



## **Mattishall Parish Council Social Media Policy**

### **Definitions**

The definition of social media continues to evolve as platforms and technologies develop. Overall, it refers to any web-based practices which can be used to share content. This policy applies to the use of all social media by any Councillors and employees of Mattishall Parish Council.

### **Aims**

It is a key communications tool for the Council and highlights a commitment to openness and transparency. Anything written on a Mattishall Parish Council social media channel reflects on the organisation, but given the relaxed style of social media, it is important not to appear overly formal.

### **Responsibilities and procedures**

A designated parish councillor is the administrator of Mattishall Parish Council's Social Media channels including Facebook and all postings should be directed through this/ these officer/(s). Any postings should only reflect information of content which it would be acceptable to publish to the general public in other council communications.

The Parish Council is under no obligation to moderate posts or comments made by the public on its social media channels. However, the council would not want to be seen to be endorsing comments which are defamatory, false or misleading; insulting, threatening or abusive; obscene or of a sexual nature; offensive, racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory against religions or other groups; promoting illegal activity; or intended to deceive. Such posts to Mattishall Parish Council Social Media pages will be removed.

Occasional negative posts cannot be avoided, but how they are dealt with has implications for the Council's reputation. They should not be ignored, although sometimes no answer is required if it is a rhetorical question, a repetition of an earlier posting, or a post designed to provoke.

As posts are public it is better to answer them in public, although occasionally it may help to take them onto a private channel.

While the private accounts of authority employees and Councillors are their own business, it is still possible for the content posted on them to affect their professional standing and/or that of the Council.

To mitigate this risk Members/ Officers may not wish include any reference to, or post comments about, the council, job roles, colleagues, or partner organisations. If,

however references to your employment or connection with the council are made on a personal social media profile, please ensure the following actions:

- Declare on each posting that the views expressed are yours alone
- Do not bring the authority into disrepute
- Do not reveal any potentially confidential or sensitive information about the authority that you may have come across in your work or role for the Council.
- Do not use any council-owned images or logos
- Do not include contact details or photographs of service users or staff.
- Do not make offensive comments about the authority, members, officers, colleagues or members of the public as this is a disciplinary offence.

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