

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Information technology has changed the way in which people communicate and share information.
- 1.2 While the technologies encompassed by the term “social media” are fundamentally no different to other forms of communication, they are potentially revolutionary because they can connect large numbers of people with relative ease.
- 1.3 Australians are among the most prolific users of Social Media in the world, and expectations are growing on Councils to engage, work openly, be more accountable and move quicker on issues.
- 1.4 Social media represents opportunities to achieve real value by engaging residents, listening more and harnessing local energy.
- 1.5 Social media can:
 - 1.5.1 Increase residents’ access to Council.
 - 1.5.2 Increase Council’s access to residents and improve the accessibility of Council communication.
 - 1.5.3 Allow Council to be more active in its relationships with residents, partners and other stakeholders.
 - 1.5.4 Increase the level of trust in Council.
 - 1.5.5 Reach targeted audiences on specific issues, events and programs.
 - 1.5.6 Provide effective, fast communication channels during crisis.
 - 1.5.7 Provide insights into how Council is perceived.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this Policy is to provide a policy position in respect to the expectations of Council’s representatives when engaging in social media in both an official and personal capacity.

3. Principles

- 3.1 The following principles will be applied when using Social Media for matters pertaining to Council:
 - 3.1.1 Be credible; accurate, fair, thorough and transparent.
 - 3.1.2 Be respectful, cordial, honest and professional at all times.
 - 3.1.3 Be responsive and share information where appropriate.

- 3.1.4 Behave with honesty and integrity.
- 3.1.5 Be consistent with other Council information.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 **Social Media** The use of online tools for communication, promotion and conversation. Blogs, Microblogs (e.g. Twitter), Social Networks (e.g. Facebook), Podcasts and Video (e.g. YouTube) are all types of Social Media.
- 4.2 **Council Representatives** means Council and Council Committee Members, and Employees when acting in their official capacity and volunteers.

5. Policy

- 5.1 Council representatives using social media must:
 - 5.1.1 Only disclose publicly available information. No comment will be made on Social Media sites regarding confidential, private or legal matters.
 - 5.1.2 Only use corporate imagery such as logos and official Council photographs with the permission of the Chief Executive Officer (or nominee).
 - 5.1.3 Ensure that no copyrighted or trademarked material is published without permission.
 - 5.1.4 Ensure that information posted online is not illegal, libellous, discriminatory, defamatory, abusive, or obscene.
 - 5.1.5 Ensure that information posted online does not infringe the behavioural requirements for Council Members, behavioural standards for Employees or any other Council code or policy.
- 5.2 When using Council social media sites, Employees authorised by the Chief Executive Officer (or nominee) will:
 - 5.2.1 Only post content that is genuinely expected to be of interest to followers.
 - 5.2.2 Link to more information on Council's website where possible. If external websites are required to be linked to, this must be authorised by the Chief Executive Officer (or nominee).
 - 5.2.3 Provide accurate, fair and thorough information.
- 5.3 Monitoring social media
 - 5.3.1 The Chief Executive Officer and/or approved delegate will monitor content posted on all official social media outlets to ensure

adherence to the Social Media Policy for appropriate use, message and consistency in branding.

- 5.3.2 Content relating to Council that is posted on the internet by Council Members, Employees, residents and other community members or organisations will be monitored by the Chief Executive Officer through the use of Google Alerts and other applications.
- 5.3.3 Where necessary, content will be addressed in an appropriate manner.
- 5.3.4 Comments from social media users will be monitored and moderated where possible.
- 5.4 Employees must not use personal accounts to make adverse comments about the Council or its programs, services, projects, Council Members, Employees, Volunteers, Community Members or decisions. Council Members and Employees are not to participate in Council's public consultation processes using social media sites.
- 5.5 Non-compliance with the Social Media Policy by Council representatives will be managed through the relevant Behavioural Management Policy/Standards and disciplinary systems.

6. Document administration and control

Policy title:	Social Media Policy
Policy number:	04.45
Policy type:	Council / Governance
Responsible officer:	Director Community & Corporate
First issued / adopted:	17 March 2015, reference 047-2015
Review period:	Within 12 months after the conclusion of a periodic election, inline with legislative changes or by resolution of Council
Last reviewed:	18 May 2021, [103-2021], January 2023, [010-2023]
Next review date:	By November 2027
Version:	Version 5
Date revoked:	n/a
Applicable legislation:	Local Government Act 1999
Related documents:	Council Member Behavioural Management Policy Employee Behavioural Standards (only applicable if standard is endorsed by Council)
Public consultation required / undertaken:	No
Availability	<p>This Policy is available for inspection at the Council office and any person may obtain a copy of this Policy upon payment of the fee fixed by Council in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges adopted each financial year. It is also available on Council's website mtr.sa.gov.au.</p> <p>Any grievance in relation to this policy or its application should be forwarded in writing to the Chief Executive Officer of the Council.</p>
File reference:	W:\4. Policy Manuals\Current Policy Manual