

POL-C-159 Social Media

1. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees and other representatives of the City of Swan (the City) with guidance on their professional and personal use of social media to protect the reputation and brand of the City and to protect the City and the City's representatives from the legal and reputational risks associated with social media.

This policy aims to balance the opportunities that social media presents for the City with risks that are associated with using social media.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The City recognises the importance of social media as part of an integrated communications and marketing plan. This policy sets out the expectations for City employees and other representatives on the use of social media for City business and in a personal capacity. This policy has been developed to ensure:

- a) the City's social media channels are used in accordance with City policies, the Code of Conduct and align with the Strategic Community Plan 2017-2027;
- b) the City maximises the use of social media tools to inform and engage with stakeholders and the community;
- c) the City's reputation is protected;
- d) employees and City representatives are aware of the risks associated with social media and their responsibilities when using social media; and
- e) legal ramifications are minimised.

2.1 Scope and Definition

This policy applies to all City of Swan employees, elected representatives, contractors, consultants and volunteers, including those affiliated with third parties who access, or are involved with, social media.

Social media may include (although is not limited to):

- social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Yammer);
- video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, Youtube, Instagram);
- blogs, including corporate and personal blogs, micro-blogging wikis, forums and discussion groups;
- podcasting;
- online multiplayer gaming platforms;
- instant messaging (including SMS); and
- geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Foursquare).

2.2 General Principles

- a) The City's social media channels will support and reflect the City's vision, values and strategic objectives.

- b) City of Swan social media channels are to be used as tools for communicating with the community and stakeholders. All channels are to be used as part of a wider integrated marketing approach, not in isolation.
- c) The City's social media channels must not contain content that is inappropriate, illegal, discriminatory or likely to be offensive.
- d) Private or commercial interests, such as private organisations' or companies' products and/or services, other than those approved by Manager Marketing and Public Relations, must not be promoted via the City's social media channels.
- e) Copyright, privacy and other applicable laws must be taken into account when interacting with social media.
- f) There will continue to be appropriate record keeping of information disseminated or collected via social media, in accordance with City policies and the State Records Act 2000 (WA).

2.3 Social Media Usage

City employees and other representatives must avoid legal, cultural, technical and reputational risks by strictly adhering to the City of Swan Social Media Usage Protocols ("Protocols") that outline the rules associated with the professional and personal use of social media.

The Protocols apply to all City employees, elected representatives, contractors, consultants and volunteers, including those affiliated with third parties who access, or are involved with, social media. They have been developed to:

- provide clear instructions for City employees (and other representatives) in the appropriate use of social media for conducting City business;
- provide guidance in preventing legal issues arising from the use of social media; and
- protect the reputation of the City of Swan.

The Protocols have also been developed to avoid:

- inappropriate, inaccurate or inflammatory online comments by the City which result in legal or reputational implications; and
- comments that may be misconstrued as the official position of the Council or City, rather than those reflecting a personal opinion or viewpoint.

2.4 Establishment of Social Media Accounts

- a) Business Units are encouraged to consider social media as part of their overall marketing and communication strategy. The end result and the main communication objective must be considered when selecting a social media channel. There are many communication avenues available for Business Units to use and social media should form part of an integrated communications and marketing plan
- b) The Marketing and Public Relations Business Unit will establish all social media accounts in line with the City's Social Media Strategy and maintain administrator status on each account. For the establishment of any new social media account, a requesting Business Unit must present a Business Case detailing why social media is being considered, how it is proposed to be used and managed, and how the content is to be generated, approved, monitored and resourced to the Manager, Marketing and Public Relations. The Business Case should consider the City's Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan, Workforce Development Plan, Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plan, Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, Community Engagement Policy, Social Media Strategy, Social Media Management Process and Risk Management.

- c) If any third party information providers are proposed to be involved in the generation of content for, or the general use of, a City social media account, prior approval will need to be sought from the Manager Marketing and Public Relations. Third parties must comply with and be provided with a copy of this policy and social media channel terms of use.

2.5 Management of Content

- a) All City social media activities must be branded as belonging to the City, as per the City Corporate Style Guide 2017 and the City of Swan Logo and Civic Crest Policy. This will assist with ensuring that the Council's and City's role in the communication is clearly recognised.
- b) Business Unit Managers are responsible for ensuring that social media content, which relates to their business unit, is accurate, current and appropriate for social media use before publication. This will ensure that the integrity of the corporate identity is maintained. Only staff members who have been approved by the Manager - Marketing and Public Relations as 'registered social media users' are permitted to update information on any of the City's social media accounts. Registered social media users must ensure appropriate approvals are sought before information is published.
- c) All social media must be used as an integrated part of an overall communications or marketing plan and not as a stand-alone method of communication.
- d) The Marketing and Public Relations business unit requires access to each City social media account as administrator. The Marketing and Public Relations Manager can remove any inappropriate material which can be deemed as damaging to the City's reputation or present a legal risk to the City at any time.
- e) When participating, posting, commenting or otherwise on the City's social media channels, members of the public must abide by the City's Terms of Engagement for Social Media.

2.6 Elected Representatives Use of Social Media

- a) Elected representatives may establish personal social media accounts at their own discretion to engage with the community, however, the City will not provide administration or moderation support for these accounts.
- b) The City will not be held liable for any loss or damage, however caused, which elected representatives or others suffer in connection with the use of elected representatives' social media accounts. The City's Legal Representation Costs Indemnification Policy (POL-C-044) applies.
- c) Elected representatives may post comments on the City's social media channels as per the City of Swan Social Media Usage Protocols and Media Protocols Policy (POL-C-134).

2.7 Access Requirements

Consideration must be given to the City's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and the City's Disability Access Policy in the use of all City social media.

2.8 Copyright and Confidentiality

- a) Confidentiality requirements must be respected when using all City social media as per the Use of Information section in the City's Employee Code of Conduct.
- b) Registered social media users must ensure copyright laws are respected and adhered to when posting or updating information on any City social media.

2.9 Recordkeeping Requirements

All records created in the course of City business are to be captured at the point of creation, regardless of format, with required metadata, into appropriate record keeping and business systems according to the City's Records Management Policy. If content on City social media sites is deemed to be a corporate record, the moderator of the social media channel must capture the content (i.e. by screen shot or other means) and store it in the City's electronic record keeping system.

Document Control

Document Approvals:			
Version #	Council Adoption		
1.	Ordinary Council Meeting - 26 March 2014 adopted policy.		
2.	Ordinary Council Meeting - 10 September 2014 adopted policy for 2 years.		
3.	Ordinary Council Meeting - 16 December 2015 adopted review of policy, with no amendments.		
4.	Ordinary Council Meeting - 8 May 2019 adopted revised policy.		
5.	Ordinary Council Meeting - 21 October 2020 adopted policy, with no amendments.		
Document Responsibilities			
Custodian:	Manager Marketing and Public Relations	Custodian Unit:	Marketing and Public Relations
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Compliance Requirements:			
Legislation:			
Industry:			
Organisational:	Employees Code of Conduct. Records Management Policy Community Engagement Policy Website Publishing Policy Acceptable Use of Computing and Communications Facilities Legal Representation Costs Indemnification Policy Media Protocol Policy Use of City of Swan Logo and Civic Crest Policy Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2007-2012 Social Media Usage Protocols Terms of Engagement for Social Media		
Strategic Community Plan:	G2.1 Improve capability and capacity		