

## South Kyme Parish Council

### Social Media Policy

#### 1. Principles

To publish information about the work of South Kyme Parish Council (the Council) to a wider audience and to avoid entering into online debates or arguments about the Council's work.

#### 2. Approved Council Social Media

- South Kyme Parish Council website
- South Kyme Parish Council Facebook page

#### 3. Users of Council Social Media

In addition to the Clerk, there will be a nominated Parish Councillor to act as the Council's Facebook user with the authority to issue official releases as instructed by the Council. This Councillor will be nominated at the Annual Parish Council meeting and at an intervening approved Council meeting if a replacement is required.

No other member of Council has the authority to issue public statements on behalf of the Council as per the Standing Orders.

#### 4. Guidance for the use of Council Facebook

The nominated user should be familiar with the terms of use on Facebook and always adhere to these.

No information should be published that is not already known to be in the public domain i.e. available on the Council's website, contained in minutes of meetings, stated in Council publicised policies and procedures, etc.

Information that is published should be factual, fair, thorough, and transparent.

Everyone must be mindful that information published in this way may stay in the public domain indefinitely, without the opportunity for retrieval/deletion.

Copyright laws must be respected.

Conversations or reports that are meant to be private or internal must not be published without permission.

Other organisations should not be referenced without their approval – when referencing, link back to the original source wherever possible.

The nominated user must remember that they will be seen as an ambassador for the Council and should always act in a responsible and socially aware manner.

The aspiration is for the publishing of a minimum of two posts each month on the Parish Council Facebook site.

## 5. Third Party Social Media and Individual Councillor Usage

Councillors need to think about whether they are acting in a private capacity, or whether any impression might be given that they are acting for and on behalf of the Council.

The Council has adopted a Code of Conduct which is binding on all members. If you use Social Media in your official capacity as a councillor, or the public may perceive that you are, you should always be mindful of the Code, and of the seven Nolan principles applicable to holding public office – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.

### Do:

- Set appropriate privacy settings for any blog or networking site.
- Watch out for defamatory or obscene posts from others on any blog or page and remove them as soon as possible to avoid any perception that you condone such views.
- Be aware that the higher your profile as a councillor, the more likely it is that you may be seen as acting in an official capacity when you blog or network.
- Ensure any Council facilities are used appropriately – if using the Council-provided Facebook page any posts that you make are extremely likely to be viewed as being made in your official capacity.
- Avoid publishing any information that you could only have accessed in your position as a councillor.
- Avoid being specific or personal about individuals.

### Don't:

- Post comments that you would not be prepared to make in writing or in face-to-face contact.
- Use Council facilities for personal purposes.
- Post comments in haste.
- Post anything that would be regarded in the workplace as unacceptable.