

## **LISKEARD TOWN COUNCIL**



### **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

#### **Section A: Aims of use of social media**

The aims of the Council's expansion into social media include:

1. To enhance the Council's communication as part of Local Council Award Scheme.
2. To communicate with more people, including more young people.
3. To provide information for people who can't get to the Council offices and Tourist Information Centre (TIC).
4. To promote and provide positive publicity for the town, town centre, town organisations, town events and town council.
5. To receive residents' views and issues.
6. To provide an alternative way for residents to communicate their views, issues and questions, bearing in mind that some are more comfortable communicating online.
7. To promote two-way communication and consultation.

#### **Section B: Types of Social Media**

1. Liskeard Town Council (LTC) will use a Facebook page (a 'like' page, as opposed to a personal account with 'friends')
2. From December 2016 LTC will trial a Twitter account for 6 months.

#### **Section C: Responsibilities & appropriate use**

Both the TIC and the Town Council Facebook pages will be the responsibility of the Town Clerk and those TIC staff members who have been trained. They will be registered as administrators for the Facebook page and will assist in promoting the pages.

Minor changes – for example, minor additions to content, style or experiments with different media etc. – may be implemented after agreement with the Mayor/Town Clerk. It is anticipated that the staff operating the accounts will spend in total around 30 minutes a day on average on these tasks.

1. The Town Clerk will monitor and offer guidance as required.
2. The Mayor will also monitor and give feedback to the Town Clerk and TIC staff. He/she may be consulted for guidance if required and will be an administrator for the Facebook page. This is solely to provide continuity of access if members of staff change.
3. Councillors will not be involved in 'official posting' but are encouraged to promote the pages.
4. Official posts must conform to the content and style guidelines below.
5. No member of staff or Councillor should post in their personal capacity on the LTC Facebook page.

#### **Section D: Administration guidelines**

1. In general, LTC will only 'like' or follow organisations providing information related to public services likely to be of interest to residents of Liskeard.
2. The Mayor/Town Clerk can approve additional pages to be liked or followed.
3. LTC will reply as appropriate where posts are not abusive/using inappropriate language.
4. Users who do post abusively or use inappropriate language will be warned once and then blocked or banned.

#### **Section E: Content & style guidelines**

1. If unsure on any point of content or style consult the TIC staff in the first instance and then the Mayor/Town Clerk. Official posts must express no personal opinions: only factual information or council policy.
2. In general, anything that would be allowed on the LTC noticeboards will be allowed on the Facebook page.
  - a. General content should include:
    - i. Regular items
    - ii. Next meeting: main topics.
    - iii. Major town events.
    - iv. Photos from events/engagements if available.
  - b. As and when items
    - i. Consultations.
    - ii. Elections – reminder when and where to vote.
    - iii. Important public information (e.g. road closures etc.).
  - c. Periodic reminders
    - i. Allotments.
    - ii. Public Hall hire.
    - iii. Community grants budget.
    - iv. Notice-boards.

- d. Details of the Eva Bowles, Philip Blamey and Alex Page Trusts.
3. Post using 'we' rather than 'I' to emphasise the corporate nature of the information.
4. Write clearly and courteously, keeping the tone formal but friendly. Postings should be in plain everyday English not 'council speak' – for example 'snow' not 'inclement weather' and 'budget setting' rather than 'precepting'.
5. Add photographs where possible. Avoid using photographs that clearly identify under-18s unless they are supplied by organisations with clear child protection procedures (such as schools or sports clubs).
6. Use symbols appropriate to particular topics so people can easily focus on what they want to read.
7. If a post requires a response of general interest (e.g. about a road closure) post to everyone. If it requires an individual response (e.g. about a casework issue) message, the individual concerned on Facebook with the relevant details.
8. If a query relates to something that LTC doesn't deal with, give as much information as possible about whom to contact and how to contact them. Remember that, as they are already online, a link to a web page or email address may be better than a phone number.

### **Section F: Promotion**

LTC staff and members will aim to promote the Facebook account (to get 'likes') and the Twitter account (to get 'followers') via

- a. About Liskeard
- b. LTC Website
- c. LTC Noticeboards
- d. Suggestions on Facebook
- e. Word of mouth
- f. Other appropriate ways as agreed

**This policy will be reviewed annually by the Communications and Engagement Committee which will recommend any changes to the Council.**