

UFFORD PARISH COUNCIL SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

PURPOSE

This Social Media Policy sets out the guidelines and expectations for the appropriate use of social media by councillors, employees, and representatives of Ufford Parish Council. It aims to protect the reputation of the Council and ensure responsible communication in line with legal, professional, and ethical standards.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

All employees of Ufford Parish Council

All members of Ufford Parish Council (elected and co-opted)

Contractors or volunteers acting on behalf of the Council

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media refers to any online platform that enables communication, interaction, or sharing of content. Examples include, but are not limited to:

Facebook

Twitter (X)

Instagram

LinkedIn

YouTube

WhatsApp

TikTok

Blogs, forums, or any other user-generated content platforms

WHEN THE POLICY APPLIES

This policy applies to use of social media:

- During and outside of working hours
- On council-owned devices and personal devices
- In both a personal and professional capacity when referencing, identifying with, or discussing matters related to Ufford Parish Council

OFFICIAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Only designated employees or councillors authorised by the Clerk may post on behalf of Ufford Parish Council. Any official communications must:

- Be approved by the Clerk or Chair when necessary
- Reflect the Council's official position

- Be respectful, factual, and avoid political bias

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Personal use of social media is permitted provided that:

- It does not interfere with work responsibilities
- Council equipment is not used for personal use during working hours (unless authorised)
- The Council is not brought into disrepute

Individuals should:

- Refrain from making disparaging or defamatory remarks about the Council, its members, staff, or stakeholders
- Avoid commenting on sensitive council matters such as planning applications
- Include a disclaimer where appropriate, e.g. "Views expressed are my own and not those of Ufford Parish Council"
- Refer any concerning content or public criticism about the Council to the Clerk or Chair

MONITORING AND PRIVACY

Ufford Parish Council reserves the right to monitor the use of internet and email on council-owned devices in line with its Privacy Notice. Any monitoring will be proportionate and lawful.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN RECRUITMENT

The Council does not routinely check applicants' social media profiles as part of its recruitment process. If any checks are made, they will comply with data protection principles and will be reflected in the Council's Privacy Notice.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Where a role includes social media responsibilities, appropriate training will be provided. Any person unsure about how to handle social media interactions should seek guidance from the Clerk.

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

Breaches of this policy may result in action under the Council's Disciplinary Policy. Serious breaches may lead to dismissal, referral to external authorities, or legal action.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually or when there are significant changes to the law or social media landscape.