

# LEICESTER FOREST EAST PARISH COUNCIL

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

### Who the Policy Applies to:

The Policy applies to all members of the Council and all Council staff.

### Definition of Social Media

For the purposes of this policy, social media includes websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook and the Parish Council's website.

### When the Policy Applies

The policy applies during work hours and outside of work for both Council staff and members. It applies to use of social media on both personal and Council-owned IT equipment.

### Policy – Work Usage

- Staff will add to the Parish Council's website and Facebook page all news items which may be useful/of interest to residents of the Parish.
- Members are encouraged to email any items which may be of interest to residents, to the Clerk, to be added to the website and Facebook page.
- The Clerk and Assistant Clerk can respond to comments on social media pages on the Parish Council's behalf but only to the extent that they are relaying opinions/decision of the Council. They must not express their personal opinion.
- Any contact made by the press/other outlets for comments must be referred to a full Council meeting.
- Staff and members must not post comments about sensitive community topics, such as planning applications, unless they relate to an issue which is likely to have a detrimental effect on the parish as a whole. Any response regarding such sensitive community topics will be made by the Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council (to avoid Parish Councillors posting individually). The Clerk can consult Council by email first if necessary.
- Employers have the right, in certain circumstances, to monitor their employee's usage of the internet or email at work.

### Policy – Personal Use

- Where an opinion expressed by a member of staff, or member, could reasonably be misconstrued to be the opinion of the Parish Council, that member of staff member will explicitly state it is their personal opinion.

- Staff and members must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about the council or its stakeholders.
- If staff or members see content on social media that disparages or reflects poorly on the Council, they should refer this to the Clerk or Chair of the Council.
- Staff and members must not post anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, an individual – this applies to personal social media accounts and the Parish Council’s accounts.

### Breaches

- Any breach of the policy may lead to action being taken under the Parish Council’s disciplinary policy.

Reviewed April 2022

Reviewed and amended April 2023

Reviewed April 2024

Due for review April 2025