

CE 7 – Social Media

1 Objectives

The objective of this Policy is to outline what Council considers appropriate and productive use of social media as a communication tool. We use social media to inform, not to engage.

2 Scope

This Policy outlines:

- 2.1 What is expected of officers, Elected Members and contractors in relation to using social media;
- 2.2 What type of information we post;
- 2.3 How we monitor social media;
- 2.4 The decision not to respond to comments to protect the reputation and legitimate interests of Council.

3 Policy

3.1 Who can post

- (a) The Communications Officer is responsible for social media management.
- (b) Delegated site monitors are nominated by the CEO and made administrators on the Shire Facebook page. The site monitors are the only officers to post/upload content on the official social media site.

Site monitors are:

- Communications Officer;
- Executive Manager, Community and Economic Development;
- Executive Assistant; and
- Community Emergency Services Manager.

All other officers wishing to post Shire content on official social media sites can forward their information and/or responses to the delegated site monitors.

3.2 Why we post

The Shire posts on social media to:

- (a) Inform the community of Shire or other information and activities that will impact on, be of interest to, or be of service to, the community; and
- (b) Ensure the community is informed of information in a widely accessible and timely manner.

3.3 What we post

The type of content the Shire posts includes:

- (a) Notice of significant council events/information – such as meetings, elections, major decisions of council, bushfire hazards and information about council services.
- (b) Tenders.
- (c) Job advertisements.

- (d) Educational information about Council services.
 - (e) Community events that are sponsored by the Shire.
 - (f) Information provided by third parties (e.g. a government agency) that impacts on, or is of interest to, the community (see 3.5 (c)) for details.
 - (g) Community consultation/engagement opportunity. Comments on these posts will not be classified as submissions. The post content will contain the following statement. Please be aware that comments on this post will not be considered submissions, however, we do encourage you to find out more and make a formal submission by visiting: (website link).
 - (h) New articles in the form of a summary that links to full article on the Shire website.
- *Styled templates are to be used for posts in alignment with the Shire branding.

3.4 What we do not post

- (a) Community events not sponsored by the Shire. Groups will be redirected to share on the Bridgetown Notice Board as it has a bigger audience.
- (b) Commercial events.

3.5 Where we post

- (a) We post to the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes Facebook page.
- (b) We share every post to the Community Notice Board group to reach a wider audience.
- (c) We post as The Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes to the Community Notice Board when asked to share information (see 3.3(f)) and include the statement:

We have been asked by (insert govt dept) to share this information with the community. Please direct any queries to them directly.

3.6 When we post

- (a) We post as needs dictate to keep the community informed in a timely manner, and as information comes to hand. We do not have a rigid schedule for posting at certain times or on certain days.
- (b) When possible, we schedule posts on consistent days to create a pattern of recognition (e.g. Waste Wednesday). This also gives officers a framework of when to provide content to the Communications Officer. Scheduling also allows us to post on days that the Communications Officer is not working.

3.7 How we interact on Facebook

- (a) The Shire does not have capacity to monitor and respond to social media posts full time, therefore there can be no expectation of immediate post responses.
- (b) We have a pinned post on our Facebook page stating:

The Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes uses Social Media primarily to inform rather than as an interactive forum. We value and appreciate your feedback and recommend that the best way to contact us for a response is via the customer service request here:

<https://www.bridgetown.wa.gov.au/contact.aspx>

- (c) Comments made by community members on proposals which are subject to engagement or consultation will not be treated as formal submissions on the proposal.

The method for enabling community members to make formal submissions on proposals will be made clear in the original post. See 3.3(h)).

- (d) The CEO reserves the right to remove content such as illegal or offensive material.

3.8 Review and Evaluation

Ongoing procedural evaluations will be undertaken regularly by the delegated site monitors to ensure any arising issues relating to daily activity or content are dealt with swiftly. Procedural evaluations will be attended by the delegated site monitors.

An annual review of this policy to assess its effectiveness will be undertaken. During this process consideration will be given to any arising issues not solved during ongoing operations and procedural evaluations.

3.9 Personal Facebook accounts

When using personal Facebook accounts, officers and Elected Members must not pose to represent Council.

When commenting on personal social media sites officers and Elected Members can post publicly available information about Shire activities, services and events, as well as Council decisions.

When using personal social media accounts for personal communication, officers and Elected Members must not:

- Use Council's intellectual property or copyrighted materials;
- Disclose sensitive or confidential information; or
- Make negative comment or insinuation about Council, Elected Members, staff members or the organisation itself.

A breach of 3.9 will result in disciplinary action.

4 Accountabilities & Responsibilities

4.1 Council is accountable for:

- Ensuring the organisation has in place a lawful, transparent, and accountable policy framework, supported by a suite of compliant and appropriate policies and procedures.
- Endorsing (or not) each organisational policy document in a timely and effective manner.
- Delegating implementation of each policy document to the CEO.

4.2 The CEO is accountable for ensuring the development, implementation, monitoring and review of this policy document, in accord with governing legislation and Council directives.

4.3 The Executive Management Team and Managers is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all employees under their direction comply with this policy document.
- Enacting process to redress non-compliance with this policy document.

4.4 All employees are individually responsible for complying with this policy document.

5 Legislation, Policy & Other Related Documents

Act	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> s.2.7(2)(b) – The council is to determine the local government’s policies s.5.103 – Model code of conduct for council members, committee members and candidates
Regulation	N/A
Local Law	N/A
Policy	CE 2 – Media and Public Relations Policy CE 8 – Community Engagement Policy
Procedure	N/A
Other Documents	External Communications Framework Community Engagement Toolkit Shire Branding and Style Guide

6 Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Amendments
V1	26 September 2013	T Clynch	Original Document
V2	02 November 2023	N Gibbs	Three-year review
Scheduled Reviewed Date	02 November 2026		