

Quendon & Rickling Parish Council

Social Media Policy

(revised 11th March 2020)

What is Social Media?

Social media' is the term commonly given to websites and online tools allowing users to interact with each other and/or the general public in some way – by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests. This interaction can be through computers, mobile phones and new generation technology such as i-pads.

Examples of social media websites include:

- social networking (e.g. facebook, Myspace and other networking sites)
- video sharing (e.g. youtube and other video clips and podcast sites)
- blogs and discussion forums
- micro-blogging (e.g. twitter)
- wikis (e.g. wikipedia)
- social bookmarking (e.g. www.delicious.com)
- Parish Council emails

Council Use of Social Media

Who does it apply to?

The principles of the Policy apply to Parish Councillors. It is also intended for guidance for others that wish to communicate with the Parish Council

Use of Social Media

The website and other forms of social media will be used to enhance communication. Existing means of communication should continue with social media being an additional medium.

- Social Media must NOT be used in the recruitment process for employees or Councillors as this could lead to privacy, potential discrimination claims and also data protection issues, with the exception of placing vacancy advertisements.

Approved Council Social Media

- Parish Council website <http://www.quendonandrickling.co.uk/>

The Policy

1. The Council will appoint a nominated member of staff/ Councillor or Councillors as *moderator(s)*. They will be responsible for posting and monitoring the content ensuring that it complies with the Social Media Policy. The moderator will have authority to remove any posts made by third parties from our social media pages which are deemed to be of a defamatory or libellous nature. Such posts will also be reported to the Hosts (i.e. Facebook) and also the Clerk.

2. The Council will appoint a nominated “*Webmaster*” to maintain and update the Parish Council Website.

The social media may be used to;

- Post minutes and dates of meetings
- Advertise events and activities
- Promote good news stories
- Advertise vacancies
- Sharing information from partners e.g. Police etc...
- Announce new information
- Post or share information from other Parish related community groups/clubs/associations/bodies e.g. Schools, Clubs and community groups
- Post or share information from local businesses that relates to a parish or community event.
- Refer resident queries to the clerk and all other councillors

Facebook will be used to support the website information above.

Emails will be used to distribute information concerning council business

Individual Parish councillors are responsible for what they post. Councillors are personally responsible for any online activity conducted via their published e-mail address which is used for council business. Councillors are strongly advised to have separate council and personal email addresses, and adhere to The Members’ Code of Conduct.

Code of Practice

Guidance when using social media (including e-mail)

1. All social media sites in use should be checked and updated on a regular basis and ensure that the security settings are in place.
2. When participating in any online communication residents and councillors should
:
 - Be responsible and respectful, be direct, informative, brief and transparent.
 - Always disclose your identity and affiliation to the Parish Council; never make false or misleading statements.
3. Residents and Councillors should note that not all communications require a response. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Some communication from residents and other third parties may be required to be discussed at a Parish Council meeting. When this is necessary the item will be placed on the next, available agenda, subject to priorities. Any response will then be included in the minutes of the meeting.
4. The nominated moderator or moderators shall remove any negative posts which may contain personal and inflammatory remarks, libellous or defamatory information without further comment.
5. Councillors or parishioners who have any concerns regarding content placed on social media sites should report them to the Clerk of the Council.

Adopted by Quendon and Rickling Parish Council on 11th March 2020.
To be reviewed on or before 11th April 2023.