING & EVENTS
Policy objective: To enhance the use of social media by using best practice standards while also ensuring staff know their responsibilities when using social media.

Policy scope:

1. This policy applies to all staff (i.e. employees, casuals, contractors) of Logan City Council who uses social media for professional and personal use.
2. This policy provides direction on:
 - (a) professional use of social media on behalf of Council
 - (b) personal use of social media
 - (c) legal considerations.

Definitions:

TERM	DEFINITION
Social media	Web-based technology allowing an exchange of dialogue between organisations, communities and individuals. Social media may include (but is not limited to): <ol style="list-style-type: none">(a) social networking websites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Yammer, Google+)(b) video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, Youtube)(c) blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs(d) blogs hosted by media outlets (e.g. 'comments' on news articles etc.)(e) micro-blogging (e.g. Twitter)(f) wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia)(g) forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups)(h) vod and podcasting(i) online multiplayer gaming platforms(j) instant messaging (including SMS)(k) geospatial tagging (e.g. Foursquare, Facebook check-in).

Policy statement:

1. **Professional use of social media**

Marketing is responsible for all public social media platforms on behalf of Council and is the sole branch authorised to respond on behalf of Council to comments and feedback posted on corporate social media pages.

Additional pages created for other branches of Council may be granted with approval from the Marketing & Events Manager (or delegate). If approved, Marketing reserves the right to remain an administrator of any pages created to ensure risk management measures to protect Council's reputation are satisfied.

(a) Authorisation to comment

Staff may not comment on behalf of Council unless they are authorised by the Marketing & Events Manager.

To become authorised, staff must have written approval from the Marketing & Events Manager and will have undertaken training provided by the Marketing & Events branch's Digital Marketing team. Staff must also have approval from their own respective branch manager.

(b) General use of social media

Once authorised to comment on behalf of Council the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- (i) Only publish content that is classified as public information.
- (ii) All content posted is accurate and has been approved by a program leader, manager or director and complies with all relevant Council policies.
- (iii) All content must not disclose personal, confidential or private information.
- (iv) All content is evenly distributed and does not over-promote or bias one service, facility, event etc. over others. A limit of one post per week about the same topic is permitted inline with best practice standards. Specific events and circumstances will be permitted more frequent posts on a merit basis and at the sole discretion of the Marketing & Events branch's Digital Marketing team.
- (v) Major announcements will only be made by Marketing to maximise the media and marketing potential for Council as an organisation or Logan as a city.
- (vi) Comments will be respectful of the community and portray Logan in a positive way.
- (vii) All posts and links will be Council-related and connected to a core service of Council.
- (viii) All content is impartial, apolitical and does not promote elected members or specific members of staff or projects and announcements that have not received approval from the relevant committee or Council.
- (ix) Marketing reserve the right to approve or reject requests from staff in relation to overall marketing and media objectives. Social media should be one component of an overall marketing and communication campaign.

(c) Adhere to the terms of use and guidelines associated with the relevant social media platform/website. See also Legal Considerations.

(d) Comments and replies

Comments can be posted on Council's social media pages at any time of the day and of a positive, negative or neutral nature.

Comments that ask a question about Council, or a matter related to Council, should be answered within 2-4 hours within standard business hours of 8am to 5pm. A response should be coordinated with the relevant program and delivered on the same day if possible.

Comments received outside of normal business hours (e.g. after-hours, weekends, public holidays) will be responded to on the following working day.

When assessing comments the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- (i) Comments by the public will be removed at the discretion of Marketing only if they are deemed to be offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, mentions a person by name, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a court suppression order or is otherwise unlawful. Other comments that may potentially jeopardise Council's financial, legal or operational capacity will be removed only if approved by the Marketing & Events Manager.
- (ii) Comments or posts that are not Council-related will be removed. This includes promotion of commercial services, products or entities.

2. Personal use of social media

Council recognises that staff may wish to use social media for personal use and this policy is not intended to discourage or limit anyone from using it. Personal use is defined as using social media during work hours, after-hours (i.e. nights and weekends) and while on leave.

Posting about Council on social media is permitted by staff but care must be taken to minimise the potential for damage to be caused (directly or indirectly) to Council's reputation.

When using social media for personal use by staff the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- (a) Only disclose or discuss publicly available information.
- (b) Ensure all content is accurate and complies with all relevant Council policies.
- (c) Do not imply that you are authorised to speak as a representative of Council or give the impression that the views expressed are those of Council.
- (d) Do not use a Council email address or any Council logos or insignia.
- (e) Do not use the identity or likeness of another employee, contractor or member of Council.
- (f) Do not make comments, use location based services (e.g. check-in) or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to Council's reputation.

3. Legal considerations

General advice is provided to assist staff in complying with obligations set out in this policy. When in doubt, staff are encouraged to seek further guidance or clarification from the Marketing & Events branch or the Staff Code of Conduct.

- (a) Privacy, confidentiality and information security

Staff should only use personal information obtained in the course of employment/engagement with Council in a manner consistent with the Staff Code of Conduct.

Do not publish or report on conversations or information that is deemed confidential or classified or deals with matters that are internal in nature.

- (b) Copyright
Respect copyright laws and attribute work to the original author/source wherever possible.
- (c) Harassment and bullying
Council's 'Workplace Bullying/Harassment' policy applies online, including social media websites, and in the physical workplace.
Abusive, harassing, threatening or defaming postings are in breach of Council's 'Workplace Bullying/Harassment' policy, and may result in disciplinary action being taken.
Workplace bullying and harassment includes any bullying or harassing comments staff make online, including on their own private social networks and when out of office hours.
- (d) Defamation
Refrain from posting material that may cause damage to another person, organisation, association or company's reputation and seek further guidance from Marketing if publication of such material is thought to be necessary.
- (e) Contempt of court
Exercise care if referring to pending court proceedings (related to Council) to avoid posting material that may prejudice those proceedings, in particular, material that will not be part of the evidence in those proceedings.
Staff should make enquiries as to any applicable court suppression orders prior to commenting on any court proceeding (whether past or pending).

Related policies/legislation/other documents:

DOC ID	DOCUMENT TYPE	DOCUMENT NAME
7200291	Internal	Code of Conduct for Staff
5992323	Policy	Workplace Bullying/Harassment Policy
1822863	Procedure	Internet and Email Procedure
Victoria Department of Justice	Creative Commons	Victoria Department of Justice Social Media Policy repurposed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0