

## WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

### Executive Summary

This social media policy is a new corporate policy developed by the Marketing Communications team in consultation with HR. It incorporates feedback from the Standards and Audit Committee (7 March 2019) relating to member complaints and the acceptable use of social media.

The need for a social media policy was identified in the Council's External Communications Strategy 2016 – 2019 and one has existed in draft format since 2016. This revised version focusses on the standards expected of all Council employees and Members when using social networking sites for Council business and/or personal use.

This policy will be supported by a number of other documents developed by the Marketing Communications team that will help improve the quality and impact of the Council's social media activities.

### Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

#### RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL That

- (i) **the Council adopts the Social Media Policy, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, with effect from 16 October 2020; and**
- (ii) **the Marketing Communications Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, be delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Policy.**

### Reasons for Decision

Reason: This policy will help employees and Members to use social media effectively without inadvertently placing themselves in a situation where the appropriateness of their conduct is called into question.

The item(s) above will need to be dealt with by way of a recommendation to Council.

**Background Papers:** None.

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## Woking Borough Council Social Media Policy

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**Date Published:** 30 September 2020

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### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Social media marketing is an essential part of the Council's external communications strategy.
- 1.2 The Council joined Twitter in 2009 and now has profiles on all key social media networks, with established followings.
- 1.3 Corporate profiles are managed by the Marketing Communications team, others are maintained by service areas.
- 1.4 As the Council broadens its use of social media it is necessary to outline the Council's expectations relating to employee and Member conduct online and compliance with the law.
- 1.5 This corporate Social Media Policy helps satisfy that requirement while also complementing and supporting a number of related Council policies.

### 2.0 Business use of social media

- 2.1 The social media policy puts in place appropriate controls to ensure that the Council's social media profiles are set up in a consistent manner, with oversight of the Marketing Communications team.

### 3.0 Personal use of social media

- 3.1 The line between what is public and private, personal and professional is becoming increasingly blurred. The policy outlines the steps Council employees and Members should take to ensure their personal social media activity does not negatively impact on the reputation of the Council and/or their own professional image.

### 4.0 Implications

#### Financial

- 4.1 There are no additional costs associated with the implementation of this policy.
- 4.2 The Marketing Communications team has a number of paid-for subscriptions to online services and tools that support its social media activities. These are covered by the annual Marketing Communications budget.

#### Human Resource/Training and Development

- 4.3 New starters will be made aware of the Council's Social Media Policy via the induction process.
- 4.4 Where business use of social media is approved by the Marketing Communications Manager, one to one training will be provided by a member of the Marketing Communications team with ongoing support.

#### Community Safety

- 4.5 None.

#### Risk Management

- 4.6 This policy should help reduce the risk to the Council by outlining the standards expected when employees and Members engage in social media for business or personal reasons.

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### Sustainability

4.7 A Sustainability Impact Assessment has been completed.

### Equalities

4.8 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed.

### Safeguarding

4.9 This policy outlines the Council's position on cyberbullying.

## **5.0 Consultations**

5.1 The Portfolio Holder, Chairman of the Standards and Audit Committee and Unison were consulted.

REPORT ENDS