

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

Social Media Policy

Readopted 22nd September 2025

1. Introduction

Kingston Seymour Parish Council recognises the importance of social media as a communication tool to engage with **parishioners** and the wider community. This policy outlines the guidelines and expectations for the use of social media platforms by council members and employees.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure responsible and professional use of social media platforms used in its day to day engagements with **parishioners** and wider community.
- Protect the reputation and integrity of the Parish Council.
- Support the safeguarding of sensitive information and data.
- Maintain respectful and courteous communication with the community.
- Provide visibility to residents and wider community of how the Parish Council intends to manage its use of social media as a communications/engagement method.
- To encourage parishioners to engage with the Parish Council directly.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all council members and employees representing Kingston Seymour Parish Council on social media platforms, whether using official council accounts or personal accounts, when discussing council-related matters or anything in respect to articles or concerns raised by parishioners.

4. Guidelines

The following guidelines exist to support implementation of this policy:

4.1. Official Council Social Media Accounts and Posting to recognised Village accounts

- All council members or employees are authorised to manage official council social media communications.
- All posts must adhere to the council's values, objectives, and policies.
- All posts must be factually accurate, relevant and timely.
- Copyright laws must be respected and necessary permissions obtained for content sharing from other content owners.
- Monitor and promptly respond to messages, comments, and enquiries from the parishioners and wider community.

4.2. Personal Social Media Use

- Council members are able to use their own personal accounts for discussing council matters, but they must adhere to this policy at all times when doing so.

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- When responding on behalf of the parish council, councillors should identify that the comment is on behalf of the council.
- Refrain from sharing confidential or sensitive information related to council business via any social media platform.
- Exercise discretion and professionalism in all communications, avoiding inflammatory language, personal attacks, or disrespectful behaviour.
- Adhere at all time to the social media platforms own usage parameters.
- Be mindful of social media privacy settings/data guidelines and ensure personal posts do not conflict with council values or policies.

4.3. Content Management

- Avoid engaging in political or controversial discussions that may compromise the council's neutrality.
- No images or videos of individuals, especially children and vulnerable adults, are to be posted without the express permission of the individual or parent/guardian in relation to children/vulnerable adults.
- Refrain from sharing or introducing on social media any misleading or deceptive information that could harm the council's reputation.
- Report any inappropriate or abusive content encountered on social media platforms to the designated authority promptly (including reporting to the social media provider via their own reporting mechanisms if applicable).

5. Enforcement

Violations of this policy will be addressed through the council's Code of Conduct.

6. Acknowledgment

All council members and employees are required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of this policy.

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and relevance to the council's objectives and evolving social media landscape.

8. Contact Information

For questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact The Clerk of Kingston Seymour Parish Council

Address: Stephen Dixon, 63 Denny View, Portishead, BS20 8BT

Telephone: 07902 798 162 Email: clerk@kingstonseymourparish.gov.uk

By adhering to this policy, Kingston Seymour Parish Council aims to maintain transparency, professionalism, and positive community engagement on all social media platforms used in its day-to-day engagements.

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