

# SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

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## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The use of digital and social media now has a clear and compelling impact on all areas of local government, enabling better and more direct contact between the Parish Council and the people and organizations that it serves and works with.
- 1.2. This Social Media Policy aims to describe how the Parish Council will use social media to improve and expand the ways in which it communicates with its local residents, local businesses, and the various government (local and central) agencies that it deals with. It sets out what is and is not acceptable usage of social media and complements the general rules in the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1. Social media describes a range of websites and online tools which allow people to interact. Social media allows one to share information, give opinions, create interest groups and to build online communities and networks which encourage participation and engagement.
- 2.2. This policy relates to any social media communication published by or on behalf of the council or any individual in their capacity as a councillor.

## 3. Social Media Use

- 3.1 Only the Executive and Deputy/Assistant Executive Officer(s) and Community Engagement Officer have permission to upload photos and videos. The appropriate permissions must be obtained for all imagery. Posting copyright images or text on social media sites is an offence. Breach of copyright could result in an award of damages against you.
- 3.2 Publishing personal data of individuals without permission is a breach of Data Protection legislation and an offence.
- 3.3 Publication of obscene material is a criminal offence and is subject to a custodial sentence.
- 3.4 Councillors should ensure that they comply with the Code of Conduct for Councillors whenever they act or appear to act in an official capacity on social media in the same way as with any other form of communication.

## 4. Social Media Platforms

4.1 Southwater Parish Council maintains several social media accounts which include:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- YouTube

*This Policy does not include WhatsApp.*

## 5. Social Media Moderation Policy

5.1 The Parish Council's social media platforms are reactively moderated. The Council cannot accept responsibility for the content of any comment.

5.2 The Council reserve the right to remove comments received on any social media platform that:

- Contain abusive, obscene, indecent, or offensive language, or link to obscene or offensive material.
- Contain swear words or other sorts of profanity.
- Are designed to cause nuisance to the page administrator or other users.
- Contains abusive language towards an individual involved in the thread, other organisations, or the page administrators.