

SOCIAL MEDIA STATEMENT WITTON LE WEAR PARISH COUNCIL

This statement sets out the Parish Council's approach on social media.

It covers:

1. the purpose and aims of the Parish Council maintaining social media accounts;
2. arrangements for the operation and management of the Parish Council's social media accounts; and
3. expectations for members of the Parish Council when using their own social media accounts or other accounts to which they have access.

1 Purposes and aims of the Parish Council social media accounts

1.1 The Parish Council maintains social media accounts to:

a) share with villagers:

i) information on Parish Council business;

ii) community notices; and

iii) other such information of public interest deemed appropriate by the Clerk.

b) capture villagers' questions, queries, requests, and matters of concern to direct them to the Parish Council, County Council, or other appropriate contact portal appropriate to their issue.

1.2 The Parish Council's social media presence aims to enhance and complement its other established community communication channels, not replace them.

2 Arrangements for the operation and management of the Parish Council's social media accounts

2.1 The Clerk and the Chair only will have privileges to post as the Parish Council. The Clerk is appointed moderator of the accounts and will be responsible for posting and monitoring content to ensure it complies with this statement. The Clerk will have authority to remove any posts made by third parties from council social media pages which, in consultation with the Chair, are deemed to be of a defamatory or libelous nature.

2.2 The Clerk will make arrangements for the Parish Council's social media accounts to be checked regularly, aiming to respond to communications from villagers (including and not limited to the types set out at 1.2 above) within 72 hours of them being posted.

2.3 The Parish Council will on an annual basis review for effectiveness the social media accounts it maintains. And decide:

- To continue or discontinue its accounts on each platform; and
- To establish account(s) on other platforms. New accounts will be subject to this statement and its provisions.

2.4 Anyone with concerns regarding content placed on social media sites that denigrate parish councillors, council staff or villagers should report them to the Clerk of the Council. If the Clerk is the subject of that concern, the concern should be reported to the Chair.

3 Use of social media accounts by members and staff of the Parish Council.

3.1 This statement applies to all members and staff and their social media accounts. Everyone is individually responsible for their content (posts, comments, likes, shares, and so on) on social media, including posting on blogs, group emails, and group messaging. The conduct of members and staff in these forums is subject to the adopted Code of Conduct.

3.2 Members and staff must:

- a) act within the law,
- b) keep the tone of comments respectful and informative,
- c) make sure their posts and comments are accurate, objective, balanced and informative.

3.3 Members and staff must not:

- a) present personal opinions as those of the council,
- b) engage in personal attacks, online fights and hostile communications.

3.4 Views posted in any capacity in advance of matters to be debated by members at a council or committee meeting may constitute Pre-disposition, Predetermination or Bias and may require the individual to declare an interest and take no part in the relevant discussions and decision making.

Date adopted: 11/04/2022 Date to be reviewed: May 2023