

South Lakeland District Council
Standards Committee
Monday, 11 October 2021
Social Media Guide for Councillors

Portfolio: Cllr Dixon Customer and Locality Services Portfolio Holder

Report from: Monitoring Officer

Report Author: Richard Machin – Communications Specialist

Wards: (All Wards);

Links to Council Plan Priorities: Working across boundaries – Delivering a balanced community – A fairer South Lakeland

1.0 Expected Outcome and Measures of Success

The Social Media Guide is meant as a brief introduction to social media for councillors, outlining how social media can be used to positively support councillors' community leadership roles.

The guide will help support councillors in creating community conversations and connecting with residents, businesses and organisations and campaigning on important local issues.

It will help support Customer Connect objectives to develop digital communication channels for the benefit of our residents and aligns with the principles in the Government's Local Digital Declaration, specifically that local authorities use technology to offer the flexible tools and services we need.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that Standards Committee notes the Social Media Guide for Councillors.

3.0 Background and Proposals

People are increasingly turning first to online sources to find information, order goods and make connections with friends, family and colleagues.

Residents will also expect that local government will be able to provide its services online with the same level of interactivity that they find everywhere else.

Already many councillors and almost all councils are engaging with the people and communities they represent online through social media.

Through its Customer Connect transformation programme, the Council is committed to using digital technologies to make life simpler for customers, improve customer interaction and use customer feedback to inform our responses and deliver faster, better and more cost-effective services for our residents.

The Council has also signed up to the Government's Local Digital Declaration.

The initiative aims to get local authorities to work towards a collective ambition for local public services in the internet age.

Many of the commitments in the Local Digital Declaration align closely with the aims and objectives of Customer Connect:

- To design services that best meet the needs of citizens
- To use technology to offer the flexible tools and services we need
- To protect citizens' privacy and security
- To deliver better value for money

The overall ambition is to help create the conditions for the next generation of local public services, where technology is an enabler rather than a barrier to service improvements, and services are easier and more convenient for residents to access.

The Communications Team has run a number of courses for councillors on the basics of social media, to help elected members to understand the advantages, opportunities and associated risks of using social media to support their roles as elected members and the aims and ambitions of Customer Connect and the Local Digital Declaration.

As representatives of their local areas and the democratically elected leaders of their organisations and partnerships, councillors can play a crucial part in delivering these ambitions and the use of social media can be a key element.

Following the training it was requested by the Member Support Steering Group (MSSG) that a simple guide be produced summarising some of the key points from the training sessions, that could be distributed to all district councillors – including new members as part of their induction packs.

The guide is meant as a brief introduction to social media for councillors, outlining how social media can be used to:

- Support councillors' leadership roles
- Create a space for community conversation
- Keep up-to-date with local needs and issues
- Campaign for important local issues

The request from MSSG has been actioned and the guide has been produced and circulated to all members. A copy is also available in the Member Support area of Sharepoint.

4.0 Appendices Attached to this Report

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Social Media Guide for Councillors (PDF)

5.0 Consultation – N/A

6.0 Alternative Options - N/A

7.0 Implications

Financial, Resources and Procurement - N/A

Human Resources – N/A

Legal

Legal, Governance and Democracy Lead Specialist consulted on guide contents relating to Code of Conduct, libel and copyright

Health and Sustainability Impact Assessment

7.4 Have you completed a Health and Sustainability Impact Assessment?

7.5 If you have not completed an Impact Assessment, please explain your reasons: Not considered appropriate

7.6 Summary of Health and Sustainability Impacts

		Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Environment and Health	Greenhouse gases emissions		x		
	Air Quality		x		
	Biodiversity		x		
	Impacts of Climate Change		x		
	Reduced or zero requirement for energy, building space, materials or travel		x		
	Active Travel		x		
Economy and Culture	Inclusive and sustainable development		x		
	Jobs and levels of pay		x		
	Healthier high streets		x		
	Culture, creativity and heritage		x		
Housing and Communities	Standard of housing		x		
	Access to housing		x		
	Crime		x		
	Social connectedness	x			

Equality and Diversity

7.7 Have you completed an Equality Impact Analysis? Yes

7.8 Summary of Equality and Diversity impacts

Please indicate: P = Positive impact; 0 = Neutral; N = Negative; Enter "X"					
Age	P		0	X	N
Disability	P		0	X	N
Gender reassignment (transgender)	P		0	X	N
Marriage & civil partnership	P		0	X	N
Pregnancy & maternity	P		0	X	N
Race/ethnicity	P		0	X	N
Religion or belief	P		0	X	N
Sex/gender	P		0	X	N
Sexual orientation	P		0	X	N
Armed forces families	P		0	X	N
Rurality	P	X	0		N
Socio-economic disadvantage	P	X	0		N

Contact Officers

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Tracking Information

Signed off by	Date sent	Date Signed off
Monitoring Officer	30/09/2021	30/09/2021
CMT	30/09/2021	30/09/2021

Circulated to	Date sent
Lead Specialist	N/A
Human Resources Lead Specialist	N/A
Communications Team	N/A
Leader	N/A
Committee Chairman	N/A
Portfolio Holder	30/09/2021
Ward Councillor(s)	N/A
Committee	11/10/2021
Executive (Cabinet)	N/A
Council	N/A