



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

The use of digital and social media and electronic communications enables Knaresborough Town Council to interact in a way that improves the communications with a wider audience. It is to enhance, not replace, other forms of communication.

The Council has a website (www.knaresboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk) and a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/KnaresboroughTC>) and also uses email to communicate.

1. This policy relates to the creation and management of Social Media accounts by Knaresborough Town Council.
2. The aim of this policy is to set down rules and regulations to ensure proper use of the account.
3. The aim is to use Social Media accounts to interact in a stronger way with the residents and to use it to advertise events and other projects of the Town Council/community.

Management

4. Town Council social media will be created and managed solely by the Town Council Office staff. No council member will have access to the administration of the social media accounts.
5. The Facebook page is available to provide information and updates regarding activities and opportunities within the Town and promote our community in a positive way.
6. The accounts will only link to pages of a local government organisation or organisations/causes relating to the town.
7. Communications from the Council will meet the following criteria:
 - Be civil, tasteful and relevant;

- Not contain content that is knowingly unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene profane, sexually orientated or racially offensive;
 - Not contain content knowingly copied from elsewhere, for which we do not own the copyright;
 - Not contain any personal information;
 - Not be used for the dissemination of any political advertising.
8. Town Council Posts on the Facebook page will be available for all users of Facebook to see.
 9. The Town Council's logo will be the profile picture for everyone to see.
 10. Photo Albums will be open for everyone to view.
 11. Photographs uploaded will not have a direct view of any child's face without the prior consent of their guardian.
 12. The accounts will be maintained by the office staff who will remove messages which include:
 - Abusive language content
 - Which may cause offence to a specific group of people e.g. comments on a person's sexuality, sexist comments, racial comments etc.
 - Which contain potential libellous comments.
 - Any other comment which may cause offence in any way.
 13. Facebook is not monitored 24 hours a day and we will not always be able to respond to individual comments or messages received.
 14. A member of the public or councillor sending a message via Facebook will not be considered as contacting the Council for official purposes and we will not be obliged to monitor or respond to requests for information through these channels. Instead, please make direct contact with the Council's Clerk (clerk@knaresboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk) and/or members of the Council.
 15. If any matters raised are relevant and need to be discussed by the Town Council, then further information will be sought and brought to the relevant council meeting/committee.
 16. Event dates will be created for any Town Council event taking place. Other events taking place in the town may be promoted.

17. The account will not be used for playing games, adding applications, or anything of a personal nature.
18. Private messages will be sent, where appropriate, in response to anyone sending an initial private message to the Town Council accounts. If a “simple” response does not satisfy the enquiry, then the person will be asked to email the Council with the request for comment and the office email will be provided. Any posts raising issues/questions/comments that cannot be answered “simply” will be dealt with separately via email. The Town Council email address will be provided.

Use of Social Media by Councillors

19. When using social media councillors should not represent their personal views as being the view or the policies of the council, nor should they represent their views as being those of other councillors unless other councillors have given express permission. Councillors must not engage in personal criticism on social media of other councillors, individuals, or organisations with whom the Town Council has dealings (in accordance with the Nolan principles of conduct in public life).

Changes

20. This policy will be a living document and can be altered by the Town Council Office Staff, if necessary, to allow immediate action should the unexpected arise. This will be key to overcome teething problems that have not already been identified. Changes to the policy will be highlighted at the next Town Council meeting to keep members abreast of the changes for their approval. This policy will be kept under review by the Town Council.

Adopted: February 2021

Review: February 2025