

# Social Media Policy



Statutory



Council



Administrative

<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Director Organisational Services
<b>Effective Date:</b>	23 August 2023
<b>Strategic Alignment:</b>	Code of Conduct for Logan City Council Staff

## 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to enhance the use of social media using best practice standards whilst also ensuring that employees, contractors and the community understand their responsibilities when using social media platforms.

## 2 Scope

This policy applies to all employees and contractors working for Council regardless of whether they are permanent, temporary, full time, part time or casual employees or volunteers. For the purposes of this policy, the term contractor includes on-hired temporary labour services (agency staff) and sub- contractors.

## 3 Policy Statement

Logan City Council recognises that there is a need to both enhance the use of social media using best practice standards whilst also ensuring that, employees, contractors and the community understand their responsibilities when using social media platforms.

Council acknowledges the growing popularity of social media both as a communication and educational tool and supports its appropriate use.

## 4 Principles

Council acknowledges the benefits of engaging with the community through social media platforms, but also acknowledges the potential for damage to be caused either directly or indirectly to Council, the City of Logan, members of the community, councillors, Council employees and contractors, through the inappropriate use of social media.

Council acknowledges that social media is a public forum and Council has a duty of care to ensure that content and comments published on social media adheres to appropriate standards.

Misuse of social media undermines Council's ability to share information effectively with the community, and to assist community members to communicate with Council. Misuse of social media could:

- a. create the wrong impression by using humour, irony or satire which can be misunderstood in impersonal or abbreviated formats
- b. mislead the community by publishing information that is inaccurate, incomplete, out of context or confusing

- c. lead to the unlawful release of confidential or personal information
- d. cause reputational loss, by destroying public confidence in Council
- e. damage Council's relationships through unprofessional use of internal social media
- f. be detrimental to the effective delivery of services to the community
- g. hamper Council's ability to be open and accountable to the community.

## **5 Corporate social media accounts**

### **5.1 Control of corporate social media accounts**

- a. Council has the exclusive right to set up, administer, monitor, create and delete all corporate social media accounts which includes but is not limited to all Logan City Council branded and managed social media accounts.
- b. Whilst the corporate social media accounts may be administered by employees or contractors of Council, Council maintains the exclusive right to those social media accounts and will have full access to administer and monitor and delete the accounts at all times.
- c. The Corporate Communications Manager is the custodian of all corporate social media accounts.
- d. The creation, use and closure of any corporate social media account must be approved by both the Corporate Communications Manager and the Director, People and Engagement.
- e. The Corporate Communications Manager may authorise other branches in Council to administer particular corporate social media accounts.
- f. The Corporate Communications Manager must keep and maintain an up to date register of all administrators for corporate social media accounts.
- g. The Corporate Communications Manager is responsible for ensuring that all administrators for Corporate social media accounts have received appropriate training to ensure that they administer the Corporate social media accounts appropriately, ethically and with integrity.
- h. To maintain the integrity of Corporate social media accounts, the Corporate Communications Manager must manage login credentials including:
  - i. password strength must meet the Council's password policy – ie alpha-numeric, mixture of upper and lower case characters;
  - ii. all account passwords must be securely stored in a restricted access document in Council's document management system;
  - iii. all passwords must be changed periodically, and at least annually;
  - iv. any shared passwords must be changed and access to social media accounts must be removed from individuals if they separate from council or change roles;
  - v. periodic (at least bi-annual) review of individuals' access to social media accounts;

- vi. keeping a register of all disclosures of the login and password in the "Register of Corporate Social Media accounts"
- vii. ensure all breaches of computer security and/or account integrity (e.g. password compromised) must be immediately reported to the Information Services Helpdesk in accordance with the Security of the Council's Information Security Management Directive and also to the Integrity and Information Program.
- i. Under no circumstances will administrators for corporate social media accounts:
  - i. reveal the login and password for any corporate social media account to anyone else either inside or outside of Council without the express written permission of the Corporate Communications Manager; or
  - ii. permanently save login details or 'keep me signed in' on a portable device such as a Council mobile phone, laptop or iPad that does not have a password to protect access to the device.
- j. All logins to the corporate social media accounts must be for legitimate work purposes and not for personal benefit, personal gain or intentional misuse.
- k. Using the corporate social media page search function to search the social media profile of members of the public whose profile cannot ordinarily be viewed through a personal social media account is prohibited. Any breach may be subject to disciplinary action under the Code of Conduct for Staff and may constitute fraud or corrupt conduct.
- l. When an employee ceases employment with Council, access to corporate social media accounts will be removed from the relevant employee on their last day of employment and the password to all accounts changed.

## **5.2 Publishing content on corporate social media accounts**

- a. Employees and contractors of Council will not have access to Council's corporate social media accounts to comment or publish content unless they are authorised to do so by the Corporate Communications Manager.
- b. It is the responsibility of the Corporate Communications Manager and the administrators of Council's corporate social media accounts, to publish content and respond to posts on behalf of Council to ensure that at all times:
  - i. all communications are professional, consistent and ethical
  - ii. the appropriate 'Alert/Public Safety template replies are used at the appropriate time for communications to ensure consistency and quality control
  - iii. all communications are of the highest professional standard, error free, and in accordance with this policy.
- c. All content published on Council's corporate social media accounts must be:
  - i. only public information; personal, confidential or private information must not be published
  - ii. accurate, comply with all relevant Council policies and have been approved by the relevant Director, Manager or Program Leader
  - iii. accessible and adhere to relevant human rights and discrimination legislation
  - iv. respectful of the community

- v. respectful of Council and the City of Logan
- vi. Council-related and connected to services provided by Council or to the City of Logan
- vii. apolitical in nature.
- d. In accordance with section 90D of the Local Government Act 2009, during the Caretaker Period, corporate social media accounts will not contain any election material.
- e. In the interests of remaining neutral and transparent Council does not publish content from third parties unless there is a formal partnership or sponsorship arrangement in place.

## **6 Community interaction on corporate social media accounts**

### **6.1 Posting of comments or questions by the community**

- a. Corporate social media accounts aim to provide a safe and positive environment for members of the community to receive factual information relating to Council and the City of Logan.
- b. Corporate social media accounts are used to promote the City of Logan, including initiatives and events relevant to the community.
- c. Council welcomes all members of the community to its pages, however content posted on corporate social media accounts will be monitored to ensure it is appropriate and complies with this policy.
- d. Council may remove posts in languages other than English if the message cannot be translated, as Council must ensure that all content is appropriate and complies with this policy.
- e. Council will include a privacy statement on each corporate social media account.
- f. When contributing content to Council's page, comments should not:
  - i. harass, bully, incite violence, abuse, attack, threaten or discriminate against other users, particularly in reference to an individual or group's age, disability, gender, political leaning, race, religion or sexuality
  - ii. participate in trolling, baiting, disrupting a conversation or not be in relation to the original topic
  - iii. be false or misleading
  - iv. include profanities, obscene or offensive language
  - v. provide other people's personal information - this is a breach of privacy and the content will be removed
  - vi. comment or share anything that may constitute spam such as advertising, appeals, petitions, requests or endorsements, or promote commercial or political interests. This also includes repeated posts and comments
  - vii. speculate or comment on legal matters
  - viii. upload materials that breach the intellectual property rights of others
  - ix. upload malicious software or files
  - x. violate the terms of use of social media platforms

- xi. break the law (including violation of copyright laws) or encourage others to do so
  - xii. encourage or incite rioting, picketing or any other actions which may amount to public nuisance.
  - g. Failure to adhere to the above may result in moderation, un-tagging, removal of posts or comments, and users being blocked from Corporate social media accounts.
  - h. Council reserves the right to remove comments and take the discussion 'offline' or into a private message if the content is personal in nature, does not comply with this policy or is affecting the enjoyment of the page for other visitors.
- 6.2 Council response to questions and enquiries made via corporate social media accounts**
- a. Questions and enquires made by members of the community on Corporate social media accounts during standard business hours of 8am to 5pm will be acknowledged within 4 hours wherever possible. A response to the question or enquiry will be coordinated with the relevant area in Council and provided within 24 hours where possible.
  - b. Except where there are extraordinary events occurring, questions and enquires made by members of the community on Corporate social media accounts outside of normal business hours (after-hours, weekends, public holidays) will be taken to have been made on the next business day and acknowledged and responded as per the above timeframes.

## **7 Use of personal social media accounts**

- a. Council recognises that, employees and contractors of Council may have personal social media accounts. This policy is not intended to discourage or limit employees and contractors of Council from using personal social media, but to provide guidance on employees and contractors discussing or representing Council and its services on personal social media.
- b. When using personal social media accounts, employees and contractors are expected to:
  - i. only disclose or discuss publicly available Council information
  - ii. ensure all content is accurate and complies with all relevant Council policies
  - iii. ensure that, if identifying as an employee or contractor on any personal social media platform, it is made clear the employee or contractor is not authorised to speak as on behalf of Council or give the impression that the views expressed are those of Council
  - iv. ensure that the use of personal social media does not compromise their effectiveness at work
  - v. ensure that the comments posted on personal social media do not imply Council endorsement of personal views
  - vi. remove any reference to working at Council from all personal social media within 15 calendar days of employment ceasing with Council.

- c. When using personal social media accounts, employees and contractors must not:
  - i. use Council contact details or any Council logos or insignia, except for LinkedIn profiles
  - ii. use the identity, likeness or photographs of employees or contractors
  - iii. disclose personal or confidential information which is not publicly available and available only as a result of their employment at Council
  - iv. make comments, use location based services (e.g. check-in) or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to Council's reputation
  - v. denigrate or criticise co-workers, management or councillors
  - vi. bring Council into disrepute
  - vii. take selfies/photographs or videos that will show Council assets or information that could put Council at risk or that breach privacy or security policies (e.g. selfies with Council's internal noticeboard in the background or with staff who have not approved to be in the photo in the background).
- d. Should employees or contractors become a social media influencer or receive paid posts from businesses or companies, they must complete a Secondary Employment and Conflict of Interest Declaration.
- e. Breach of the Social Media policy may prejudice security or breach the Information Privacy Act 2009 and will be dealt with in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct for Staff and may result in disciplinary action.
- f. Council reserves the right to request employees or contractors take down or remove content from personal social media accounts.

## 8 Councillor social media

Councillors manage their own social media and Council has no role in the creation or management of these platforms.

## 9 Human Rights

Under the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld), Council must not make a decision without considering and assessing the potential impact to human rights, and giving consideration to any impacts before making a decision. Council does not consider that any human rights are impacted by this policy.

## 10 Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Policy.

TERM	DEFINITION
Corporate social media accounts	All corporate social media accounts, platforms and pages that Council support and manage, that have been created and approved by the Corporate Communications Manager.

Election material	Includes anything able to, or intended to, influence an elector about voting at an election, or affect the result of an election.
Personal social media accounts	A social media account or page used predominantly for private use.
Public record	Has the meaning provided in the Public Records Act 2023.
Social media	<p>Social media consists of online interactive technologies through which individuals, communities and organisations can share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content or pre-made content posted online. Social media may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) social networking websites (eg Facebook, LinkedIn, Yammer, Threads)</li> <li>(b) video and photo sharing websites (eg Flickr, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, Vimeo)</li> <li>(c) blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs</li> <li>(d) blogs hosted by media outlets (eg 'comments' on news articles)</li> <li>(e) micro-blogging (eg Twitter)</li> <li>(f) wikis and other online community generated forums (excluding any Council initiated programs) (eg Wikipedia)</li> <li>(g) forums, discussion boards and groups (eg Google groups)</li> <li>(h) vodcasting and podcasting</li> <li>(i) messaging technologies/apps (e.g. WhatsApp)</li> <li>(j) streaming platforms (e.g. Twitch, Mixer)</li> <li>(k) private messaging</li> <li>(l) geospatial tagging (eg Foursquare, Facebook check-in);</li> <li>(m) any other tool or emerging technology that allows individuals to publish or communicate in a digital environment (excluding website content)</li> </ul>

## 11 Document Control

Version Number	Description of Change	Author / Branch	Effective Date
1.0	Creation	Corporate Governance	4 December 2019
2.0	Updated doc Id for Code of Conduct for Staff	Corporate Governance	10 June 2020
3.0	Amended	Corporate Governance	28 October 2020
4.0	Amended	Corporate Governance	23 August 2023