

Wingerworth Parish Council – Social Media Policy

Wingerworth Parish Council is committed to making the best use of all available technology and innovation to improve the way we operate. This includes using all reasonable and cost-effective means to improve the way we communicate, reach out and interact with the different communities we serve.

'Social media' is the term commonly given to web-based tools which allow users to interact with each other in some way; by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests online. This includes e-mail, online social forums, blogs, video- and image-sharing websites and similar facilities.

Any communications that employees or Members make in a personal or professional capacity through social media must not:

- breach confidentiality by giving away confidential information about an individual or organisation
- do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by:
 - making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age
 - using social media to bully another individual
 - posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content
- bring the Council into disrepute, for example by:
 - making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups
 - posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content
- breach copyright, for example by:
 - using someone else's images or written content without permission
 - failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce something.

The Council reserves the right to monitor employees' internet usage in accordance with the Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy. The Council considers that valid reasons for checking an employee's internet usage include suspicions that the employee has:

- been spending an excessive amount of time using social media websites for non-work-related activity
- acted in a way that is in breach of the rules set out in this policy.

The Council reserves the right to monitor and, within specific guidelines as defined within the Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy to retain information that it has gathered on employees' use of the internet.

Wingerworth Parish Council – Social Media Policy

Access to particular social media websites may be withdrawn in any case of misuse.

All employees and Members are required to adhere to these guidelines. Employees should be aware that use of Social Media in a way that may be deemed as deliberate or inadvertent misuse which could be a breach of these guidelines, may lead to disciplinary action under the Council's Disciplinary Policy.

Serious breaches of these guidelines, for example incidents of bullying of colleagues or social media activity causing serious damage to the Council, may constitute gross misconduct and may lead to action under the disciplinary procedure up to and including dismissal; for Council Members this could lead to sanctions being imposed.

The Council takes its responsibility to its employees and Members seriously and will protect individuals by acting upon any offensive posts made by the public.

Originally adopted 03 January 2018

Review date January 2019