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 young people and harder to reach groups
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:
   - Facebook
   - Twitter
2. Use of any new social media channels must be authorised by a resolution of the Communications and Engagement committee

Section C: Responsibilities & appropriate use

The social media accounts will be the responsibility of the Town Clerk and will be administered by those staff suitably trained and authorised to do so.

1. The Town Clerk will monitor and offer guidance as required.
2. Councillors will not be involved in 'official posting' unless authorised for a specific event. Councillors are encouraged to promote the pages.
3. No member of staff or Councillor should post in their personal capacity on the LTC Facebook page.
4. Staff or Councillors who comment on council posts from their own accounts must do so in their official capacity
5. Social media must be used for lawful purposes only and must comply with relevant legislation and the Council's own policies.

6. Posts must not publish or link to any posts or content (text, images or video) that may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection and confidence or other claims for damages. This includes but is not limited to material of an illegal, discriminatory, sexual or offensive nature that may bring the Council into disrepute.
7. Staff and members must not promote personal financial interests, commercial ventures or personal campaigns via town council social media accounts. Posts must not be of a political nature or for specific campaigning.
8. Be vigilant towards social engineering and phishing attacks through social media in the same way as you would email i.e. be cautious when receiving 'direct messages' which contain links.

Section D: Administration guidelines

1. LTC will only 'like' or follow individuals and organisations appropriate to the role of the town council and its policies.
2. LTC will reply as appropriate where posts are not abusive/using inappropriate language.
3. Users who do post abusively or use inappropriate language will be warned once and then blocked or banned.
4. The decision of the Town Clerk will be final.

Section E: Content & style guidelines

1. 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 social media.
   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 English.

5. Add photographs where possible.
6. Use appropriate symbols, such as hashtags on 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) this should be sent privately via an appropriate communication channel.
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.

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

Amended 6 March 2018 (reference 561/17)
Full review May 2018