



**WINTON SHIRE COUNCIL
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY & PROCEDURE

SOCIAL MEDIA – POLICY & PROCEDURE

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this Winton Shire Council **Social Media Policy and Procedure** is to:

- Identify the parameter of Winton Shire Council's use of social media
- Outline the process for managing Council's social media presence
- Provide direction to employees about the personal and professional use of social media
- Protect the interests and intellectual property of Winton Shire Council

SCOPE

This Social Media Policy applies to all employees of Winton Shire Council (WSC) who use social media for professional and personal use.

This document provides direction on the official representation of WSC and its tourism brands 'Experience Winton' and 'Waltzing Matilda' through social media, and the personal use of social media by WSC employees.

Note: Personal use of social media where the individual is representing themselves and does not reference WSC or its operations - does not apply to this policy.

DEFINITIONS

CEO - The person appointed to the position of Chief Executive Officer under the Local Government Act 2009, and anyone acting in that position.

Council - Winton Shire Council

Employee – Includes any person employed by Council and persons providing services to or on behalf of Council, including Elected members

Social Media – An umbrella term covering websites, technology, applications, or tools that enable an exchange of dialogue between organisation, communities, and individuals.

Social media may include (but is not limited to):

- Social Network websites/apps (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+)
- Video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Instagram, Flickr, Youtube)
- Blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs
- Blogs hosted by media outlets (e.g. 'comments' sections on news articles etc.)
- Micro-blogging (e.g. Twitter)
- Wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia)
- Forums, discussion boards, and groups (e.g. Google Groups, Whirlpool, Yahoo! Groups)
- Instant messaging (e.g. SMS, Facebook Messenger)

PROCEDURE

General Use by Council

Social media is used as a channel by the community to access WSC and vice versa. For Council, social media represents a channel by which Council can support or deliver a wide range of activities including:

- Community engagement, communication and marketing
- Policy development and implementation
- Service delivery
- Research

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Views expressed in these channels by anyone other than WSC or its brands 'Experience Winton', and 'Waltzing Matilda', are not Council's views and Council disclaims all liability for any such views, comments, advertising or other non-Council content.

Council encourages discussion and opinion-sharing via Council's social media presences, however inflammatory, defamatory, commercial, spam and comments encouraging activities illegal in Australia or that are detected as transgressing copyright or intellectual property laws will be deleted.

Professional Use

Professional use of social media is any use of a WSC managed social media account, profile or presence by an authorised employee. Comments made through official social media accounts are representative of WSC and must only be made by employees authorised to do so.

Employees may be granted authorisation with a completed **Network Access Request Form**.

While individuals may have their own social media presence, the distinction between a personal profile and the Council profile shall remain separate.

Authorised employees may:

- Publish content that is relevant, accurate, and fair (text, images, video)
- Respond to communication from individuals within appropriate timeframes
- Publish links to external content that is relevant, accurate, and fair
- Publish links to content on Council websites
- Share published Council content to external social media profiles

Authorised employees **must not**:

- Interact with their own personal social media profiles or those of Council employees
- Publish views or opinions that do not reflect that of Council
- Publish content that breaches the Copyright Act 1968
- Reproduce published content to any non-Council social media channel
- Publish content that discloses personal, confidential, or private information
- Publish content that is illegal, discriminatory, defamatory, abusive, or obscene

Personal Use

Personal use of social media is defined as - individual or private use during work hours, after-hours, and while on leave, and not attributable as an official use. Council recognises that staff may wish to use social media for personal use and this policy is not intended to discourage or limit anyone from using it.

Publishing content about Council on personal social media profiles is permitted by Council employees but must adhere to the directions below.

Employees may:

- Publish content that is accurate, publicly available information, and complies with all relevant Council policies
- Share published Council content to personal & public social media profiles

Employees **must not**:

- Disclose confidential Council information
- Imply that you are authorised to speak as a representative of Council or that views expressed are those of Council
- Use or reference the identity or likeness of another Council employee, contractor, or member of Council without appropriate permission
- Publish content that may be damaging to the reputation of Council or its employees
- Use a Council email address, or any Council logos or insignia
- Publish content that breaches Council's Code of Conduct or Council Policies

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- Publish Council content, advertisements, or information that has not been published by an authorised user through Council's official social media

Update Frequency

Authorised users shall endeavour to update Council social media presences as dictated by circumstance and as described in the table below:

INFORMATION TYPE	TIMEFRAME
News, Public Notices or other Business	<i>As required</i>
Council Business Papers and Minutes	<i>Monthly as required</i>
Policies or Local Laws	<i>As changed, modified or adopted</i>
Road Reports	<i>As changed conditions can be confirmed</i>
Crisis information	<i>As available</i>

Response Times

Council shall endeavour to respond to enquiries submitted via social media within 12 business hours during the operating times of 8:30am – 5:00PM Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

When possible, enquiries may be resolved directly, however if required enquiries may be directed to the appropriate Council employee for response.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Social media by its nature can result in the disclosure of personal information in a public way. Privacy is one of the major concerns of those using social media and the following sections provide guidance on how to make use of social media while complying with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

Employees must not disclose confidential Council information on any Social Media channel unless authorised to do so.

Under no circumstances is a Council Employee to replicate unauthorised copies of Council data, information, or intellectual property for purposes other than Council business.

Personal Information

Council will not willingly disclose any personal information (such as name, address, contact details etc.) without express written permission of that person, or unless required to do so by law.

Photography

Council employees shall endeavour to get written permission from the subject or individual/s concerned prior to taking photographs.

If at any stage a member of the public requests a Council employee to stop taking photographs (while carrying out duties relating to this policy) the employee shall cease immediately. Every effort shall be made to ensure photos already captured are removed and deleted.

COPYRIGHT

Employees are required to adhere to the requirements of copyright legislation. Intellectual property rights apply to most material on the internet, including text, graphics, and sound. Employees must not assume they can reproduce, print, transmit, or download material to which they have access. Usage of any material should comply with copyright legislation, as any material reproduce outside permitted uses

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or without the permission of the owner may result in litigation action against Council and disciplinary action against the Council employee.

The copyright over artistic, literary, dramatic or musical work authored by WSC employees whilst carrying out work duties is owned by the WSC as per the Copyright Act 1968 (s35) unless by prior arrangement.

UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY

Employees must not conduct or be party to any unlawful activity while using or through the use of Council social media channels. Any unlawful activity found to occur will be reported directly to the CEO and appropriate law enforcement agencies. This includes, but is not limited to, harassment, and defamation.

COMMUNICATION

- All Council employees will have access to this policy.
- All Council employees will be provided with opportunities to be involved in the review of this policy.
- Council employees will be provided with information from this policy at the time of employment and orientation.
- Changes/amendments made to this Policy document will be communicated to all Council employees.

ENFORCEMENT

Non-compliance with this policy could place Council in breach of both the **Local Government Act 2009** and/or the **Information Privacy Act 2009**. It is important to note that non-compliance with this policy/procedure by an individual could lead to personal liability and/or criminal prosecution.

The failure of any Council employee to comply with this policy in its entirety may lead to:

- Refresher or further training,
- Performance management, or
- Modification or termination of employment.

RELATED COUNCIL DOCUMENTATION

- Employee Code of Conduct
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Information Technology (IT) Acceptable Use Policy
- Cyberbullying Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Network Access Request Form

LEGISLATION, RECOGNISED AUTHORITIES AND OTHER SOURCES

- Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)
- Local Government Regulation 2012 (Qld)
- Copyright Act 1968 (Federal)
- Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)
- Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)
- Crime and Corruption Act 2001 (Qld)
- Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)
- Invasion of Privacy Act 1971 (Qld)
- Office of the Information Commissioner (Qld) <https://www.oic.qld.gov.au/>

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CEO DISCRETION

Where applicable, the CEO can apply their discretion as to the enforcement of the requirements outlined in this policy and any requests for variations to this policy.

REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy remains in force until amended or repealed by resolution of Council. This document will be reviewed biannually or as required.

RECORD OF AMENDMENTS and ADOPTIONS			
DATE	REVISION NO	REASON FOR AMENDMENT	ADOPTED BY COUNCIL
November 2021	V1.0	Preparation for Council Adoption	17 December 2021